

mined by the author's priorities. Soviet critics—for example, A. S. Dolinin, L. Grossman, M. M. Bakhtin, and N. M. Chirkov, who have attempted to keep literary criticism and ideology separate, and who have, therefore, been victimized at one time or another by the Soviet government, are most prominently represented. On the other hand, while some of V. V. Ermilov's work is included, little attention is devoted to other representatives of the Soviet literary establishment who, although they have made a smaller contribution to Dostoevsky scholarship, are presently responsible for shaping the official image of Dostoevsky in Russia. This group includes, among others, M. Khrapchenko, B. Suchkov (who died recently), K. Lomunov, and B. Bursov.

The book provides a wealth of information and it will be of particular interest to the Western student of Dostoevsky who lacks facility in the Russian language. Many works by and about Dostoevsky have been recently translated into English, but there is still a variety of untranslated critical material on Dostoevsky, published both in the Soviet Union and in the West. Thus, the book will serve as a useful guide to the inquisitive student. The book is also supplemented by an appendix in which the author gives a brief description of the most important contributions to the study of Dostoevsky by Russian émigré scholars in the West.

The quest for the meaning of Dostoevsky's art and for the understanding of its creator is an endless one. The dialogues and discourses on the relative merits of his novels have frequently been marked by disagreement, particularly when the dialogue is between Soviet and Western scholars. Dr. Seduro's study, adhering to this tradition, reads as a continuous dialogue between the author and the representatives of Soviet *Dostoevskovedenie*. While it is the author's privilege to criticize official Soviet interpretations of Dostoevsky and to agree or disagree with Soviet critics, this continuous dialogue reveals his own biases and makes it difficult to follow the main thrust of his argument. Furthermore, Dr. Seduro's final conclusion, that "in the continuing duel with Soviet ideology, his [Dostoevsky's] Christian-humanistic world-view is also gradually winning a place for itself in Soviet culture . . ." (p. 382), is questionable and needs further substantiation.

Nevertheless, Dr. Seduro's new book is a serious contribution to Dostoevsky scholarship in the West which will introduce the reader to a variety of new interpretations and will stimulate his interest in the new, as yet untranslated, studies of Dostoevsky the man and the artist.

A number of minor typographical errors and several blank pages (in my copy, at least) mar this otherwise attractively produced volume. The book also lacks an index and a bibliography.

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TWENTIETH-CENTURY RUSSIAN LITERATURE. By *Harry T. Moore* and *Albert Parry*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974. xi, 194 pp. \$6.95.

There is a jocular Russian expression "*galopom po Evropam*"; I don't know what the English equivalent might be, but this book certainly points the need for it. The authors start with Chekhov and actually manage to include events as late as July 1974, while the drama, cinema, and émigrés also receive attention, and all this in 169 pages of text. Of course, at this pace something had to be sacrificed,

and it was the literature: the pre-1917 period, for example, is covered in twelve pages. The approach is mainly biographical, with a marked weakness for gossip. Thus, the story of Libedinskii's wife is given much more space than his writings, and we learn more about the prices which the works of Solzhenitsyn, Mandelstam, and Bulgakov command on the black market than about the works themselves.

The organization of the book is incredibly haphazard. A section on Il'f and Petrov digresses in mid-paragraph to Kataev's *Rastratchiki* because, you see, Kataev and Petrov were brothers. The chapter on Soviet poetry, 1920–41, arranges its material into the following sections (none more than three pages long): Tikhonov, Bednyi, Bezymenskii; Aseev; Briusov and Others (Khodasevich, Kliuev, Bagritskii, Sel'vinskii, Platonov, Pavel Vasil'ev, and Voloshin); Mandelstam; Akhmatova; Tsvetaeva (where incidentally, both *Remeslo* and *Posle Rossii* are omitted from the list of her major works). Zabolotskii gets six worthless lines; Aleksandr Prokof'ev gets thirteen immediately above. The two paragraphs on Merezhkovsky end: "Merezhkovsky was not, however, in a class with two of the influential essayists of the day, Vasilii Rozanov and Lev Shestov, both of whom were later to interest D. H. Lawrence," but neither Rozanov nor Shestov is mentioned elsewhere in the text.

It should also be pointed out that much of the discussion is derivative. The section on Aseev (pp. 86–87) is so closely modeled on that in Zavalishin's *Early Soviet Writers* (pp. 230–31) as to raise suspicions of plagiarism; the garbled account of Leonov's first two novels (pp. 41–42) also seems to have been based on a misreading of Zavalishin (pp. 305–6) rather than of Leonov. The alterations are almost as revealing: useful comment has been dropped and empty verbiage substituted. One of the few original judgments concerns Ehrenburg's "extremely interesting *Padenie Parisha* (1941–42)" with which he "reached the pinnacle of his pre-war fame in 1940."

The book contains many elementary blunders: like Platonov (see above), Shklovsky is classed as a poet (p. 34); Ol'ga Forsh's *Sumasshedshii korabl'* is listed among novels on "safe" Soviet themes (p. 57); Pushkin's "Prorok" appears to be attributed to Pasternak (p. 125); Solzhenitsyn's "Pir pobeditelei" is stated as having been read in "countless typewritten copies in sub-rosa gatherings of Solzhenitsyn's admirers in [Russia]—and staged in the West" (p. 144). But perhaps it is best to end with two quotations to indicate the level of "discussion": "Pil'nyak was not always appreciated by the critics, who—as everyone knows—function in the Soviet Union on a somewhat official basis" (p. 48); "the roots of dissidence go far back, are deep and wondrous, and simply cannot be stamped out" (p. 166).

One could go on, but to deal with all the errors and omissions, the trivializations, misunderstandings, and unattributed borrowings would require a review as long as the book. I doubt whether it deserves even this much.

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ISAAC BABEL: RUSSIAN MASTER OF THE SHORT STORY. By James E. Falen. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1974. xiii, 270 pp. \$9.75. Surely nothing comes harder to the critic than the celebration of an irreproachable work of art. The lapses and failures that commonly afflict the artist are easy,