

There are also many textual inaccuracies. For instance, the poem "Kak prezhde" (1918) is not dedicated to D. V. Filosofov but to I. I. Bunakov-Fondaminsky; Hippius's references to "new *voliublennost'*" and "new voluptuousness" in her diary *Contes d'amour* have no connection with the poet's personal relationship with a "young, yet old looking, English girl" (p. 72) (reference to the composer Elizabeth Baroness von Overbach?). The dwellers of the underworld in Hippius's poem *The Last Circle* (1943) did not "want to return to life" (p. 109). On the contrary, wishing to avail themselves of time to undergo spiritual purification and attain love, they had no desire "to return to life."

Mrs. Matich's "Selected Bibliography" is outdated and often lists works which contain no reference to the poet, for example, D. V. Filosofov, *Slova i zhizn': Literaturnye spory noveishego vremeni (1901-1908 gg.)* (St. Petersburg, 1909), or P. F. Nikolaev, *Voprosy zhizni v sovremennoi literature* (Moscow, 1902).

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SELECTED WORKS OF NIKOLAI S. GUMILEV. Selected and translated by *Burton Raffel* and *Alla Burago*. Introduction by *Sidney Monas*. Russian Literature in Translation, no. 1. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1972. xi, 248 pp. \$10.00.

MODERN RUSSIAN POETRY. Edited and translated by *Olga Andreyev Carlisle* and *Rose Styron*. New York: Viking Press, 1972. 210 pp. \$6.95.

Both of these really quite attractive editions should appeal to the broader general readership for which they are intended. The presentation of Gumilev's works is scholarly in manner, while the approach in the anthology of modern Russian poets is what is usually called popular. This is Olga Carlisle's third book (here in collaboration with Rose Styron) in a series which has helped, along with her numerous articles, to bring some idea of modern Russian poetry to the English-speaking public. The Gumilev collection marks the beginning of a new series, Russian Literature in Translation, designed to make available translations of those Russian writers who have been more or less ignored or badly translated in the past. The format is handsome, and the first volume in general augurs well. One can only wish the new venture success.

The editor's fairly brief introduction to the Gumilev volume makes good use of the relatively limited materials on the poet's life and work. It does not discuss at any length the shorter lyrics, although the comments on the plays and the cycle including "The Lost Tram" are highly interesting. There are, however, some faults. It is long past time, for example, that we got over being embarrassed by what might be called Gumilev's youthful "conquistador" stance (see p. 14). Selections from his first volume, *Pu' konkvistadorov*, were wisely omitted from this collection; the stance was not so frequently taken in later volumes, and was actually atypical for the maturer work. At another point in the introduction there is a reference to Gumilev's wickedly clever satire of the *personae* of many of Akhmatova's early poems—and, in part, of the poet herself ("Iz logova zmieva"). Given the occasion and the known circumstances of the poem, it seems odd to connect this figure with Zoë of *The Poisoned Tunic*, or the person to whom the poems of *The Dark-Blue Star* were written—and much less with Eve and the Fall, and

beyond that with Lilith. The footnote (n. 23) which observes that the poem is "unusually playful for Gumilev" points to the contradiction rather than resolving it. Apart from these objections, the scholarship and editing are careful. It is good to have such an essay available in English.

The translations read well. The foreword explains that they are to be read and judged as English poetry, and this principle, of course, allows for considerable latitude in departing from the original. Sometimes, though, the latitude seems unnecessarily wide. "Out at sea, at noon" (p. 30) renders "Nad puchinoi v poludennyi chas," when a closer translation is certainly possible. Similarly, "Ne spasěhsia ot doli krovavoi" becomes simply "Fate is inescapable" (p. 34). Perhaps such a recasting is necessary to suit modern English taste in poetry, but it is a far cry from the original. There are other problems, however, which have to do with something more than taste in choice of words. For example, a *latnik* is not a hussar (p. 43). On page 53 there is a translation of a very interesting poem ("Otryvok"). The poet asks, if the Kingdom is to the poor and meek, what then of the great? "II' Beatriche stala prostitutkoi,/Glukhonemym—velikii Vol'fgang Gête/I Bairon—plohchadnym shutom. . . O uzhas!" At the end of a fine translation of the poem, the cry of horror is unaccountably rendered as an irritated, mildly exasperated "oh, *merde, merde*."

The poem "Iz logova zmieva," mentioned above, is an extremely difficult poem to translate because of borrowings from the folk tradition, which Akhmatova herself sometimes used for stylizations, and the colloquial tone. The translators do catch the swing of the original, but some of the lines are highly doubtful. "A dumal zabavnitsu,/Gadal svoenravnitsu" becomes "I wanted a girl for the fun of it,/A high-powered fun-girl" (p. 49). When we know the reference is to Akhmatova—well, "Tsarskosel'skaia vesēlaia greshnitsa," perhaps, but "a high-powered fun-girl"?

These are isolated instances, however, and the translation overall is more than acceptable. In the succeeding sections ("Stories," "Drama," "Literary Criticism") the translation presents much less of a problem, and one must agree with the editor that the prose translations are of unusual merit.

The collection *Modern Russian Poetry* reads quite easily, as is suitable for its intent. The introduction in some ten pages assumes no knowledge at all of Russia and its literature. It ranges broadly from Cyril and Methodius onward, and through Russian literature since Pushkin. The survey is accompanied by an index with a chronological chart of Russian history, 1613–1968.

The selections are at once expected and odd. Expected, because they are already more or less established anthology pieces from the best-known poets of today (e.g., Brodsky, Evtushenko) and yesterday (e.g., Mandelshtam, Tsvetaeva). Odd, because the central section contains poets from the war years who are rather less well known (Slutsky) and even fairly obscure (Mezhistrov). These poets are generally represented by one poem each; included in their number are the father and uncle of one of the editors. Each poet is introduced by a short, chatty essay, often incorporating family recollections and accounts of meetings between the editors and the poets.

Several approaches to translation seem to have been employed by the editors; they are in general successful, and tend to stick close to the original except in the case of rhymed verse. Liberties are taken, however, and they sometimes exceed reasonable bounds. In Blok's *Skify*, for example, the epigraph and five whole

stanzas are simply omitted, with no note to that effect. Akhmatova's famous lines about Petersburg, "I tsaritsei Avdotei zakliaty, / Dostoevskii i besnovaty," are rendered ". . . and banished, bewitched like Czarina Avdotya, / Dostoevskyan, the unearthly." In the same poem "graves" is translated as "roots," and the line "I valilis' s mostov karety" becomes "bridges parting to topple the carriages."

Quibbles aside, both books serve their own very useful purposes. What one does wish for, however, along with volumes of translations, is a series of editions like James B. Woodward's *Selected Poems of Aleksandr Blok*. The two collections at hand are really of very limited use to those who command a little Russian. Much more useful is the Woodward format, in which the original text is given, and difficult passages are translated or explained in the notes. A series of this kind would be most welcome indeed.

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BORIS PASTERNAK. By J. W. Dyck. Twayne's World Authors Series, no. 225. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972. 206 pp. \$6.50.

J. W. Dyck provides a general introduction to Pasternak and in so doing manages to at least touch on all aspects of his writing. After presenting the basic facts of Pasternak's life and career, Dyck devotes a chapter to his poetics as presented in the autobiographies and then goes on to discuss the poetry, *Doctor Zhivago*, the short prose, and the translations. The footnotes and the bibliography indicate that Dyck is familiar with most of the major secondary literature on Pasternak, and he has certainly read the works themselves with great love and diligence. Yet the result is not totally satisfying. Despite a number of acute observations the book suffers from two faults: a tendency to make vague or inexact remarks and, more crucially, the failure to impart a sense of unity. The former is illustrated by the attempt to explain the reasons for the dedication of *Sestra moia zhizn'* to Lermontov through the unlikely and poorly supported assertion that Pasternak's "esthetics was primarily based on Pushkin's realism, which has universal application. In *My Sister, Life*, Pasternak had not yet matured to the level of such concreteness." Questionable as well is the characterization of Komarovskiy as "happy-go-lucky." The absence of unity is felt both in the work as a whole and within individual chapters. The result is that it is often difficult either to see the point that is being made about a particular work or to get a feeling for Pasternak's career in its entirety. For example, the decision to discuss the short prose only after *Doctor Zhivago* obscures the extent to which the novel reflects the earlier writings. Indeed, the entire chapter on the short prose seems to have been included almost as an afterthought. The chapters "Poetics in Autobiography" and "*Doctor Zhivago*" both suffer from being broken down into a number of sections based largely on theme. Ideally, this device would lead to a clearer and more organized presentation; however, the series of separate discussions (such as those on "Man," "Man in History," "Illusions and Disillusions," and "Free Personality" in *Doctor Zhivago*) lead instead to artificiality and some repetitiveness.

There are a number of minor errors. For example, the lines by Mayakovsky quoted on pages 78–79 are from *Oblako v shtanakh*, hence were *not* "written not too long before his death." Dyck indicates that the first collection of Pasternak's stories appeared only in 1933, whereas in fact one was published as early as 1925.