

tributions by V. V. Vinogradov, A. V. Isačenko, Nils Åke Nilsson, and others; two articles on Croatian documents in Hungarian archives; Dietrich Gerhardt's sparkling study of the interjection *ej, ej, ej*; Margarete Woltner's equally attractive study of dog names in Russian literature; Dmitrij Tschizewskij (Ukrainian astronomical onomastics); A. Rosetti (Rumanian neuter category); and two papers on Slovenia, one of which is unfortunately missing from the table of contents: Rudolf Kolarič, "Bemerkungen zur Frage der Kontinuität der Kultur in Slowenien," pp. 233–40.

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PUSHKIN: A COMPARATIVE COMMENTARY. By *John Bayley*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1971. vii, 369 pp. \$13.50.

It is a pleasure to see a book with an accurate title; this is indeed a *comparative* study of Pushkin. The author has read widely in Western literatures, knows particularly well his Byron and other European poets who were Pushkin's predecessors and contemporaries, and offers analogues to Pushkin's works whenever possible.

There are surprisingly few one-volume books about Pushkin; Mirsky's and Blagoy's spring to mind first of all. It is deplorable that nothing yet exists which would be comparable to the various Western "handbooks" or "guides" to various poets—with elucidations, glosses, and critical analyses of individual works. Bayley's book is not exactly such a guidebook either. What he does is comment on most of Pushkin's works (the lyrics are somewhat slighted), using mixed chronological and genre divisions of the subject. One wonders what readers he had in mind. There is no question about one audience: those who are seriously interested in Pushkin—students taking a course about him, amateur readers and lovers of Pushkin, and especially those whose vocation or avocation is the study of Pushkin—will all want to read Bayley's comments when they approach a particular work by the poet. However, the general reader—starved for help and illumination—may continue to turn to Mirsky. Bayley's book is a little too impenetrable. Its virtues are its handicaps. There are so many references and allusions to Western works that one loses the thread of his argument. In other words, the study lacks focus and emphasis. There is no clearly discernible thread of argument. The details obscure the outline. The central importance of Pushkin's works sometimes vanishes in the swarms of references to Schiller, Kotzebue, Mérimée—facts, dates, characters.

It is difficult to read the book from cover to cover; rather one hunts down discussions of individual works. When one asks oneself after finishing the book what one has learned about Pushkin, there is no one big thing, but one has learned a lot of little points. We must try not to quarrel with Professor Bayley's sometimes idiosyncratic choice of things to discuss (for example in his pages about *Eugene Onegin*) and his avoidance of the central and most important issues, but rather be grateful to the author for his plethora of information and detail.

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