

The emphasis is on its intrinsic meaning in the former and a depiction of its application in a historical context in the latter.

The book has been extensively researched and is well documented. Especially valuable is the information taken from Gippius's numerous diaries, letters, and other archival materials, some of which have been published recently by Professor Pachmuss in the Russian émigré journal *Vozrozhdenie*. Perhaps the study is somewhat overburdened with lengthy quotations, but as a major source work about Gippius it is a valuable contribution to literary scholarship, my few critical remarks notwithstanding. The author has also succeeded in finally refuting Gippius's unfounded "decadent" reputation by revealing the poet's intense and multifaceted religiosity as reflected in her literary, philosophical, and even political activities.

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RUSSIAN LITERATURE UNDER LENIN AND STALIN, 1917–1953. By
Gleb Struve. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971. xvi, 454 pp. \$9.95.

The present volume—revised, enriched, and expanded—grew out of the classic *Soviet Russian Literature, 1917–1950* (1951). It is an important event. Moreover, it forecasts a sequel dealing with the literary scene after Stalin's death. The promised undertaking will require all of Struve's formidable erudition, clarity, and objectivity which mark the present volume. The connection of this volume with the planned sequel is not unproblematic, as the author is fully aware. For example, he speaks in the foreword of a "submerged" literature, of works kept in drawers, such as Akhmatova's and Mandelshtam's poetry and a large portion of Bulgakov's oeuvre: "Chronologically speaking, they belong to the period covered in this book. But in another and more real sense they are part of the post-Stalin literary scene. This fact has presented a difficult problem. To discuss them out of the context of the period during which they were *published* seemed to me unjustifiable" (p. vii). The merits of the method adopted can be best judged when the sequel appears.

The bibliography is excellent and streamlined. (It is to be hoped that the publisher plans a paperback edition forthwith.) The footnotes, honed and updated throughout, make fascinating reading all by themselves, though one may have preferred the inclusion of Mirsky's, Gukovsky's, or Belinkov's destinies in the text.

Several revisions turn poignantly eloquent. The altered language of the dedication to Mandelshtam, Babel, Pilniak, and other victims of Stalinism reflects a clearer knowledge than that of 1951 of their martyrdom. In his 1951 book Struve said this in reference to Akhmatova's "Slava miru" poems: "Their poetic quality is very low, and one hesitates to believe that they were written by Akhmatova" (p. 333). In the present volume: "Those who knew Akhmatova well realized at the time that by this abject capitulation before her detractors she was buying not so much the right to re-enter literature as her son's freedom" (p. 354). The hiatus here, shatteringly relevant to Nadezhda Mandelshtam's memoirs, makes me question a point the author raises in regard to nonresistance to Zhdanovism: "An impartial observer of the Soviet literary scene cannot help reflecting with dismay on the fact that not a single voice of dissent, let alone protest, was raised against this total subjection of literature to the line dictated from the party heights" (p. 367). Doesn't the author's own exhaustive account of literature under dictatorship show that such dismay is unwarranted? Dissent had bifurcated between death and the desk drawer.

The intent of surveying so much material does not make for easy reading. Sadly, poets do not come off as well as prose writers. Some key writers are parceled out across several chapters. Frequent promises that certain works will be discussed in other places seem disruptive. Poor Voloshin, for one, is relegated elsewhere altogether; the reader is invited to find out about him from Mirsky. Although Grin has now been upgraded, as well he should be, and dwells in a small section all his own, Platonov is still treated obliquely. It is not altogether easy to agree with the clipped statement, "Of newcomers of promise there were practically none during the war" (p. 331). Mezhirov, Sluzky, Gudzenko, Dudin—and not only they—deserve at least mention. Some of them may show up in the next volume, but this will dislodge the chronological order.

The author structures and controls a mass of unwieldy materials masterfully. Incisive periodization is supported by a lucid grasp of what the regime has done to the literary life of the country. The book is not a series of portraits. By design, rounded-out figures do not emerge, and therefore, perhaps, the human sense of time and place—the revival of an epoch—is obscured by detail. However, even those who fancy a dislike of surveys—but cannot work, let alone teach, without them—stand indebted to the author.

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V. A. KAVERIN: A SOVIET WRITER'S RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM OF COMMITMENT: THE RELATIONSHIP OF *SKANDALIST* AND *KHUDOZHNIK NEIZVESTEN* TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET LITERATURE IN THE LATE NINETEEN-TWENTIES. By D. G. B. Piper. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1970. vii, 180 pp. \$7.95.

This book is a very careful, scholarly study of two important novels as they relate to the development of Soviet literature during the twenties, and as they express the grim choices that were offered to Soviet writers at the end of the decade. The author has covered the literature of the period with remarkable thoroughness, and certain parts of the book are worth reading just for the rich new material they offer on the dilemmas faced by artists and writers of the Russian avant-garde during that period. The bibliography is meticulously complete, and the material cited in the text is an enlightening selection culled from a vast body of books, articles, speeches, and the like. As we know, Soviet critics and literary theoreticians did not spare words. For instance, the transformation of one group representing "left art" in the Soviet Union, the Futurists, into a rigorous proponent of the "social demand" and service to the state is well documented by copious quotations from the magazine *LEF* and from other documents of the day. The fact that the LEF-Futurists Mayakovsky and Brik were far ahead of the proletarian literary organization, RAPP, in their demand for a purposeful and didactic literature, Mr. Piper demonstrates beyond question.

The two novels *Skandalist* (1929) and *Khudozhnik neizvesten* (1931) are analyzed by Piper as statements of the effect on writers of the pressure to participate directly in "the building of socialism." He has thrown much light on the nature of those books and has told us much about how they were made. His researches on the real-life models of the principal characters in them have succeeded in clearly