

John Garrard, ed.

*THE RUSSIAN NOVEL FROM PUSHKIN TO PASTERNAK*

New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. Pp. 300

Reviewed by Vasa D. Mihailovich

The Russian novel, more than any other genre, has contributed to the fame that Russian literature enjoys abroad. Even though Russian poetry stands at the same level as the novel, it has fared less well, undoubtedly because of the difficulty of adequate translation. The short story, except for Chekhov, Babel, and a few others, has never reached the heights of the novel. It is no coincidence that some of the greatest among Russian writers—Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy, for example—are best known as novelists. It is not surprising, therefore, that scores of books and an untold number of essays have been written about the Russian novel in all languages. The book under review represents a collection of such essays, written for the most part by Slavists teaching at American universities.

The twelve essays, skilfully edited by John Garrard, are arranged organically and more or less chronologically. The introduction by the editor, instead of giving a threadbare rundown of the novelistic achievements, acquaints the reader with the beginning of genre and with the conditions leading to the phenomenal rise of the Russian novel in the nineteenth century. Further development is taken up by the essays that follow. They are grouped into four sections. In the first, Donald Fanger and Edward Wasiolek discuss the general features of the Russian novel, especially its significance not only for literature but for the society as a whole, as the conscience of the entire people, and as one of the main sources and conveyers of ideas and ideals. After these introductory and general discussions, Kahryn Feuer, Patricia Carden, and Robin Feuer Miller discuss in the next part, appropriately entitled "High Noon," the three giants of the Russian novel, Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky, respectively. While Feuer concentrates on *Fathers and Sons* and Carden on *War and Peace*, Robin Feuer Miller treats the aspect of terror, or the Gothic tradition in Dostoevsky's works. The third part, "Decline and Renewal," deals with the novels of the twentieth century: Bely's *Petersburg*, Pilnyak's novels, Fedin's *Cities and Years*, three postrevolutionary Utopian novels (A. Tolstoy's *Aelita*, Zamyatin's *We*, and Platonov's *Chevengur*), and Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*. The book concludes with two essays on criticism—"The Theory of the Novel in Russia in the 1930s: Lukács and Bakhtin" by Michel Aucouturier, and "The Nineteenth-Century Russian Novel in English and American Criticism" by Rene Wellek. The book is appended by a useful, though somewhat confusing, chronology of Russian novels and novelists and by recommended translations into English.

The book has many wholesome facets. Even though it does not pretend to be a historical survey of the Russian novel, it often makes historical references enabling the reader to orient himself. And although it avoids overly reliance on theory and non-literary connotations, it does not fail to include them where pertinent. One could argue, of course, why some other novels have not been discussed (Sholokhov's *The Quiet Don* comes to mind), but given the fact that the scope of the book was not to be all-inclusive, such omissions are understandable. What the book does offer is a dozen discerning, thought-provoking, and well-written essays that will be of immeasurable use to the student and the lover of Russian literature alike.

Atma Ram, ed.

*PERSPECTIVES ON R.K. NARAYAN*

Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1982.

Pp. xxxii + 222.

(Also issued by Vimal Prakashan Ltd.)

Reviewed by Uma Parameswaran

R.K. Narayan has long been the best known of Indian writers in English and has been the subject of more critical work than any of his compatriots. Professor Atma Ram's collection of

essays by a variety of critics is proof that still more perspectives on Narayan's works can be legitimately wrought.

There are twenty-one essays in this volume, including a preface by Warren French and an introduction by the editor. Twenty of these are new, and only one a reprint. Twelve deal with thematic analyses, that is, of themes that run through several of Narayan's stories and novels; nine essays deal with individual works. The bibliographical listing at the end of the book, updated to 1979, is very useful. It is to be noted that Narayan's *Old and New* appeared in 1981; *Old and New* is a collection of eighteen stories, about half of them new in that they have not appeared in book form.

Warren French, in the "Preface," places Narayan among other contemporary novelists and says Narayan, like Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Thornton Wilder, is a humanist; Narayan sees the fragmentation of society but creates an artistic order that transcends fragmented society.

Atma Ram's "Introduction" gives a biographical sketch of Narayan and then lists the themes in Narayan's work, most of which are developed at greater length by other contributors.

Since *The Guide* is one of Narayan's most complex novels, one might consider what this volume has contributed to scholarship on it. Harish Raizada's analysis of point of view in Narayan's novels is a systematic, albeit simplistic, exploration of Narayan's handling of this literary technique. The earlier novels are straightforward, Raizada argues, and therefore the first person or single point of view is effective. However, Raizada goes on, these novels would be even stronger if Narayan had not occasionally interrupted the narrative with neutral omniscience. *The Guide*, having more complex situations and characterization, needs another dimension and therefore Narayan chooses a dual point of view. In Raju's recounting of his passion and his career, there is first-person narrative so that "we see Raju as he wishes to be seen," (p. 84) while in the other sections we see him from the omniscient narrator's point of view.

Ram Dial's analysis of *The Guide* from the anima-animus aspect gives another facet of the novel. "Rosie finds her anima in the person of Raju" while Raju whose anima is first shaped by his mother and then roused by Rosie later finds himself "transformed through his interaction with the collective psyche into the living archetype of a Wise Man" (p. 150). This critic has made a good point but the importance of the above statement calls for a deeper analysis of the collective psyche, more focus on the villagers' attitudes and actions, than are covered in this essay.

Noticeable by its absence is any reference to K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar's signal contribution to Narayan scholarship. Iyengar in his *Indian Writing in English* (1962), wrongly dated as 1973 in the bibliography of this volume, and in his earlier volumes of 1943 and 1945, very succinctly and prophetically summarized the essential significance of Narayan's work within the context of Indo-English writing. He points out that the basic movement in Narayan's novels is from equilibrium to inequilibrium to restoration of equilibrium; H.M. Williams expands this idea in his essay, "Precarious Innocence," but makes no reference to Iyengar. Few critics seem to refer to these definitive volumes by Iyengar, the pioneer in Indo-English criticism.

There are numerous typographical errors but the content of the essays and the bibliographical lists make this volume a useful acquisition.

Hilary Simpson

*D.H. LAWRENCE AND FEMINISM*

DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1982.

Pp. 174

Reviewed by Jennifer Michaels

This study examines Lawrence's changing attitude to feminism. In her introduction, Simpson sketches some of the major developments in the feminist movement of the time. She