

and the new information he offers is of immeasurable value. Although he gives us a great deal of data with little or no interpretation of it, his handling of complex materials demands professional respect, and his research (215 informative notes to buttress 95 pages of text) is an estimable scholarly contribution. Less thoroughly researched is P. R. Zaborov's "Zhermena de Stal' i russkaia literatura pervoi treti XIX veka," but even here we have a significant contribution to knowledge.

In the second collection, Pulkhritudova's article, "Romanticheskoe i prosvetitel'skoe v dekabristskoi literature 20-kh godov XIX veka," is a successful attempt to loosen V. G. Bazanov's too rigid definition of Decembrist Romanticism as preponderantly Enlightenment in character. She understands, I think, that a literary period accounts naturally for the survival of elements of previous periods, and is correct when she states that "the 'Enlightenment preponderance' in the Decembrist writers' world outlook and creativity does not remove them from Romanticism" (p. 48). She demonstrates this through a close examination of three Civic Decembrists—Ryleev, Küchelbecker, and Bestuzhev-Marlinsky—and she concludes convincingly that their creativity, including their orientation to the Enlightenment, "was an organic and necessary part of the general Romantic movement of their time" (p. 72). I. E. Usok's "Filosofskaia poeziia liubomudrov" is a welcome appreciation of the neglected "Schellingists" in Russian Romantic poetry, but the article suffers from a serious shortcoming. The author considers Schelling's philosophy to be the very basis of Russian Romantic metaphysical poetry (pp. 108–11), but gives no indication of ever having read Schelling. (Nor, so far as I am aware, has any other Soviet literary scholar in recent times.) A. N. Nikoliukin's article, "K tipologii romanticheskoi povesti," is a study of reality and fantasy in the Russian and American Romantic prose tale. The article is quite unusual in that the author chose these two largely unrelated Romantic literatures to demonstrate that "certain properties of the Romantic prose tale are not specifically national . . ." (p. 260).

The growth of Soviet scholarship in Romanticism is, of course, a healthy development; but, with few exceptions, these and other Soviet scholars seem unaware of Western scholarship in their subject, or even of the well-known debate over Romanticism conducted many years ago in Europe and America. Romanticism as a unity versus pluralistic romanticisms, the organic period concept of literary history, Romanticism versus romanticism, the Romantic period in relation to the Neoclassical period which preceded and the Realist period which followed—it is a bit unsettling to witness so many productive scholars debating and resolving questions which have already been debated elsewhere and resolved in uncannily similar ways. Perhaps some reading in English, French, German, and Italian could be recommended here.

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VLADIMIR IVANOVIČ DAL' AS A BELLETRIST. By *Joachim T. Baer*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 276. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972. 204 pp. 42 Dglds.

One can only express pleasure at the appearance of a monograph devoted to Vladimir Dal, an often-mentioned but seldom-studied secondary figure whose ca-

reer as belletrist covered the middle third of the nineteenth century. Joachim T. Baer's book attempts a comprehensive summary of Dal's writings from his first major work, *Russian Fairy Tales* (1832), to his essentially valedictory *New Scenes from Russian Life* (1868). Included are discussions of Dal's prose tales, physiological sketches, and stories of Russian life, the latter a body of about one hundred narratives appearing primarily during the 1850s. Baer gives an account of the major thematic and formal features of Dal's favored types of narrative, with special emphasis on his use of *skaz* and his efforts to forge a literary language from the speech of the common man. The author relates Dal's works to those of Weltman and Gogol, explores his contribution to the Natural School, and discusses his ties with Leskov, to mention only the most important representative of the so-called Younger School (*mladshaia shkola*). Throughout the study Dal's reception by critics is noted. Baer does a workmanlike job of characterizing Dal's fiction and establishing his place in the history of Russian literature.

Now to less positive features. This work has all the stigmata of a reworked dissertation (which it is), including gratuitous digressions, unresolved problems, unnecessary (and often misleading) references to other authors and works, inconsistencies, and occasional outright errors. Therefore, the uninformed reader is advised to proceed with caution. For example, complex questions of literary evolution are often treated in a manner so succinct as to be of questionable utility: "Romanticism reached Russia in the first decade of the nineteenth century (Zukovskij). Twenty years later one of the aspects of Romanticism, briefly called *narodnost'* in Russia, became a subject of extended debates and polemics" (p. 35).

Baer's gratuitous references to works of Dal's contemporaries are often quite misleading. In discussing Dal's biographical novels, he states that the two outstanding examples of the genre were *A Hero of Our Times* and *A Family Chronicle*, as if Lermontov's tense novel of psychological analysis were in any way structurally or thematically related to Aksakov's placid family history. Again gratuitously, Baer comments that Hermann of *The Queen of Spades* is connected with the theme of the "poor and insignificant hero fighting for a better station in life," whereas clearly Hermann is a would-be superman unmasked as a psychological impostor, even a caricature, of the Romantic adventurer. Some errors arise from insufficient acquaintance with Dal's predecessors: "It is not surprising that Dal' had followers with his style of folklore *skaz*. Lupanova discusses three of them: O. M. Somov, Nikolaj Polevoj and Ivan Vanenko" (p. 72). Baer provides no footnote here, but in fact Lupanova says that in certain respects Somov anticipated Dal. Somov used *skaz* in *Kikimora* (1830), and he was dead and buried (1833) one year after Dal's first major publication. A few statements are quite surprising, such as Baer's assertion that the appearance of *Russian Fairy Tales* brought Dal the friendship and admiration of "Russia's greatest writers (Puškin, Gogol', Jazykov, [now hear this!] Voejkov). . . ."

With a minimum of effort the potential utility of this study could have been widely expanded. For example, Baer cites titles only in transliteration, thus mystifying those who do not know Russian. Yet in deference to this same group he provides translations of all the critical commentaries quoted in Russian. When he quotes Dal's stories themselves, no translation appears. Admittedly the problems of rendering this author's "unliterary" Russian into an equivalent English are enormous, but if one translates what has been said about Dal, why not at least provide some examples of Dal's own writing?

The translations, especially in the early chapters, are wooden and glued to the syntax of the original. And nonreaders of Russian will be very perplexed by the many quotations about *narodnost'* (pp. 34 ff.), which is translated variously, even within the same paragraphs, as "national spirit," "indigenouness," "nativeness," and "nativism."

Every author is ultimately responsible for what is printed over his name, but at the same time a publisher has the duty to provide any scholarly work with a knowledgeable and conscientious editor. Anyone who has published knows how obvious errors, inconsistencies, redundancies, misspelled words, and stylistic collisions somehow hide in manuscripts and then jump out from the printed version to mock the author. It is too bad Mr. Baer didn't have editorial assistance. My point made, I still applaud his effort in affording us this study of a significant but neglected author.

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GLEB USPENSKY. By *Nikita I. Prutskov*. Twayne's World Authors Series, no. 190. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972. 174 pp.

The decision to bring out a book on Uspensky in this series is a courageous one. Although he was clearly a most important figure in nineteenth-century Russian literature and social thought, no one could say that he is widely read today, especially in the West. Yet his agonized investigations of the life of the post-Emanicipation peasantry tell us much not only about the Russian village in those years but also about the spiritual conflicts of the radical intelligentsia. At their best, his works are impressive literary monuments of a new type, the semidocumentary sketch, which has undergone a considerable revival recently in the Soviet Union. Even his ideas are not as dead as they might seem: they have certainly influenced Efim Dorosh, and perhaps some of the other "village prose" writers currently enjoying an extended vogue among the Soviet intelligentsia.

Nikita Prutskov does not take aboard much of this. His book, a translation and adaptation of one published by "Prosveshchenie" in 1971, is a succinct and well-documented study of Uspensky the writer and man, but it is unlikely to make many converts. He presents Uspensky as a man who wanted to be a populist, but was too honest and clear-sighted to become one. According to Prutskov, Uspensky, while still attached to the ideal of the commune, lucidly analyzed its shortcomings and showed that it was in any case collapsing in the face of the development of money relations and capitalism; he became a materialist in outlook, but retained certain "utopian" and "moralist" illusions which were characteristic of the democratic intelligentsia and which hindered him from developing into a thoroughgoing Marxist. Prutskov shows how he evolved the genre of the sketch in order to cope with the complexity of his perceptions and to be able to respond immediately to the reality around him and to bring it to his readers, many of whom he hoped would be ordinary working men or even peasants. This conception of Uspensky is a plausible one, and it has been presented before by Prutskov in three books and a series of articles.

Nevertheless, one wonders whether this is the best way to present Uspensky to the Western reader. More important, I do not find the conception itself wholly satisfying. A notable omission in Prutskov's account is Uspensky's interest in the