

14.81 is misleading: a small number of high frequency verbs have a *t/c* alternation in the past passive participle (*platit/placen*). The author's semantic equivalents are often in the form of a single gloss buoyed by syntactic usage. Thus *vědět* is glossed "to know" (p. 73) when used in conjunction with *to*, as in *to vím*, but a counterexample—*to znám (ze školy)*—is perfectly acceptable as well. Both examples could be accounted for if the student had been told that *vědět* expresses knowledge in terms of awareness or consciousness, *znát* in terms of facts or data.

The insertion of Russian examples, presumably added to eliminate interference from Russian look-alikes, often struck this reviewer as curious. Some are certainly to the point, others seem gratuitous (the connection between Russian *gorazdo* and Czech *o mnohem*, given the absence in Czech of *\*horazd-*). At other times Russian look-alikes are not given when they might have been, as the Russian *dolgii*, "long"—which refers to temporal coordinates only—versus Czech *dlouhý*—which refers to temporal as well as spatial coordinates.

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ASSOTSIIATSIIA KHUDOZHNIKOV REVOLIUTSIONNOI ROSSII  
"AKhRR": SBORNIK VOSPOMINANII, STATEI, DOKUMENTOV.  
Compiled by *I. M. Gronskii* and *V. N. Perel'man*. Moscow: "Izobrazitel'noe iskusstvo," 1973. 503 pp. Illus.

The publication of these documents is not an unmixed blessing for historians who rejoice in the appearance of primary sources. Reading through this collection of manifestoes, memoirs, and reviews is as instructive about the 1920s as it is about cultural politics in the Soviet Union today. It is in connection with the latter, contemporary, aspect that misgivings set in.

The Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (AKhRR) was formed in 1922, and signaled, in part, a return to easel painting and the figurative forms of art after the bold experimentations of the early revolutionary years. The AKhRR, dedicated to documentary realism, was the least adventuresome and least creative of the numerous neorealist groups that surfaced with the onset of the NEP. Yet, this group claimed that its "heroic realism" was a new departure which had nothing in common with the style and ethos of the *Peredvizhniki*, the socially concerned realists of the nineteenth century. Within an astonishingly short time, this small band of untested talent became the largest artistic and exhibiting society in the Soviet Union. It remained so until 1932, when it was dissolved, together with all the other associations, to give way to the single nationwide artists' union.

Before 1932, a storm of controversy was created by the conservative pictorial language of the *Akhrovtsy*, by the munificent patronage they secured from the trade unions and the army, as well as by their efforts to claim recognition as the official style of the Soviet state. Their maneuverings and the responses they aroused are fascinating to follow because they reflect the unresolved issues of Soviet cultural life in the 1920s: how to combine pluralism with state patronage, how to make possible the coexistence of elite and mass cultures.

The anthology under review does not represent these issues objectively. Its editors have personal reasons to plead a cause: V. Perel'man was one of the founders of AKhRR, and I. Gronskii, as editor of *Novyi mir*, was prominent in the 1930s among those who attempted to give Socialist Realism a narrow, chauvinist, and political interpretation. Nor was the attempt to gain for AKhRR recognition as proponents of the art which had the party's support limited to the 1920s: the more politically controlled the art scene became, the greater the attempt to distort the history of art

into a direct progression from the *Peredvizhniki*, via the *Akhrovttsy*, to Socialist Realism.

Several prominent themes of this mythmaking are reflected in the book. The publication of a later, "updated" version of reminiscences by E. Katsman, a close associate of V. Perel'man, gives the misleading impression (as do some memoirs written in the 1960s) that the *Akhrovttsy* regarded and represented themselves, from the beginning, as the successors of the *Peredvizhniki*. The introduction presents a distorted version of Soviet cultural policy in the 1920s by insisting that the party always had a definite policy, not merely regarding the function of art but also regarding style. Similarly, the selections from Lunacharskii's speeches and reviews slight those pronouncements in which he warned against the perils of an official line for the mode of artistic expression. Furthermore, the more savage attacks on the art and policies of AKhRR, written by its opponents, are not included.

It is, of course, useful to have texts of the manifestoes issued by AKhRR, a sampling of reviews, facts about the wide network of AKhRR's activities as provided in some of the memoirs, a listing of exhibits and exhibitors, and a select bibliography. But anyone seeking a full picture of the role and fortunes of the AKhRR will not be spared the trouble of digging through the various publications of the 1920s. Even the small selection of documents printed in two earlier general anthologies—P. I. Lebedev, ed., *Bor'ba za realizm v iskusstve 20-kh godov* (Moscow, 1962) and I. Matsa, ed., *Sovetskoe iskusstvo za 15 let* (Moscow, 1933)—provide a more well-rounded story.

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## LETTERS

### TO THE EDITOR:

The late Professor Schiebel came to Georgetown University in the fall of 1966 (not 1976, as the obituary in the March 1977 *Slavic Review* reads). *Mea culpa*.

DAVID M. GOLDFRANK  
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### TO THE EDITOR:

In her review of my Wicksell Lectures (*Slavic Review*, March 1977), Dr. Padma Desai raises some interesting questions regarding the comparisons of Soviet and Western productivity and consumption growth that I made there. Unfortunately, the questions are also more or less technical, and I have reluctantly concluded that this is not the context in which to explain my feeling that her strictures are not nearly as telling as she apparently assumes.

According to Dr. Desai, I concluded that the Soviet performance in respect of output per worker and consumption per capita is "impressive but not imposing." Dr. Desai, I am sure, has only by inadvertence attributed such an inanity to me. My principal conclusion, as I stated it, was that in the spheres in question "the famous Soviet model, though no doubt effective, still appears not especially imposing in a comparative perspective."

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