

The most valuable aspect of the book is the documents included in it. In descending order of importance they are: Gombrowicz's preface to his first published work, which he had removed before publication; his explanation of the mysterious anagram which replaced the preface (reconstructed it was to have read "This doesn't mean anything at all"); his marginal comments in a copy of the book, which reveal, among other things, his secret debt to Schopenhauer; excerpts from six reviews of this work unlisted in any bibliography; approximately twenty-five letters to Keipiński and the Skamander poet Stanisław Baliński; and forty-six photographs of Gombrowicz and his family, friends, and teachers.

In sum, Keipiński's memoir is rather marginal, despite the documents and biographical information it provides. It is ironic that this version of Gombrowicz has had two editions, totaling twenty thousand copies in three years, while the publication of Gombrowicz's collected works in Poland, promised four years ago but not yet published, is to be limited to two thousand copies—barely enough for libraries. Obviously, there is a demand for Gombrowicz in Poland, but when, and to what extent, his own writings will be made accessible to those who want to read them is still an open question.

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THE NEW POLISH POETRY: A BILINGUAL COLLECTION. Compiled and edited by *Milne Holton* and *Paul Vangelisti*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1978. xviii, 119 pp. \$7.95, cloth. \$4.50, paper.

This anthology of Polish poetry since 1956 is the result of a project undertaken by many individuals. It grew out of an English-language summer seminar held in 1976 at the University of Poznań. Fifteen Polish students of English philology and two American editors participated.

The editors' stated purpose is to provide English-speaking readers with a sequel to Czesław Miłosz's *Postwar Polish Poetry* (1965). They disavow claims to comprehensiveness and suggest that the anthology provides only a sampling of poems they admire. Considering this modest goal, the poets and the poems are generally well chosen. The anthology includes seventy-five poems by twenty-seven poets. One may question the wisdom of presenting so few poems by so many (for example, the brilliant and prolific poet of the "linguistic" school, Stanisław Barańczak, is represented by a single undistinguished poem). One may even disagree with the selection of atypical and inferior poems over better and equally translatable possibilities. Most of the poems, however, were selected intelligently: they are brief, reflect straightforward thoughts reinforced by repetitions and short lines with simple syntax.

Despite the above commendation, the potential merits of this volume have not been realized because of inept translations and careless editing. Flaws in this collection embrace the entire range of translators' pitfalls.

It is not surprising that the Polish translators encounter the traditional difficulty for Slavic speakers of English—that is, the correct usage of articles and verb tenses. Good editing could have removed such errors. Worse still, the translators do not always interpret the Polish text correctly, they have a shaky knowledge of English vocabulary and idiomatic usage, and they display gross cultural ignorance. They confuse "daily" with "everyday" (thus Nowak's "Psalm codzienny" is translated "An Everyday Psalm") and use "civility" for "civilization" (p. 87); the title of Szymborska's poem "Dwie małpy Breugla" is translated "Two Apes of Breughel" instead of "Two Monkeys of Breughel"; in Kornhauser's "Moja żona śpi, Iliczu" the first word in the Bolshevik slogan "zemia trudniashchimsia" is rendered as "earth" rather than "land," the metaphorical expression "kwadratowe okienka partii," meaning "chess-board," is mechanically rendered in the inapplicable sense of "chess game," and the

Polish "Leta" for the river "Lethe" is left unchanged in the English text. The translators see no difference between "zapach" (scent) and "węch" (sense of smell) and therefore render the line "Jak oddać zapach w poezji" (p. 52) as "How to present the sense of smell in poetry" rather than "How to convey scent in poetry."

The book has many typographical errors. A few that wreak havoc with the meaning include the last word of the line "a distant color swells" which should read "smells" (p. 16); the last word in "the ability to converse" should read "conserve" (p. 27); the word "moon" in the first line of "Summer" should be replaced by "noon" (p. 67).

Other deficiencies that should be mentioned are: literal translations of idioms which are meaningless in English, the dubious procedure of resorting to explanatory footnotes (see p. 97), and inept translation of metaphors, for example, "biała ryba ciała" (p. 95) or "the body's white fish" becomes the "realistic" phrase "the white fish's body," and in "from the burning airplane of your brain," the metaphoric "airplane" is, without apparent reason, prosaically translated as "surface."

Although some poems are free of glaring errors, the translators show a lack of linguistic sophistication and poetic sensitivity. Faring the worst are Wisława Szymborska, a great master of ellipsis and concision, and the fine poet of the younger generation, Ewa Lipska, who often constructs her poems around a single sustained metaphor. The skimpy biographical and critical notes are often inexact and misleading; however, space limitations preclude listing examples.

Those who subscribe to the philosophy that bad translations are better than no translations at all will find this anthology useful. With the inclusion of poems by Hillar, Iredyński, and Poświatowska, this collection introduces several previously untranslated poets and provides a glimpse into some of the themes of Polish poetry of the last twenty years. In defense of the Polish translators who probably have not spent a protracted length of time in English-speaking countries, it should be noted that they have selected the poems well and provided comprehensible first drafts which editors more familiar with Polish language, culture, and poetry could have turned into acceptable English versions.

Pittsburgh University Press deserves qualified praise for incurring the expense of an attractive bilingual edition.

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SERBIAN POETRY AND MILUTIN BOJIĆ. By *Mihailo Đorđević*. East European Monographs, 34. Boulder, Colo.: *East European Quarterly*, 1977. vi, 113 pp. Illus. Glossary. \$10.00. Distributed by Columbia University Press, New York.

Considering the deplorable scarcity of full-length monographs in English dealing with Serbian and other Yugoslav authors, Mihailo Đorđević's book on Milutin Bojić (1892-1917) is a welcome contribution to the field of Serbian studies in America. Its publication must be greeted with joy and with the hope that more works of this genre will follow. A five-chapter study on the life and work of Bojić (pp. 1-82) and twenty-six translations of his most representative lyric poems (pp. 83-96) constitute the major parts of this book. They are followed by an impressive bibliography (pp. 97-100) including over eighty entries on Bojić and a glossary (pp. 101-13) of one hundred forty-nine important names, titles, places, and events mentioned in the book, which was compiled by Jelisaveta Stanojevich-Allen. The glossary provides a wealth of useful information both for readers unfamiliar with the political and cultural scene in Serbia prior to World War I, and for students who lack a broader background in European literatures.