

manner in which several authors manipulate the traditional temporal relationship between *histoire/fabula* and *discours/siuzhet*. Narrative strategies of revelation or concealment are at the heart of the creation of suspense. Authors may employ analepsis—narration of events that preceded temporal point in time of the narration—or prolepsis—narration of events that are in advance of the temporal point in time of the narration—in order to (dis)advantage the reader's knowledge of events and heighten suspense.

Part 3, "Textual Games," focuses on the ways in which authors deliberately played with the conventions of detective fiction in order to explore narrative itself as a subject. Such authorial self-awareness and the resultant narrative play influence the reader's construction of meaning from the tale. Whitehead examines intertextuality—both in dialogue with canonical works of detective fiction, but also with the journalistic narrative structures of newspaper accounts of what would become fictionalized crimes—as a form of narrative self-reflexivity. This narrative self-awareness is also manifest in various forms of metatextuality in which the narrative reveals its fictional, constructed status. Whitehead sees these devices as similar to the strategies of temporal manipulation and the blending of generic narrative styles in the creation of a uniquely Russian style of detective fiction. Whitehead examines in some detail the metatextual device of casting the detective as reader—a convention adopted from Poe and the character of Dupin. Whitehead also discusses the detective character as the author creating a logocentric version of the "truth" within the narrative. Whitehead points out that while writing was an authoritarian act in late Imperial Russia, the use of narrative devices which reveal the unreliability of the narrator's authorship and draw attention to the act of writing itself creates a critical response in the reader which is counter to traditional narrative authority.

The Poetics of Early Russian Crime Fiction (2018) examines a previously understudied genre of Russian fiction. Whitehead clearly demonstrates that the genre, although often regarded as highly conventional, was one of great experimentation with narrative voice and structure. Rather than focusing solely on the works of well-known authors, Whitehead's study demonstrates that lesser-known, popular authors were frequently the source of generic innovations that might be amplified and made famous in the works of more renowned authors. Whitehead has written an important study for those looking to understand the specifics of the development of crime fiction in Russia and has done so in such a way that transcend the features of a specific genre.

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Val Vinokur. *Relative Genitive: Poems with Translations from Osip Mandelstam & Vladimir Mayakovsky*. New York: Poets and Traitors, 2018. 104pp. \$18.00 (paper).

Relative Genitive by Val Vinokur is the second of four poetry collections published to date by *Poets and Traitors*, a new publishing house that focuses on poetry and translation. The publisher is Vinokur's own brainchild, a publishing experiment dedicated to single-authored volumes by poets who consider translation an essential part of their creative practice. Vinokur's book elegantly embodies this approach, showcasing his original and translated poetry as unified by a single voice that renders the poems in the English language. Yet the book is no haphazard collection of original and translated poetry, its unity forged as if from the outside by the singularity of the poet's voice. Instead, it is a carefully crafted study in reception and influence, exposing the power of tradition, the traps of temporal and authorial priority, and the originary gravity of one's inherited literary languages.

Conceived as a poetic hybrid, *Relative Genitive* raises exciting philological and philosophical questions about translation and its place in a poet's oeuvre. Most visibly, it does so at the level of

structuration. The book consists of thirty-eight original poems by Vinokur, seven translations of Vladimir Mayakovsky, and eighteen translations of Osip Mandelstam. Unlike the other books in the series that distinguish original poems from translations by placing them in separate sections, *Relative Genitive* intermingles them. For this idea, Vinokur credits guest editor Emily Skillings, a distinguished poet in her own right. The effect of mixing things up is dizzying, and occasionally disorienting. Now we read a whisper of a poem by Mandelstam, reflecting on the relative closeness of death at different stages of a human being's life, and straight away we plunge into Mayakovsky's street-noise-filled verse about a falling horse. The poets' surnames appear in the bottom corner of each page in lower-case letters, visually suppressed by the weight of the poems themselves. Yet despite the structural intermingling, the poems are not rendered unrecognizable by the poet-translator's chosen tonality, nor do they get fused into a continuous monologue. Each part within this self-consciously orchestrated chorus remains unmistakable, doing its own work. Mayakovsky's and Mandelstam's poetic voices ring clear and distinct, and Vinokur's translations are admirably attentive to stylistic features and punctuation.

The academic merits of the book are twofold. First and foremost, the book contains valuable new translations of some of the most difficult yet influential Russian poems from the first half of the twentieth century. Vinokur's own selections help illustrate the difference between Mandelstam and Mayakovsky not only as individual poets, each endowed with a unique voice, but also between the poetics of Acmeism and Futurism, respectively, of which these poets were the most visible representatives. Beyond its suitability to serve as a supplementary study guide to Russian poetry, the volume raises important questions about poetry and translation, and invites reflections on new fruitful approaches to literary canon. For Vinokur, in addition to being a Guggenheim-winning translator and a poet in his own right, is also an accomplished scholar, author of numerous articles as well as a monograph (*The Trace of Judaism: Dostoevsky, Babel, Mandelstam, Levinas* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2009)). Attuned to the ways in which poetry is usually read in college classrooms, he seems to have purposefully resisted the usual approach of engaging with these poets as the safely dead and permanently at rest. First trying his hand at translating Mandelstam's verses in Joseph Brodsky's seminar as an undergraduate, Vinokur approaches translation with a somewhat different set of goals than a traditional philologist-translator would. The latter ultimately aims at accuracy, setting loyalty to the original as a guiding ideal. Vinokur does not dispense with this goal, but adds to it another—that of vitality. The poets must speak, and they must speak English, making use of its inner logic and grammar, its specific tonality and sound.

This brings us back to what Vinokur's translations can do, and what type of conversation the book itself could enter into with scholars and teachers in the field. For Vinokur's translations are not merely new translations. Were they simply a curious expansion of an extant set, it could be pointed out that all of these poems had been translated before, that many of them already exist in multiple iterations, and that some of them are already very good. What Vinokur does with the translations is new and curious, and merits its own discussion. The effect of intermingling them with his own poems is transformative, depriving the poem-artefacts of their sacred and untouchable status, taking them out of the literary museum where scholars are usually happy to examine them with their toolkit of choice. In this way, Vinokur may be seen as honoring one poet's desire to transcend temporal and bodily constraints with the sheer power of poetic voice, and another's vision of freeing poetry from "the sheds of human genius—palaces, galleries, salons, libraries, and theatres" and allowing it to be written on "the walls, fences, roofs, and streets of our cities and villages, on the backs of automobiles, carriages, streetcars, and on the clothes of all citizens." (This quote comes from "Decree No. 1 on the Democratization of Art" in Victor Terras, *Vladimir Mayakovsky* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), 11–12.)

"Everything is relative and related, genitive and generative," writes Vinokur in the concluding paragraph of his introduction (15). The book testifies to a poet's ability to adapt to different forms of life, to adopt new languages and cultures, thus exposing the relative nature of the poet's

own identity. Yet the poet does not emerge out of nowhere, he or she also belongs to someone or something, has roots, shares food, words. It is within this larger realm—in language—that the seemingly irreconcilable tension between liquid poetic identity and solid belonging comes to the fore. In order to speak, the poet accepts language as their own—as their native language. The vibrations of poetic speech caught in motion, on a page, in the form of poems and translations, describe language neither as an object of possession nor as an instrument of communication, but rather as an entity that anchors, feeds, and penetrates, holding us as individuals and tying us together into communities—with fragile yet deep roots.

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Ivo Andrić. *Omer Pasha Latas: Marshal to the Sultan*. New York: NYRB Classics, 2018. 304 pp., \$16.95 (paperback).

As the Yugoslav Wars raged in the 1990s, the perplexed often reached for travelogues and fiction to help them better understand what was then typically described as dormant ethnic hatreds, foreign to Westerners, which, having been repressed during the communist years, have now escalated into an armed conflict. In addition to Rebecca West's 1941 travelogue, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey Through Yugoslavia*, often invoked was Ivo Andrić's 1945 novel, *The Bridge on the Drina*. The perplexed would have been better advised to review their countries' aggressive neoliberal policies vis-à-vis Yugoslavia, enforced via economic blackmail by organizations like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which led Yugoslavia into economic austerity and eventually into a constitutional crisis and civil war. Such literary works, however, can help one better grasp the region's political entanglements (which are no more perplexing than those of Northern Ireland or Catalunya) by elucidating the repercussions of Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian imperialism in the Balkans, which had pitted future Yugoslavs against one another.

Had it been available in English translation at the time, Andrić's *Omer Pasha Latas* would have been particularly instructive. First published in 1975 (posthumously and unfinished), the novel spans a single year, 1850 to 1851, in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina during the regenerative Tanzimat era when the Ottoman Empire attempted to stave off a slow, but steady decline. Ironically, having cut off the Balkans from Europe, the Empire was modernizing and consolidating via constitutional reforms under Europe's pressure and watchful eye. The dehumanizing imperial machinery was particularly eager to create the impression of greater economic and religious freedom for the many conquered Christian ethnic groups, and so discourage any outside support for rebellions and emancipation movements inspired by Europe's romantic nationalisms.

Consisting of vignettes typical of Andrić, *Omer Pasha Latas* focuses not only on its eponymous historical figure, the mean and melancholy seraskier of Serbian origin tasked with implementing reforms in the restive border backwater of the Empire, but also on the many equally tragic personalities who find themselves drawn into the orbit of this convert from Lika, Croatia, who has become one of Sultan's most trusted generals. More precisely, the novel focuses on the ripple effect caused by the loathed seraskier's presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina (one of those places tritely claimed to be the location where the East meets West) whose elites resist reforms, desperate to retain the privileges "owed" to them ever since their fathers and grandfathers converted to Islam.

The elites care little for the hardships of others or the decay that surrounds them: "People worked only as much as their hunger required of them or the authorities drove them. Nothing was being built, and every public building, when you looked closely, was either unfinished or had

begun to collapse for lack of repairs" (90). Yet, the seraskier's task needs doing and gets done through violence and intimidation. Andrić's novel is about deference, duty, and service. Everybody, including Omer Pasha, serves the Empire. They take one breath for themselves and the next for the imperial machinery careening towards its end, unaware it is about to be expunged by the modern times with which it wants to catch up. In this state of in-betweenness and ambiguity, the Empire's neurotic, anxious subjects are quick to lie, swindle, gossip, and scheme in order to secure privileges and survive: "Sarajevo is not a city of crime, at least not public and bloody; one could rather say that it is a city of hate, and hate easily finds new causes and confirmation to justify it everywhere" (220). Behind their masks hides bitter disappointment, unfulfilled desires, obsessions, and failed ambitions; heartbroken and disconsolate, some go mad, unable to maneuver further, unsure of who they are or what their place is in the social hierarchy.

The Bosnian elites, resentful of this Serb peasant who could execute them on a whim, privately dismiss him by declaring that "there is not a trace of the Turk in him" (25). Their assertion summarizes the novel's emphasis on the theme of duality and mimicry inherent in imperial subjects who aim to prosper under foreign rulers. When the exceptionally bright Mihajlo "Mićo" Latas crosses into Bosnia from Croatia, from Austria-Hungary into the Ottoman Empire, obsessed with becoming the great man he was meant to be, he exchanges one empire's backwater for another's. His rise to power begins when he gives up his identity and converts to Islam. Now his portrait hangs "in the heart of Vienna, and in it he is not dressed in the uniform of a Turkish Marshal but as an Austrian Field Marshal, with shining stars and a steel-blue sash across his chest, with the Order of Maria Theresa round his neck" (117). The seraskier is duality embodied. He even crosses himself in front of a wary Serb leader from Herzegovina in order to secure his cooperation. Haunted by the memories of his childhood, Omer Pasha struggles to accept his "curse," which is that he remains who he was as a boy.

Andrić knew well the precariousness of duality of identity. Born a Croat in Travnik, once the capital of the Eyalet of Bosnia, as a mature writer Andrić gravitated towards the Serbian language and culture, integrating into the Serbian literary corpus. For this move, perceived to be cynically strategic, designed for career advancement, he was disowned by Croatia's literary establishment while Bosnia's still ruling Muslim elites remain deeply resentful of Andrić's portrayals of Bosnia under the Ottomans.

An often-told anecdote has it that when Andrić was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1961, an idle Sarajevo ruffian, upon seeing the bespectacled Andrić stroll past him, jeered, "Four eyes, how's the writing going?!" The timid writer smiled and replied, "Well. It's going well." Likely true, the anecdote sums up much of the mentality that seeped into Andrić's characters, especially the cutthroat provincialism resentful of another's success. Indeed, this superb translation by Celia Hawkesworth of Ivo Andrić's final work is recommended for those who want to understand.

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Ivo Andrić. *Omer Pasha Latas: Marshal to the Sultan*. Translated by Celia Hawkesworth. Introduction by William T. Vollman. New York Review Books, 2018. ISBN 9781681372525. 304 pages. \$16.95 (paper).

This beautiful novel by Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić recounts the tale of Omer Pasha Latas (1806–1871), who served as Ottoman governor of Bosnia from 1850 to 1852. Born as Mićo Latas to a Serbian family in Austro-Hungary, he had then "fled to Bosnia [...], converted to Islam and then, through his knowledge, skill and personal merit, risen to the highest military position in the [Ottoman] empire" (4). During the Hungarian Revolution of 1848, the iron hand