

the masses as the *subject* of revolution, whereas to the latter they are merely an *object* to be manipulated by the educated revolutionary leadership (p. 251). Similarly, Städtke gives a political meaning to the "canonization" of Pushkin, on the one hand, and the reckless attacks on the poet made by some revolutionary democrats, on the other (p. 227).

Belinskii is naturally the focus of Städtke's book. Predictably, Städtke sides with Soviet scholars—and Plekhanov, to some extent—in seeing Belinskii's later period as his "mature" one and recognizing the movement toward his positions in the mid-1840s as "progress." Nevertheless, the author sees the inconsistencies in Belinskii's theoretical positions, and his critical attitude is not limited to the early Belinskii. He points out that Belinskii's aesthetic system did not allow for conflicts which were not based in objective reality (pp. 199–201); consequently, Belinskii could not appreciate Dostoevsky's *The Double* and the works of some other major authors (Balzac, George Sand) which showed "romantic" tendencies. Städtke's description of Belinskii's criticism as "aesthetics in motion" (*eine sich bewegende Ästhetik*), in which aesthetic categories are subordinated to historical and literary change, is remarkably apt (p. 201).

Altogether, Städtke's book combines the better qualities of East European scholarship with the strengths of Western scholarship. Among other things, Städtke shows great competence in the comparative aspect of his subject by demonstrating full control not only of the German sources of Russian aesthetics, but of French sources as well.

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#### CHEKHOV'S ART OF WRITING: A COLLECTION OF CRITICAL ESSAYS.

Edited by *Paul Debreczeny* and *Thomas Eekman*. Foreword by *Ronald Hingley*.  
Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1977. iv, 199 pp. \$8.95, paper.

This anthology of articles on Chekhov is the result of a Chekhov symposium organized at the University of North Carolina in the spring of 1975. Although the collection contains articles by Thomas Winner and Karl Kramer, both of whom have published books on Chekhov, the emphasis is on work by a generation of scholars who are just now beginning to say their word on Chekhov, so far in the form of journal articles. The anthology thus serves as a useful introduction to a new generation's thinking about Chekhov.

The volume will not in any way greatly revise the understanding of Chekhov currently held in academic criticism. It does show a methodological bias, as the editors note, for the methods of Formalism and Structuralism. Most of the authors show themselves to be well-trained readers of text, and one can glean a number of interesting insights about specific stories.

Ordinarily, the most useful gesture a reviewer can make in reviewing an anthology is to list the contributors and indicate the nature of their efforts, so that the reader can select from the menu what pleases his taste. In this case, the editors of the volume have written an excellent review of its contents in their introduction. I would simply suggest that anyone interested in Chekhov should pick up a copy of the volume and read these three pages to find what he wants.

Several of the most interesting essays are those considering the question of Chekhov's relationship to Impressionism in painting. The notion that Chekhov is an "Impressionist" has been much bandied about, most notably, perhaps, in an article by Dmitri Čiževsky, "Chekhov in the Development of Russian Literature" (re-published in *Chekhov: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Robert L. Jackson). "Aspects of Impressionism in Chekhov's Prose" follows Čiževsky's outline to some

extent and illustrates a number of his points by reference to Chekhov's stories. The articles by Thomas Winner and Savely Senderovich try to give more rigorous definition to the analogy. Winner points to the highly syncretic nature of Chekhov's art, which provokes analogies not only with painting but with music and incorporates elements from myth and folk art. Winner links this syncretic tendency in choice of form and material to the characteristic structure of Chekhov's works with their seeming lack of action and reliance upon repetitions to achieve significant form. Savely Senderovich takes a hard look at the analogy to Impressionist painting and tries to put it on a sounder methodological footing. His observation that many of the qualities that define Impressionism in painting are peculiar to the act of painting as such serves to clear the air. He proposes a "morphological" approach to the analogy, by which aspects of Chekhov's writings can be compared to Impressionist painting on the grounds of similarity in deep function, rather than because of superficial resemblances such as use of color. Many of his comparisons are illuminating. I fear, however, that when he analogizes Chekhov's "overthrow of spiritual perspective" to the Impressionists' overthrow of geometrical perspective on the canvas, he stretches the method to its breaking point.

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EVGENIJ ZAMJATIN: HÄRETIKER IM NAMEN DES MENSCHEN. By Gabriele Leech-Anspach. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976. x, 119 pp. DM 58, paper.

This short survey (119 pages) covers a vast amount of ground. Divided into three tightly organized and concise sections, the text opens with a twenty-four-page biographical introduction, which emphasizes the politics of Zamiatin's literary career. Continuing with a section on theoretical writings (14 pages), the author summarizes Zamiatin's philosophical, stylistic, and aesthetic views. The work culminates in the major section, "Stories, Novels, and Plays" (70 pages), in which virtually all of Zamiatin's fiction and drama are analyzed, or at least characterized. That Gabriele Leech-Anspach treats eighty-four different works in only eighty-five pages suggests the intensity of this tour de force. Eleven pages of bibliography and indexes conclude the survey. A reference handbook on Zamiatin's life and work could hardly be more compact or complete.

A solid, reliable work which follows established scholarship and criticism, this survey serves the general German reader who may be familiar with *We*, but not with Zamiatin's other works. (Only a small portion of his writings has been translated into German, much of it by Ms. Leech-Anspach herself.) Although written for the generalist, the work yields few generalized insights. A survey can collect and summarize material, but without a controlling idea it cannot discriminate among accumulated data or distinguish crucial events and works from less important ones. The subtitle suggests such a generalization. Unfortunately, neither the image of Zamiatin as a heretic nor the suggestion that his heresy was humanitarian emerges clearly.

The biographical section pays more attention to the context and effects of Zamiatin's actions than to their origins or intent. The brief description of Zamiatin's theoretical writings relates them to ideas of Belyi, Blok, Remizov, Ivanov-Razumnik, Fedin, Gorky, Sholokhov, Leskov, L. Tolstoy, as well as to H. G. Wells, Anatole France, Nietzsche, Bergson, Sartre, Bernard Shaw, and Upton Sinclair. But again, context overwhelms content. Zamiatin certainly viewed the true artist as a heretic, but the reader is not shown how this concept applied to Zamiatin himself.

The analysis and summary of Zamiatin's prose and dramatic works proceed thematically and structurally, rather than chronologically, under the headings "Dark