

sectarian communities of the Caucasus and southern Russia and in the Old Believers of Siberia (the main works on this subject are also omitted from the otherwise pretty full nine-volume collection of Uspensky's works issued in Moscow in 1956). Uspensky was always fascinated by religious practices and folklore, partly for their own sake and partly as a source of the social cohesion which he felt the commune was failing to provide. His "utopian" and "moralist" illusions were, in short, perhaps more central to his thought than Prutskov allows. This is certainly the view of Jean Lothe (*Gleb Ivanovič Uspenskij et le Populisme Russe*, Leiden, 1963—a work not even mentioned in Prutskov's bibliography), who sees Uspensky as a subjective, ethical socialist of the school of Mikhailovsky, devoted all his life, in spite of his bleak clear-sightedness, to the ideal of some kind of communal peasant agriculture, illuminated by its own inner ideals and served by an altruistic intelligentsia. Another interesting recent Western approach is that of Richard Wortman, for whom Uspensky is representative of a crisis in the populist outlook, a man driven by feelings of personal guilt and unworthiness to report faithfully on every phenomenon that ran counter to his own deeply held ideals, and who therefore raised questions that no populist could answer. To give the reader a wholly convincing survey of Uspensky's work, Prutskov should at least have taken these views into account.

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ANNA AKHMATOVA. By *Sam N. Driver*. Twayne's World Authors Series, no. 198. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972. 162 pp.

Akhmatova has always been one of the most accessible of all the great modern Russian poets. Her poetry is widely known and loved in the Soviet Union; she is probably the best-known modern Russian poet outside Russia—among readers of Russian, at least. A recently published selection of her verse in the exceedingly good translations of Stanley Kunitz will make her audience abroad even larger. In great measure, what makes Akhmatova accessible also makes her poetry both difficult to translate and difficult to write about. A translation, for instance, of the intimate narrative of her early poetry is possible, but it can easily be rendered into another language without touching the essential stuff of the poems at all. The accepted scholasticism of formal analysis easily gathers the poet's work together, reshuffles and sorts out neat piles of themes, lexical items, and devices, but also can leave the essence untouched.

This brief study of Akhmatova's poetry starts with something of a stacked deck by dealing mainly with Akhmatova's early poetry (through *Anno Domini*, 1922), a severe limitation. The approach is the familiar one, and as a practitioner Mr. Driver is no cardsharp. His treatment is straightforward—orthodox, therefore systematic and informative. There is something to be said for this. The reader gets a brief account of Akhmatova's life, a quick survey of Acmeism by way of literary background, and then a careful sorting of suits and sequences. It is unfortunate that the book treats mainly Akhmatova's early verse in any detail and, in a short closing chapter, only surveys her later work.

Akhmatova would have protested this emphasis. It may be so, as Driver asserts, that not all her later poetry has been published, but surely enough is available for us to know beyond doubt that the poet herself was right. Though

her early work is certainly worthy of more than passing interest, it is in her later poetry, especially in *Requiem* and *Poem Without a Hero*, that her voice reached beyond itself. The power is indeed present in her earlier works, but we now perceive it from the vantage point of her later writing.

Driver relies heavily on a number of articles and books written long before Akhmatova's final maturity, by Eikhenbaum, Zhirmunsky, and others. Adherence to these relatively few early critical appraisals, however, can hardly account for the astonishing statement (p. 47) that Kuzmin's "poetic talents dwindled rapidly" after 1911! There are a number of inaccuracies here and there but nothing quite on the order of the dwindled talents of the author of *Forel' razbivaet lëd*.

One hopes that Driver will now give us another general study, so much needed, on the later poetry of Akhmatova—but one less constrained by preconceived procedures and with more of his own obvious devotion to the poet in it.

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GRAMMAIRE DU VIEUX-RUSSE. By *Jean-Yves Le Guillou*. Études linguistiques, 12. Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1972. x, 108 pp. Paper.

Unable to find a simple work suitable for his students, Le Guillou wrote this slim volume, purposefully avoiding "accumulations of facts, examples, citations of variants, references to numerous texts" (p. vii). Unfortunately, the texts we call OR represent a vast range of compromises between a series of local East Slavic dialects of different periods and the semiforeign Church Slavonic that was on the whole the accepted standard. A kind of triangulation, based on detailed descriptions of OCS and modern Russian, has proved to be the most effective frame of reference for introducing students to these texts. But it is precisely the details and the variants which must be mastered if one is to learn to read and interpret OR texts in any serious way. There can be no real simplification for such complex matters.

That it is possible to provide a concise introduction which minimizes the OCS and banks heavily on modern Russian was shown by A. S. Nikulin, whose imperfect but usable *Istoricheskaia grammatika russkogo iazyka* (Leningrad, 1941) gives the basic information with the most important details, plus annotated texts and a glossary, all in 96 pages. Le Guillou, on the other hand, has eliminated much of the required data and obscured a good deal of the rest. Though a product of the Sorbonne, he is untouched by the spirit of Meillet and Vaillant and apparently innocent of elementary linguistics. His superfluous remarks about phonetics could be condensed and clarified by a single table (pp. 14–15). Little can be done about his unclear and misleading statements about phonology, morphology, syntax, and historical evolution. A single example: his final subparagraph on the imperfect states, "Éventuellement: première palatalisation des vélares, dentales et des labiales" (p. 84); his sole example, ХОЖАХЪ from ХОДИТИ. Alas, (1) the alternation of Ж with Д is not the "first palatalization," but iotation (and Le Guillou specifically mentions the theoretical *j*—"ХОД-[J]А-ХЪ"), and (2) such an imperfect is a Slavonicism in OR, for despite the Slavonicizing scribes it is clear that the native forms were of the type ХОДЯХЪ, phonetically [xod'axʲ] or [xod'äxʲ]. When such an important matter as the semantic difference between short and long adjectives is omitted, why provide curiosities a student surely will not encounter in a text