

Turgenev's faces completely, and Ms. Ledkovsky does it well and convincingly, beginning with a study of the romantic elements in his writing, linking these to the wide Russian interest in the "Gothic" (though surprisingly she misses Dostoevsky in a list of writers so interested), proceeding to a discussion of nonrealist themes in his better-known works, and leading to a discussion of his relatively little-read "mysterious tales," which link him to Gogol on one side and the Symbolists on the other.

It is, indeed, with a chapter on Turgenev as proto-Symbolist that *The Other Turgenev* ends. Links with the French Symbolists are hard to find, but Turgenev must have read Baudelaire, and Ms. Ledkovsky traces clear analogies between some of his writings and those of Verlaine, Maeterlinck, and Villiers de L'Isle-Adam. Also, she indicates the obvious lines of filiation between him and the Russian Symbolists.

*The Other Turgenev* is a timely book, reinforcing one's impression that the realism ascribed to Turgenev was in fact a great curiosity about all dimensions of life, intangible as well as tangible, mitigated by an enduring skepticism regarding the powers of reason.

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KOZ'MA PRUTKOV: THE ART OF PARODY. By *Barbara Heldt Monter*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 211. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972. xiv, 143 pp. 32 Dglds.

The problems posed by the works of Kozma Prutkov are such as to daunt all but the most cunning and erudite of critics. It is bad enough that behind the Prutkovian mask should stand *four* different authors (Alexei Tolstoy and the Zhemchuzhnikov brothers) practicing a bewildering variety of genres (fables, lyrics, aphorisms, plays, and so forth) in a number of manners, ranging from the parodic to the outright nonsensical. There is the further difficulty that all parody (like criticism, of which it is a special branch) is, by definition, *parasitical*—it feeds on and directs our attention to another author or work. Ideally, then, he who seeks to know the "parasite" should know the "host" as well. But how many Slavists in the West have immersed themselves in the likes of Shcherbina, Benediktov, and the second-rate Russian imitators of Heine?

Equipped with a sharp eye, a crisp style, and an obvious appreciation of Kozma's genial (in both senses of the word) tomfoolery, Professor Monter advances bravely on her subject. Alas, her varied *aperçus* and formulations fail ultimately to pin him down. To claim, for instance, that Prutkov's "personality is inseparable from his works" is valid for the aphorisms—and for very little else. To argue that his creators had a "genuine affection" for the Prutkovian *persona* is to forget how unpleasant a creature he was: a "tyrannic" lover of all that was "oppressive, stale, and inhuman" in Nicholas's Russia—to quote Professor Monter herself. To give partial assent to Pypin's view (enthusiastically endorsed by Soviet critics) that Prutkov was the product of the claustrophobic climate of mid-century Russia is, momentarily at least, to forget that Prutkov was born from sheer youthful exuberance—an emotion which seldom if ever stems from claustrophobia. And so it goes. Repeatedly the agile author tries to catch the subject in her critical nets, and almost as often the protean poet escapes, growling as he retreats: "Nikto ne obnimet neob"iatnogo."

If the embraceable remains unembraced by the author, hers is nonetheless a useful handbook for the admirers of the Bard. Her translations are plentiful, well selected, and accurate. Her discussion of the genesis of the poet is knowledgeable. The thankless task of explaining the jokes and elucidating the allusions is tackled with resolution and efficiency. In a word, her short, solid monograph will—like Prutkov's turpentine—have its uses.

One crucial question, however, is, I regret to say, nowhere broached by the author. Namely, what conceivable *relevance* can this fustian epigone of bygone years have for Soviet Russians of today? The answer, I am convinced, is that, repeated official denials to the contrary, the dangerous virus of *prutkovshchina* has not only not been stamped out by the authorities, it has infected the Soviet editors of the Bard himself. As proof of this grave accusation I submit the following musicological footnote drawn from the Academy edition of Prutkov: "According to information provided to me by S. L. Ginsburg Frère Jacques is an ancient French song: 'Frère Jacques (bis)/Dormez-vous (bis)/Sonnez la matinée [*sic*] (bis)/Bim-bam-bom! (bis).' Thematically [Frère Jacques] approximates the [Russian] seminary song 'Father Theofil' of which it is apparently a partial reworking, partial translation" (p. 567). *Bdite!nost', tovarishchi, bdite!nost'!*

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SELECTED POEMS. By *Alexander Blok*. Introduced and edited by *Avril Pyman*.

Illustrated by *Kirill Sokolov*. New York and Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1972. xix, 366 pp. \$11.50.

Ms. Pyman's book is a welcome addition to the all-too-small number of annotated Russian poetry texts published in the West and likely therefore to be available for several years at a stretch for use in the classroom. It contains a hundred lyrics, *Dvenadtsat'*, *Skify*, an extract from *Vozmezdie*, and a short prose passage, thus providing a selection twice as large as that in James Woodward's teaching text (Oxford, 1968), though smaller than the collection published in the same year by "Khudozhestvennaia literatura," which is another stand-by for courses in Russian poetry. In addition to the poems there are fifty-three pages of introduction, ninety-five pages of notes, and an extensive bibliography covering, besides Russian works, publications on Blok and translations in English, French, German, and Italian; this is in part a reprint of material published by Ms. Pyman in the first Tartu *Blokovskii sbornik* in 1964.

The selection is a good one, ranging from interesting juvenilia to the poetry of Blok's maturity. Virtually every aspect of Blok's poetry is represented except his translations, and this is a pity, for they are by no means simply an appendage to the main body of his work, and form part of a tradition of verse translation that is a significant part of the achievement of Russia's poets. The introduction is "an attempt . . . to write briefly about Blok's poetry in the context of his life and times." On the whole it succeeds admirably, combining information drawn often from the less obvious sources with a lively presentation of the basic biographical material, and betraying a shrewd and sympathetic understanding of Blok as man and writer, although Ms. Pyman relies too unreservedly on some of Blok's observations about the intellectual climate of his time which are more or less deliberate and highly colored exaggerations, dramatizations of his characteristically emotive