

guilty of irresponsible appeals to its baser instincts. It was this suprapolitical attitude of Gorky's that explains his decision to back the Bolsheviks only a few weeks after they had suppressed *Novaya zhizn'*. He was able to disregard this deep personal rebuff, because he had come to feel that the Bolsheviks, for all their faults, were now the only party capable of saving Russia from chaos. It was certainly disingenuous of him to claim later that his opposition to the Bolsheviks was inspired *only* by a distrust of the peasantry; but it is also too much to claim, with Ermolaev, the lack of any "evidence that he retracted his condemnation of the Bolshevik methods of government" as proof of his continuing reservations (p. xiii). First, such a retraction would have been much too specific to be convenient (the generalities saved face all round); second, his ostentatious cooperation with the Soviet rulers from 1928 onward was proof enough of his change of heart.

It is not quite clear why the articles have been translated for this edition; students of Russian history and literature would prefer the original Russian, and it is unlikely that these articles will interest anyone else. Gorky's political ideas were naïve, and his journalistic writings are ponderous; in English translation these faults are inevitably spotlighted: "But when a man who is down raises his head and quietly slithers up behind you with the insidious intention of hitting you in the back of the head, then it is necessary to talk about him in that tone which his Jesuitic schemes deserve" (p. 163).

The book is prefaced by a useful introduction covering Gorky's relations with the Bolsheviks from the Revolution until his death. There are copious notes, mostly aimed at nonspecialist readers, and a competent index.

R. D. B. THOMSON
University of Toronto

A DICTIONARY OF IRREGULAR RUSSIAN VERB FORMS. By D. B. Powers. New York, London, Sydney, and Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968. xiv, 353 pp. \$12.95.

RUSSIAN: BOOK ONE. By Joseph C. Doherty, Roberta Lander Markus, and Cynthia Lamoureux. Boston: D. C. Heath, [1968]. xiii, 303 pp. \$6.50.
RUSSIAN: BOOK TWO. Boston: D. C. Heath, [1970]. xiii, 382 pp.

Anyone with even a rudimentary knowledge of Russian grammar has to be surprised to discover that there are enough irregular verbs in Russian to fill a dictionary. A quick examination of the dictionary clears up the mystery. It contains such "irregular" verbs as *pisat'*, *khodit'*, *liubit'*, and *nesti*. In other words, any verbal paradigm in which the stem undergoes some kind of a change is considered irregular (except for *-ovat'* and *-nut'* verbs, which do not lose *-nu-* in the past tense). Such a conception of grammatical irregularity is of course monstrous. However, the dictionary is not intended for linguists but for those users of Russian who lose much time "in futile search in standard dictionaries for the infinitive and/or meaning of an irregular finite form" (p. v). If such people exist, they undoubtedly need all the help they can get, and for them this book will come in handy.

The dictionary lists the first- and second-person singular forms (and for *-ch* infinitives the third-person plural, which contributes nothing, since the first-per-

son singular already shows the consonant), as well as the past tense masculine, the imperative, and the participles and gerunds if they show any irregularity. The dictionary is apparently to be used as follows: A reader comes across a verbal form for which he does not know the infinitive, say the form *khodiat*. He must then convert it to the second-person singular *khodish'* and look that up in the dictionary. The meanings are given under the first-person form only, so he is referred to *khoshu*, where he learns that the infinitive is *khodit'*, that it is intransitive, and that it has a number of meanings. In addition to 280 pages of such information, the book contains an appendix of all the infinitives treated in the dictionary. This is presumably in case you know the infinitive and wish to look up the "irregular" finite forms.

Russian: Book One and *Russian: Book Two* are intended to serve as a two-year introduction to the Russian language. The authors assume a five-period week. If less time is available, they suggest a three-year course. They must have in mind a high school class, because in college we have neither the time nor the need to spend two years—let alone three—on an introduction to the Russian language.

The two volumes together consist of an introduction and thirty-five lessons. Much of the text is devoted to drills, especially pattern drills. Each volume also contains appendixes giving declension and conjugation paradigms, lists of verbs dealt with in that volume, indexes, and a Russian-English and an English-Russian glossary. *Book One* also has a list of Russian first names. The two volumes could easily have been consolidated into one.

The introduction, as is usually true of texts of this kind, will be pretty much incomprehensible to the beginning student. The authors are probably aware of this, because they do not bother to transliterate the Russian words which they offer as readily recognizable cognates, even though the students have not at this point been introduced to the Russian alphabet. On the positive side, the introduction contains fewer errors than is usual, but it does contain some. For example, *a* is said to represent the low *front* vowel (p. 12), *i* is called a *palatal* vowel sound (p. 15), *shch* is said to represent a voiceless *sound* (p. 9), and in describing the intonation of a yes or no question, the authors state, "the accented syllable of the most important word is uttered on a high rise" (p. 17), but they fail to say that the voice drops immediately after that, which is precisely how this kind of question in Russian differs from the same kind in English.

Each lesson has reading and grammar sections, drills, and vocabulary. Except for the final ten lessons, which deal with "area" topics, the reading sections are generally uninteresting, stilted, and forced. For example, the first thirty-one lines of the reading selection for lesson 10 contain no fewer than thirty-one instrumental case forms (needless to say this lesson deals with the instrumental case). In each grammar section all points of grammar covered in the lesson are illustrated and discussed in detail. The drills that follow are not labeled according to the point of grammar they illustrate; in fact some drills illustrate all points covered in the lesson. Most of the drills are devoted to translation from English to Russian and to questions in Russian to be answered in Russian. The sentences in the English-to-Russian translation exercises are exact or nearly exact translations of the Russian reading passages. The new vocabulary items are given at the end of the lesson, which is of course unhandy for the student. Since there are complete alphabetical glossaries at the end of each book, these vocabulary lists serve no useful purpose.

Both books contain numerous errors, wrong formulations, and critical omissions. For example, in *Book Two* (p. 13) the authors say that the imperative mood

endings are added to the second-person singular stem, and on the very next page they are forced to say that the forms *pomogi* 'help' and *liag* 'lie down' are irregular. It does not take much ingenuity to see that if the third-person plural stem is used, these "irregular" forms become perfectly regular. In *Book One*, the sentences *Zdes' eë komnata* and *Eë zovut "Ikh kolkhoz"* (p. 49) are the only examples used to illustrate the genitive case without preposition of *ona* and *oni*. The verb *est'* is said to be optional in the sentence *U menia est' kniga* (p. 50). On page 40 the authors state that the numerals 2, 3, and 4 are followed by the genitive singular, but they fail to add that this only holds for the nominative case. On page 23 they say that one can usually tell the gender of a Russian noun by the ending of the nominative singular: hard consonant equals masculine, *a* equals feminine, *o* equals neuter. But there is no mention of other types of endings, even though such nouns are introduced without comment in the very next lesson. A more serious omission is the interrogative pronoun "whose," which is listed in the English-Russian glossary but is not mentioned anywhere else. A native speaker would not understand the sentence *Reb'ata idut k nei* (p. 79) as "The boys go towards her" unless there was some specific reason for it. The usual meaning is "The boys are going to visit her." The sentences *Masterstvo inostrannogo iazyka—delo praktiki* and *Poetomu umeite svobodno chitat' i govoriť po-russki* are found on page 11 of *Book Two*. The first sentence, it seems to me, is wrong, and the second is at least strange.

Russian: Book One and *Russian: Book Two* are beautifully printed and bound and are amply and tastefully illustrated. Those who are now using the Doherty-Markus textbook will find the new edition a considerable improvement, especially if in the next printing the two volumes are combined into one. Those who are using another text will find little reason to switch.

RASIO DUNATOV

University of Illinois, Urbana

THE DIARY OF VASLAV NIJINSKY. Edited by *Romola Nijinsky*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968. xvi, 187 pp. \$2.25, paper.

THE ART OF THE DANCE IN THE U.S.S.R. By *Mary Grace Swift*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968. xii, 405 pp. \$15.00.

The diary of Vaslav Nijinsky first appeared over thirty years ago, in 1936, and has now been released in paperback. Edited by his wife, Romola, it was written during 1918–19 in St. Moritz when Nijinsky was on the verge of his mental breakdown. He did not show the diary to his wife, and it was discovered accidentally in 1934. Written in a highly personal idiom, full of pantheistic sentiments and colored by a philosophy of nonviolence, humility, and forgiveness reminiscent of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, it not only provides an insight into Nijinsky's personal life, but also has thought-provoking references to Diaghilev, Stravinsky, Bakst, Benois, contemporary politics, religion, and criticism.

To compare the translation with the original diary, one may examine the three pages of Nijinsky's epilogue, reproduced in his own handwriting, that are inserted near the end of the book. There are a number of differences. For instance, a sentence in lines 6 and 7 of the first page of the original does not appear in the translation. On page 2, lines 4 and 5, Nijinsky writes, "The doctor does not understand my illness"; this is translated "The doctors do not understand my