

The second part, "Some Émigré Poetry," contains specimens of the poems of Nikolai Morshen, Anatolii Steiger, Iurii Odarchenko, and Igor Chinnov. Translation of poetry, of course, is and will always remain an insoluble problem. What *can* be done, *is* done throughout this volume. The translations by Paul Schmidt and Richard Wilbur seem to be the most successful. Most interesting and revealing are Nabokov's translations of Khodasevich (1941).

The third part, "Selections of Émigré Prose," contains excerpts—which deal mainly with Bunin—from the "Grasse Diary" by Galina Kuznetsova; a typical short story entitled "Time" by Nadezhda Teffi, with an introductory note by Edythe C. Haber (properly stressing the sad side of this "humorist"); and an excerpt from V. S. Ianovskii's novel *American Experience*. Three additional items are included in the same section: (1) an excerpt from the recent novel by Alla Ktorova, *The Face of Firebird: Scraps of an Unfinished Anti-Novel*, with a fine introduction by Olga Hughes, (2) "My Encounters With Chekhov," the not-too-exciting reminiscences of the painter and writer Konstantin Korovin, and (3) the brilliant article, "Mozart: Theme and Variations," by Vladimir Markov. First published in *Novyi zhurnal* (vol. 44) in 1956 in honor of the two-hundredth anniversary of Mozart's birth, it deserved this exhumation long ago: now it lives and will live.

The prose translations are correct (a quality, which certainly does not apply to all translations from Russian), and in most cases they are artistically done. The commentaries are concise and reliable. One can only hope that this substantial volume gets the publicity it so highly deserves.

VSEVOLOD SETCHKAREV
Harvard University

SOVIET RUSSIAN LITERATURE SINCE STALIN. By *Deming Brown*. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1978. vi, 394 pp. \$24.95.

This excellent survey of recent Soviet Russian literature is organized not chronologically, as a history, but in an eclectic fashion—by genres, topics, and individual writers. There are four chapters on poets (the oldest generation, the first Soviet generation, the war generation, and the younger generation) and three chapters on prose, which are divided according to theme (the rise of short fiction, the youth movement, and the village writers). In addition, two chapters deal with special concerns (the past and the present), two separate chapters treat Solzhenitsyn and Siniaevsky, and one chapter is allotted to underground literature. Within these divisions, Deming Brown's discussions are sober, judicious, imaginative, and incisive. He maintains a fair balance between thematic and formal aspects of literature, with a major portion necessarily going to biographical sketches and plot summaries.

Soviet Russian Literature since Stalin is an important book, and it fills a void: Struve's histories do not reach into the contemporary period, and the 1977 edition of Slonim's history gives far less space to the post-Stalin period.

Most users of the book will probably be those who want to look up individual authors or works. From now on, no one will teach, study, or write about a post-1953 work without first looking up what Deming Brown has to say about it. It is a pity, however, that a work of such tremendous reference interest lacks a bibliography or bibliographical footnotes for primary works (it does give them for critical articles and books), and that the index is limited almost exclusively to authors' names (works are not listed). The years of publication of stories and poems are given in the text, but the names of the journals in which they appeared are not.

Few readers will probably read this book from cover to cover, yet it is by no means exclusively a reference work. Here and there, after illuminating and excellent

accounts of dozens of authors and works are presented one after another, we suddenly run into a paragraph or page of what are really essays—introductory, summarizing, analytical—about special topics. One wishes they had been printed in a different typeface, or that they could have been marked by subheadings, so that one could go through the book just picking out these “opinion” sections. They include fascinating and original little surprises—for example, a delightful miniature essay on “happy endings” in Soviet literature (p. 309), style and colloquial language in Soviet short stories (pp. 184–87), “suppressed rage” as a dominant theme (p. 182), the nomadic period of Soviet poets with a proclivity to long journeys (p. 108), or an excursus on how *skaz* muffled or disguised the voice of the author in prose of the 1920s (p. 150).

Since the book covers hundreds of works and authors, it would be unfair to quarrel with the relative amounts of space allotted to various works or to object to the omission of individual books or topics—one’s own favorite dark horses or sleepers. This reviewer, for example, missed any reference to Kaverin’s important *Pered zerkalom* (*In Front of the Mirror*), or a sufficient account of rehabilitations—the delayed impact of posthumously published works (Slonim has a whole section headed “Posthumous Revivals”)—or a fuller discussion of Trifonov’s *House on the Embankment* and of the late Bitov. However, Deming Brown is excellent on innumerable authors; let me name only four—Iurii Kazakov, I. Grekova, Kushner, and Voznesensky. Throughout, we feel we are not reading entries in a dry survey, but rather, the personal, direct reactions of a prudent and sensitive scholar to hundreds of recent Soviet works.

Deming Brown’s general view of Soviet literature since Stalin is that “socialist realism . . . has largely been replaced by critical realism” (p. 19), and he concludes: “When the idea of writing this book was conceived in the mid-1960’s, Soviet literature appeared to be on the upswing. A new, bold generation of poets and prose writers, reinforced by an older generation recently released from decades of frustration, was in the process of introducing a variety of fresh topics, ideas, and styles into a literature that had been virtually moribund. The present book, then, was planned as the chronicle and analysis of a literary renaissance. The events and developments of the ensuing decade, however, have been so disappointing that the process can now be best described as a renaissance in reverse. What began as a great burst of liberated creative energy subsided into something fragmented, depressed, and lifeless” (p. 373).

GEORGE GIBIAN
Cornell University

POEMS. By *Nikolai Kliuev*. Translated by *John Glad*. Published by the Iowa Translation Series, International Writing Program, University of Iowa. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1977. xx, 96 pp. \$2.95, paper.

Translating the poetry of Nikolai Kliuev is such a thankless job that one can only admire John Glad for having undertaken this difficult task. Kliuev mixes folklore, dialect, Slavonicisms, neologisms, obscenities, slang, and historical references into a messy vinaigrette of pseudo-Slavophile philosophy, mystical religiosity, and fairy tales spiced with sentimental longing for village Rus'. His style so far has not won the so-called “peasant poet” many enthusiastic admirers either in Russia or abroad, where he is mostly known for his stormy relationship with Esenin, and in particular for his role as Esenin’s mentor and possible lover.

Glad’s introduction with its description of *Khlysty* rites and Kliuev’s emotional histrionics titillates the reader’s imagination but fails to provide an overview of his poetry or even list his major collections. Such empty rhetorical questions on the fate