

the past fifty years, by taking the brunt on herself, she has saved Europe again—this time from rationalism and the will to evil that goes with it. The sacrifice of human life was enormous. How can I believe it was in vain?"

Nadezhda Iakovlevna's recollections are translated well by Max Hayward. Clarence Brown's introduction is illuminating enough, and his appropriate citation from Yeats's "Lapis Lazuli" may be applied to both of the Mandelshtams:

They know that Hamlet and Lear are gay;
Gaiety transfiguring all that dread.

.....
All things fall and are built again,
And those that build them again are gay.

GEORGE IVASK
University of Massachusetts

OSTANOVKA V PUSTYNE: STIKHOTVORENIIA I POEMY. By *Iosif Brodsky*. New York: Izdatel'stvo Imeni Chekhova, 1970. 228 pp. \$5.00, paper.

Brodsky's first book of poems appeared in New York in 1965. The present book, his second, is the first title of the Chekhov Press redivivus (under different management and a different English name, but with the identical Russian name, to keep future bibliographers on their toes). It contains seventy-one poems, of which twenty-three appeared, occasionally in unsatisfactory form, in the earlier version. The first title of a new house, the second (traditionally crucial) collection of a poet who had at the time just turned thirty (an even more fateful anniversary nowadays than it used to be)—it would seem a momentous conjunction of occasions, calling for special attention.

All concerned deserve congratulations. And since he has been rather abused in the émigré press, I specifically include the anonymous "N.N.," author of the eccentric introduction, who, if he is an *enthusiast*, is at least an enthusiast for poetry rather than the cold war.

Brodsky's finest work is in the long poem (for want of a more precise term; the divisions of the book blur what is left of such genre distinctions as *elegia* and *poema*) and in the translations. The longest and most ambitious work, *Gorbunov i Gorchakov* (1965–68), is also the best. Brodsky's headlong genius is rather like Khlebnikov's in requiring the scope of a large work: his unit is not the line, as "N.N." rightly observes, but a kind of syntactic period. These fourteen cantos each contain one hundred iambic pentameters, usually in ten-line stanzas with only two alternating rhymes. It is exclusively dialogue (between the two eponymous heroes, for the most part, though there are other voices), and the speeches are not attributed by any of the normal typographic devices to specific speakers. In order to keep the voices of this dizzying stichomythia apart in your mind, you must plunge in and, having determined who is who, read forward at the frenetic and urgent pace that is so characteristic of Brodsky. But they coalesce anyway, as they should, for we are dealing with another Russian geminate hero. Gorbunov, the humane, half-crazy dreamer about mushrooms and the sea (Brodsky's symbols for peace and freedom are peculiarly Russian while being very contemporary, and universal), and his tormentor, the *seksot* Gorchakov, are really two facets of one anguished consciousness. The emotional and intellectual tensions built into the form itself are reminiscent of Dostoevsky. In Canto 5 ("Song in the Third Person") Brodsky puts the phrase

"i on emu skazal" through so many transformations that it finally acquires, in the manner of concrete poetry, a sort of third dimension and stands out unforgettably from the page, strange and dangerous—a kind of monument to the ritual of denunciation.

There are only four translations, all from John Donne, to whom Brodsky has addressed a justly admired elegy, reprinted here. But these four are enough to suggest that in some future history of Russian poetry Brodsky's discovery of Donne will be a significant date. His Russian version of "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" is uneven, but where it succeeds, it succeeds wonderfully, with enjambments that do not so much translate as *enact* the "gold to avery thinnesse beate." How fitting, too, that the "parasite" of 1964 should now have honored his native language with a splendid version of "The Flea."

CLARENCE BROWN
Princeton University

THE OLD LITHUANIAN CATECHISM OF MARTYNAS MAŽVYDAS (1547). Edited and translated by *Gordon B. Ford, Jr.* Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp. N.V.—Dr. H. J. Prakke & H. M. G. Prakke, 1971. xvi, 104 pp. 30 Dutch guilders.

The first purpose, successfully attained, of this publication is to provide a correct text of the 1547 Catechism of the so-called Mažvydas. However, the name of this Old Lithuanian writer was not Mažvydas but, by his own testimony (see my *Handbuch der litauischen Sprache*, vol. 2: *Lesebuch und Glossar* [1957], p. 159), Martynas Mosvydas Vaitkūnas—that is, Martin Mosvydas son of Vaitkus.

In addition, we find here an English translation of the Lithuanian and Latin texts as well as a list of Slavic loanwords occurring in the Catechism. Not all Lithuanian passages are properly translated. Thus, *weikiaus*, which occurs several times, stands for modern *greičiau* 'as soon as possible.' Therefore, the text *Bet skaititi tur io weikiaus makitij* (p. 26) means 'but he should teach him to read as soon as possible,' and the line following this one is to be translated: "Sons, learn as fast as possible and do not idle." Following Skardžius, Ford interprets *žekas* (he writes for no reason at all *žėkas*) and *žekelis* (he writes *žėkelis*) as 'disciple, pupil,' which makes no sense, whereas these words really mean 'cantor' and go back to Polish *diak, dziak*.

On page 3 the date of publication, given in the original as *VIII. dena Meneses Sausia*, is wrongly translated as 'on the eighth Day of the Month of January,' instead of December. To be sure, today *sausis* is used for 'January,' but in Old Lithuanian it designated the same as modern *gruodis* (i.e., 'December'), as can be seen in Senn-Salys, *Wörterbuch der litauischen Schriftsprache*, vol. 3 (1957), p. 615, and Senn, *Handbuch*, 2:251. The problem has been discussed at length by Pranas Skardžius in his article "Mėnesių pavadinimai lietuvių kalboje," *Archivum Philologicum*, 1 (Kaunas, 1930): 103–13, esp. p. 107, and by Ruth L. Pearce, "The Lithuanian Month Names," *Studi Baltici*, 9, n.s. 1 (Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere "La Colombaria," Firenze [Italy], 1952): 121–62, esp. pp. 150–51. Concerning the publication date of the Catechism, Mrs. Pearce makes the following additional statement: "It has been proven that some of the hymns in this Catechism were translated from a Polish text which was not published until the fall of 1547. This being true, the book must have been published in December, not January of 1547."