

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT. By *Feodor Dostoevsky*. Revised edition. Edited by *George Gibian*. Translated by *Jessie Coulson*. A Norton Critical Edition. New York: W. W. Norton, 1975 [1964]. xii, 670 pp. \$15.00, cloth. \$2.95, paper.

This revised edition provides an improved format for the novel, more explanatory notes, a passage from an early draft in which Raskolnikov is the first-person narrator, an updated bibliography, and six new critical selections. Ortega y Gasset offers reasons for Dostoevsky's continued popularity. Karen Horney briefly examines Raskolnikov's self-hatred. R. D. Laing analyzes the dream of the beaten mare and the letter of Raskolnikov's mother (Laing does not mention Snodgrass's essay but he reaches—more quickly—the same conclusions). In "Dostoevsky as Rorschach Test," Simon Karlinsky notes with enthusiasm that many great Russian writers disliked Dostoevsky's works. (Karlinsky's own bias is clear from his remark that a "more accurate translation" of the title *Notes from Underground* would be *Diary Written in a Basement*.) George Gibian recalls an undergraduate honors thesis written by Sylvia Plath, which was concerned with doubles in Dostoevsky, and which foreshadowed much in her later work and life. And Joseph Frank clears up the problem of Raskolnikov's clashing motivations by tracing their origin to clashing ideologies of the 1860s. Frank is so brilliantly persuasive that (for this reader at least) Raskolnikov becomes almost wholly a product of his age, making him seem much less interesting and relevant today. Well, at least Svidrigailov can still fascinate us. . .

Some minor criticisms of this useful book must be noted: R. L. Jackson's anthology of criticism of *Crime and Punishment* (1974) is missing from the bibliography; the chronology omits *Notes from Underground*; and the notebook extracts are still keyed to an obsolete Russian text of 1931 instead of to the 1970 Literaturnye Pamiatniki edition.

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OSIP MANDEL'STAM AND HIS AGE: A COMMENTARY ON THE THEMES OF WAR AND REVOLUTION IN THE POETRY 1913–1923.

By *Steven Broyde*. Harvard Slavic Monographs, vol. 1. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1975. xiv, 245 pp. \$8.00.

Only a few years ago it looked as if the Western scholarly world might succumb to the example of the television networks and *Playboy* magazine and accept Evgenii Evtushenko as "the dean of modern Russian poetry." The unexpected recent upsurge in the prestige and popularity of Osip Mandelstam in the West has spared us that unwelcome possibility. In light of the ever-growing body of critical exegesis of Mandelstam's work, it was predictable that this poet would become a favorite topic for doctoral dissertations. Steven Broyde's book falls into this category. It is apparently an unrevised version of his original 1973 thesis, in the typescript form (reproduced by photo offset), which contains the usual products of the haste with which many dissertations are typed, such as numerous misprints and uncorrected mistranslations of Russian words. Among the latter one finds misreadings of *klet'* (storehouse) as *kletka* (cage) (pp. 9, 18, 27); of *khramina* (room or chamber) as *khram* (temple) (p. 80); and oddest of all, the systematic rendition of *koleno* (knee) as "elbow" (the adjective *kolenchatyi*, which technical dictionaries translate as "elbow-shaped" must be the source of this confusion).

In addition to such minor blemishes, more serious mistakes must be noted: the misunderstanding of a key line in "Nashedshii podkovu" ("To, chto ia seichas govoriu, govoriu ne ia," meaning "It is not I who say what I am saying now," is understood by Broyde to mean "What I am now saying, I am not saying"); and the odd digression into paleontology, found on page 134, which reads: "Pinnipeds, mammals which have not yet made the transition from a marine to a land environment, suggest animals at the earliest stage of evolution." Does the author wish to impute to Mandelstam the notion that the mammalian orders evolved in the sea and then emerged independently, one by one, on dry land? But surely Mandelstam, with his abiding interest in Linnaeus, Cuvier, and Lamarck, must have known that pinnipeds (that is, the seals and the walruses) are a suborder of the *Carnivora*, that they are related to dogs and bears, and that their ancestors lived on dry land for many millions of years before returning to the sea, an evolutionary accomplishment that is anything but primitive.

All this is probably mere carping, because Steven Broyde's dissertation is eminently worth publishing as it stands. Authors of future dissertations on Mandelstam will have a hard time matching it. The author presents a close analysis of about twelve poems written in 1913–23, which deal with the themes indicated in the subtitle—that is, war and revolution. Broyde's objective is to demolish the popular fallacy that Mandelstam was indifferent to the social developments of his time. Broyde has overlooked a recent example of this view found in the reference book *Atlantic Brief Lives*, edited by Louis Kronenberger, where we read that Mandelstam's poetry "reflects life in art and literature, rather than direct experience. Chiefly concerned with form and technique, it is impersonal and erudite" (p. 484). It is Broyde's considerable achievement that his systematic demonstration of Mandelstam's varied reactions to the historical events of his time, as expressed in some of his most significant poems, should lay to rest once and for all such simplistic views of Mandelstam as an aloof Parnassian.

But apart from debunking past misunderstandings, Broyde's detailed *explications de texte* are of interest on several other levels. His approach to the poems is twofold. First, there is the method of establishing the poem's context within the rest of the poet's work. Here Broyde follows his teacher Kiril Taranovsky, who was the director of the original dissertation and whose recent essays on Mandelstam are remarkable for their insight and acumen. However, Taranovsky's analysis of context and subtext (not dissimilar in method to Harold Bloom's much acclaimed recent studies of English poets), with its ultimate implication that a poem exists primarily as a sum of the echoes of its author's other poems and of the poets he has read, stands in curious contradiction to the basic thesis of Broyde's book. The contradiction is resolved, however, when Broyde applies his second approach and, thus, very ably demonstrates that much of Mandelstam's poetic response to war and revolution was parallel to the response of his contemporaries, especially Mayakovsky, Esenin, and the proletarian poets. While these *engagé* poets responded to events simplistically, Mandelstam recognized the full complexity of historical developments. The final sentence of the "Conclusion" to the book—a section that contains some of its finest pages—reads: "Mandel'stam's poems are ambiguous not out of perversity but out of accuracy." It is a statement that could stand as a suitable epigraph to Broyde's entire study; its justice is borne out by every page of his book.

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