

life—admittedly a difficult task, but the author convincingly demonstrates that his work is obsessively autobiographical. Nowhere does she mention that before he married Olga Suok he was married to her sister Serafima, whom he lost to Vladimir Narbut, and who is now married to Shklovsky. The third sister married Eduard Bagritsky. According to the diary of Bagritsky's son Vsevolod, Olesha worked tirelessly during the late thirties to obtain the release of Bagritsky's widow from a forced-labor camp. The diary also mentions the suicide of Olesha's young son.

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RUSSIAN: A COMPLETE ELEMENTARY COURSE. By *Peter Rudy, Xenia L. Youhn, and Henry M. Nebel, Jr.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1970. xxii, 522 pp. \$7.50.

This attractively printed volume is designed to integrate the functions of an elementary grammar, introductory conversation book, and graded reader. The authors have aimed at combining both audio-lingual and traditional methods and thus provide the basis for training in the fundamentals of aural comprehension, speaking, and reading.

In format, the book is divided into three phases: lessons 1–3 (Phase I) deal primarily with introducing the alphabet, handwriting, and pronunciation; lessons 4–12 (Phase II) treat the essentials of grammar—the case system and the verb, minimally presented; lessons 13–30 (Phase III) shift the emphasis to reading, with secondary attention devoted to grammar and conversation. In addition to a dozen or more introductory pages on how to use the book, there are over a hundred pages of “additional exercises” at the end, a sixteen-page appendix, Russian-English and English-Russian vocabularies, and a two-page index. The book contains approximately 1,400 vocabulary items. Tape recordings are available from the publisher. According to its authors, the course has been tried out at Northwestern University over the past six years by both experienced and inexperienced instructors.

A number of good things can be said about the Rudy-Nebel-Youhn textbook. It has been carefully prepared and contains few misprints. Aspect is introduced relatively early along with the past tense (lesson 7), and all of the cases in singular and plural are presented by lesson 12. Handwriting is featured in the first three lessons, though neglected later. The lesson vocabularies are short and manageable for at least the first third of the book. Useful guidelines are contained within the book for both teacher and student. There is an abundance of exercises, including the large number of pattern drills for lessons 4 through 30 called “additional exercises.” It would be a pity if so naming them and relegating them to the back of the book would cause teachers to neglect them. In order to achieve even minimal active mastery of Russian grammar, these “additional exercises” are absolutely essential.

Among the weaknesses of the book, perhaps the most glaring is the presentation of the sound system vis-à-vis the writing system as presented in the first three chapters. This is the result no doubt of the authors' attempt to avoid introducing any phonetic transcription. One also wonders if anything is gained by avoiding traditional terms such as perfective and imperfective in favor of “verbs of completion and verbs of incompletion or repetition.” Soft-series or iotated vowel letters are called “indicator vowels,” consonants which occur in both plain and palatalized varieties are called “variable consonants,” and the misleading terms “incompletion” and “repetition” are used to categorize the two imperfective aspects of the basic

verbs of motion (usually called definite/determinate and indefinite/indeterminate). Only minimal attention is paid to stress, and the problem of word order is totally neglected. Model sentences too often read like word-for-word translations of English into Russian. It is not that sentences like *Gde vy videli ego vchera?* do not exist in Russian, but rather that an excess of such models misleads the student into thinking this is the *normal* word order in that language.

Despite these minor objections, the book has much to recommend it. Grammar explanations, though traditional, are clear and concise. The inclusion of an extensive body of literary readings adapted from Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekhov, and Zoshchenko must be regarded as a positive asset.

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MODERN FINNISH PAINTING AND GRAPHIC ART. By *John Boulton Smith*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1970. 62 pp. \$4.50.

MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN FINLAND. By *Asko Salokorpi*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1970. 64 pp. \$4.50.

John Boulton Smith asks the question whether or not Finnish modern painting and printmaking have an individual cultural identity, and proceeds expertly to trace the effects of Romanticism, Impressionism, Postimpressionism, Art Nouveau, and Expressionism on Finnish painters who attempted to evoke their own national heritage. Painting is a young art in Finland. In a state of decline after the Reformation, it was not revived until the nineteenth century, when it was relearned from various European models. Abstract art was not accepted until the 1950s, growing commonplace in the 1960s.

The year 1809 saw Finland's severance from Sweden and its new guise as an independent grand duchy under Russian domination. As in other Nordic countries, nationalism grew, and Elias Lönnrot's publication of Finland's national epic, the *Kalevala*, occurred in 1835. The centers for the artistic training of Finnish artists in the nineteenth century were, successively, Stockholm, Düsseldorf, and in the 1880s, Paris.

The first distinctively Finnish painting drew upon the *Kalevala* and used the sinuous style of Art Nouveau. Akseli Gallen-Kallela (1865–1931) was the most famous exponent of this form. The nationalist movement was greatly strengthened by Finland's final independence from Russia in 1917, and produced, once again, an interest in the depiction of folk themes. Edvard Munch's 1909 and 1911 exhibitions in Helsinki helped foster an interest in Expressionism. But the Finnish quality in Finnish painting is apparent in the content, not the style. The most frequently reiterated theme is a strong feeling for nature, both lyrical and melancholy.

Mr. Smith's text is clear, direct, and sympathetic, and his choice of plates arouses interest in a little-known sphere of modern art.

In contrast, Finland's architecture has a long-standing, unbroken tradition, and its modern architecture is world renowned. Asko Salokorpi traces the key aspects of modern Finnish architecture, which parallels European architecture in general, and discusses the concepts of rationalism, romanticism, internationalism, and nationalism. His presentation is terse, often brilliant, and he makes it clear why "Finnish architecture often seems to be an art form rather than a way of building." The influence of Art Nouveau, Cubism, and Constructivism and the concept of functionalism are