

ten years ago. Still more disturbing is that Bojko's emphasis on the avant-garde artists leads him to ignore the work of other figures who, though they chose to proceed in a conservative style, nevertheless had a widespread influence on Soviet art. The assertion that the works produced by the avant-garde or "leftist" artists (Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Klutis, and others) constituted "basically a plebeian art-form" does not recognize how truly elitist this art was. Finally, Bojko totally avoids the knotty problem of explaining the demise of the avant-garde by the late twenties. To be sure, he declares that he had "no exceedingly ambitious goals," since his "principal aim was to introduce some semblance of order into existing research." But even these modest objectives are not achieved in this disappointing effort.

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INTRODUCTION TO POLISH VERSIFICATION. By *Mieczysław Giergielewicz*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970. x, 209 pp. \$10.00.

The book proceeds by topics: presyllabic and syllabic verse, syllabic-accentual verse, lines, accentual verse, "free verse," rhyming, stanzas, and supplementary devices. There is an English-Polish vocabulary, a selected bibliography, a name index, and a subject index. Within the confines of each topic, the exposition follows an occasionally disorganized historical chronology. And, on the whole, the book is badly written.

Only on rare occasions does the author date the poems which he cites, and even more rarely does he give a reference to the edition from which a poem is taken. Sometimes he doesn't even name the poem or work his excerpt comes from. He also has a most annoying habit of informing us that some poet is an accomplished manipulator of a certain poetic device or is a practitioner of a certain poetic genre—only to give us an illustrative example from some other poet. Of course, at times it would be difficult to select an appropriate illustrative example from, say, a genre like poetic drama; but the author often appears to have selected his examples merely because they were ready to hand. In order, therefore, to follow the exposition with a minimum of confusion, one would have to have a pretty fair knowledge of the history of Polish poetry. But then one would also know something of the rudiments of Polish versification and wouldn't have a very great need for this book.

There are also a number of strange statements. On page 28 we are told that Słowacki "even in his early poems indulged in outbursts blending the elements of rhythmic texture"—as if it took "outbursts" to accomplish *that*. On page 62 the author informs us that Mickiewicz, in part 2 of *Forefathers' Eve*, "fixed in the collective memory of his nation the typical rhythmic combination of lines of 4 and 3 accents." Maybe he did, but I would be inclined to doubt it. On pages 113–14 we are offered a fairly incredible definition: "Basically, rhyme is the term indicating the identity of the stressed vowel and all consecutive sounds of words and lines."

The profession could well use a reliable introduction to Polish versification, but I doubt whether this book fills the gap.

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