

On the other hand, some of the chapters devoted to Sinyavsky's early works retain significant interest, even though Andrei Sinyavsky/Abram Tertz (he continues to publish under both names) has been very active in the very short period since his arrival in Western Europe—suffice it to mention his brilliant recent essays in *Kontinent*, and his iconoclastic books on Gogol and Pushkin. Thus, for example, many astute observations are found in the chapter comparing Sinyavsky's *Thoughts Unaware* and Vasilii Rozanov's collections of aphorisms with their random observations on religion, sex, death, and sundry matters. Similarly revealing is Mr. Lourie's comparison of Sinyavsky's literary criticism, published in official Soviet journals and legally printed books, with his celebrated "underground" essay on socialist realism. Mr. Lourie demonstrates how the same author was capable of producing perfectly conventional praise of Gorky—indeed, the kind of praise that is quite obligatory in Soviet criticism—and then would "satirize the follies and excesses of Gorky" (p. 176). It is a pity that Mr. Lourie did not extend his parallel with Rozanov to include this striking similarity as well.

One disappointing feature of *Letters to the Future* is Mr. Lourie's reluctance to portray Sinyavsky against the background of contemporary Soviet writing with which he is engaged in an impassioned polemic. He fails, for example, to discern the importance of the appearance of two living Soviet authors (the neo-Stalinist poet Sofronov and his counterpart in prose Kochetov) as characters in *The Makepeace Experiment (Liubimov)*—and under their true names at that! The omission is particularly noticeable since Sinyavsky published a devastating critique of Sofronov's verse in *Novyi mir*. On the other hand, Mr. Lourie finds reasons, which escape this reviewer, to cite such modern Polish poets as Adam Ważyk and Aleksander Wat, and to refer to Witold Gombrowicz, Stanisław Lec, and even such nineteenth-century Polish authors as Mickiewicz and Orzeszkowa.

Letters to the Future is marred by the usual number of misprints and typos, particularly in transliterations from the Russian. Some of these are only misleading (for example, *liubki* [luvs?] instead of *lubki*, old Russia's original comic strips). Others smack of ideological sabotage. For example, on page 190, an early Bolshevik poem promises a Palace of World Freedom with Karl Marx's shining tower, but in Mr. Lourie's book "tower" (*bashnia*) becomes "fable" (*basnia*). As any character from Sinyavsky/Tertz's fiction would attest, a thorough investigation is called for, comrades.

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THE SILVER AGE OF RUSSIAN CULTURE: AN ANTHOLOGY. Edited by Carl Proffer and Ellendea Proffer. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1975. xv, 454 pp. Illus. \$15.00, cloth. \$5.00, paper.

Carl Proffer and Ellendea Proffer, who established Ardis Press in 1971, can take pride in their activities as publishers. They have published many books of Russian poetry, fiction, and theater, and twelve book length issues of *Russian Literature Triquarterly*. The Proffer-edited anthology under review, however, is not on the same level as some other publications of Ardis Press. The collection attempts to reveal the achievements of the Silver Age (1894–1917), or, as stated in the preface, "the Russian contribution to world literature during the old regime's last cultural renaissance." Unfortunately, the anthology fails to provide an adequate picture of the period.

The present volume contains four sections: "Criticism," "Poetry," "Prose," and "Articles." An appendix with the Russian texts of Blok's "The Twelve," Akhmatova's "Poem without a Hero," and several verses by Mandelstam is also provided. Poetry is represented by male poets, with the exception of Akhmatova whose works, however, are cited too generously as compared to those of Andrei Belyi, Briusov, Vladimir Soloviev, Viacheslav Ivanov, Innokentyi Annenskii, and Nikolai Gumilev. The poems of Zinaida Hippus, a major representative of the Silver Age and an original practitioner of verse, are not presented, even though on page 367 she is referred to as a "recognized poet," and on page 400 a statement indicates the "weight" of her name in *The World of Art*. The poetry of Cherubina de Gabriak and Adelaide Gertsyk, to mention only a few among other excellent "innovators" in Russian versification, is also omitted. There is no explanation for the absence of Fedor Sologub's verse. The "Prose" section includes several curious selections, which are poorly translated by Samuel Corian, who apparently does not understand idiomatic Russian. On page 317, for example, the Russian "Na utro ne iz vsiakogo doma poshli . . ." is translated "In the morning people from every house failed to go . . .," or on page 318, "Dariushka uzh ne v pervyi raz gadala" is translated "Daryushka could not guess on the first day," and so forth. Even the English rendering seems somewhat awkward.

The selection of articles by Russian poets—including one by the late V. M. Zhirmunskii—is commendable, although their translation is uneven. Moreover, one can question the value of translating articles which often demand firsthand familiarity with the Russian texts under discussion.

The best two items in the anthology are twenty-one excellent translations of Akhmatova's poems by Walter Arndt, instructive articles written by Denis Mickiewicz ("Apollo" and "Modernist Poetics"), and John E. Bowlt's essay ("The World of Art"). Several remarkable portraits of Russian poets, as well as various sketches and drawings by Evreinov, Benois, Somov, Vrubel, and other Russian artists, add merit to the volume. Little useful purpose seems to be served, however, by illuminating the Silver Age of Russian culture with a drawing by Marquis von Bayros. The quality of the anthology is further marred by abundant typographical errors.

Despite these flaws, the volume is noteworthy for its portrayal of the *Zeitgeist*, artistic pungency, and emotional intensity of the period.

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THE NAKED YEAR. By *Boris Pilnyak*. Translated with an afterword by *Alexander R. Tulloch*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1975. 204 pp. \$3.95, paper.

A new translation of Pil'niak's *Golyi god* has long been needed; for all its fluency and vigor, Alec Brown's 1928 rendition is too expensive (photoreprint by AMS Press, 1971), frequently inaccurate, and unabashedly bowdlerized because of the "plainspokenness" of the original. Unfortunately, this handsome, high-quality, reasonably priced volume does not fully answer our need. Tulloch replaces Brown's occasional looseness with a meticulous attention to the Russian original that frequently constitutes a flaw in itself. One encounters, for example, a pervasive tendency toward word-for-word translation that often preserves virtually intact the Russian syntax—for example, on page 39, "Noch'iu ot poloev i zavodei poidut tumany" becomes "By night up from the water-meadows and creeks mists will