

majority of Russian homes" (p. 56); ". . . velichaet vashim vysokim blagorodiem, no govorit ty" (10:66), "He called me 'your worship' and addressed me in the second person singular" (p. 68); "Zdes' ne tol'ko skam'i i steny zadvorkov, no dazhe liubovnye pis'ma otvratitel'nye" (10:71), "There are disgusting scribbles on the benches and backyard walls, and there are also love letters" (p. 76); "tak kak bol'shinstvo ego selenii lezhit na reke Tym" (10:107), "because its settlements lie along the Tym river" (p. 115).

It would also have been better if the translators had retained Chekhov's paragraph arrangements instead of altering them in what seems to be a haphazard manner.

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THE NOVELS OF MARK ALEKSANDROVIČ ALDANOV. By C. Nicholas Lee. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 76. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1969. 386 pp. 63 Dutch guilders.

This is, in some ways, an unusual—not to say strange—book. To begin with, there is a minor unusualness about its title: instead of the first and the last name of the author discussed, as is usual in English-language works, or the initials and the last name, as is usual in Russian, it gives all three names: the first, the patronymic, and the last. The arrangement of the book is also unusual. As the title indicates, it is a book not about Aldanov but about his novels; nevertheless, it is rather unusual to reduce the biographical material about a relatively little-known writer to such a minimum: less than two pages, entitled "Biographical Remarks." The rest of the body of the book consists of a two-page preface, a short introduction (seven pages), a somewhat longer conclusion (fourteen pages), and sixteen chapters, each of which deals with one of Aldanov's fictional works. This does not cover all of his fiction, but the major part of it—his thirteen novels and three "philosophical tales" (*The Tenth Symphony*, *Punch Vodka*, and "For Thee the Best" ["Mogila voina"]). Aldanov's few short stories, which are neither historical nor "philosophical," and his nonfictional works are not discussed. All the chapters about the novels are divided into three sections: "A. Action," "B. Characters," and "C. Style." In the chapters about the three "philosophical tales" the "B" and "C" are replaced, respectively, by "Themes" and "Symbols." In his introduction the author tries to explain and justify this somewhat artificial schematic arrangement, with references to Aldanov's own writings about the art of the novel and to some other works on the theory of literature.

The consistent "parallel" treatment adopted by Professor Lee has both its advantages and weaknesses. It enables him to expose very clearly the similarities and the differences between Aldanov's individual works, as well as certain ties between them (some of them have the same characters cropping up again or introduce descendants or ancestors of earlier characters). On the other hand, it results in a certain schematic rigidity of the whole critical analysis. Sometimes one cannot see the forest for the trees, especially under the headings "Action" and "Style." Some of the expected critical generalizations are relegated to the conclusion. The plots of Aldanov's novels are retold with an unnecessary profusion of details—a criticism the author foresaw in his short preface and discounted in advance. Nevertheless it remains, I think, valid. Under the heading "Style" there is much that is simply repetitious, and there is, in fact, very little genuine stylistic analysis: apart from some rather hackneyed general remarks about Aldanov's artistic *écriture* (the words "simple" and "limpid" are those most frequently used to characterize it), a

few minor points are made about his incorporation in his work of passages in foreign languages, his use of neologisms, and so forth. It might have been better to devote a separate section to structural devices, which at present are mixed in with the plots.

The section called "Characters" is the one that lends itself best to the procedure adopted by Professor Lee. But even here one might wish that the author had dispensed with a certain amount of repetitiousness and raised, for instance, the question of possible prototypes for Aldanov's nonhistorical characters, at least in the novels about our own time or about the recent Russian past (such as *Istoki* and *Samoubiistvo*).

The book is the first full-length study of Aldanov the novelist. Its main defect is perhaps to be seen in its very "richness," its excessive detailization. Those among the readers who are not very familiar with Aldanov's work will certainly get a good idea of what his fiction is about, and even what it is like, and may be prompted to read some of the novels for themselves. Those who know their Aldanov may find this very conscientious study insufficiently selective and somewhat deficient in critical evaluation, despite keen observations scattered here and there. There is very little discussion of Aldanov as an historical novelist in relation to his pre-revolutionary predecessors or his Soviet contemporaries. True, there are frequent juxtapositions with Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, mainly to illustrate their differences (and this despite Aldanov's almost unbounded admiration for Tolstoy: the latter and Bunin were for him the two greatest Russian prose writers of all times). The complex relationship between Aldanov and Tolstoy is taken up again in the book's conclusion—in connection with Aldanov's ideas (in the conclusion one more section is added to the three in the chapters about the novels: "D. Ideas").

At the end of the book there is an extensive, but somewhat capriciously organized, bibliography, and also a table of those of Aldanov's works which are discussed in the book, arranged in the chronological order of their historical setting and thus beginning with *Punch Vodka* (1762) and ending with *Nightmare and Dawn* (Bred, 1953).

Like so many of Mouton's publications in Slavistics, the book unfortunately has more than the usual share of misprints. I also found the abundance of *op. cit.* and *loc. cit.* references in footnotes rather annoying and often confusing: it is not always clear what particular works *op.* and *loc.* stand for.

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A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY: MEMOIRS, 1917–1922. By Viktor Shklovsky.

Translated from the Russian by Richard Sheldon. With a historical introduction by Sidney Monas. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1970. xlvii, 304 pp. \$10.00.

This memoir, written fitfully over the period of 1919 to 1922 and first published in Berlin in 1923, during Shklovsky's short-lived exile, is a fascinating performance. A deliberately disjointed, fragmentary, digressive narrative, mixing scenes of revolutionary turmoil and Civil War atrocities with lyrical meanderings, snatches of literary theorizing, and vivid glimpses of the literary life in Petrograd, *A Sentimental Journey* is a remarkable implementation of Shklovsky's Formalist poetics, with its emphasis on discontinuity and displacement. By the same token, the encounter between the realities of the War and the Revolution and the narrator's