

Earthly Signs Moscow Diaries 1917 1922 New York R

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2022-01-06

HULL GRANT

Compulsory Games New York Review of Books

“Riveting . . . There is a wealth of new information here that adds considerable texture and nuance to his story and helps to set Russia apart from previous works.”—The Wall Street Journal An epic new account of the conflict that reshaped Eastern Europe and set the stage for the rest of the twentieth century. Between 1917 and 1921 a devastating struggle took place in Russia following the collapse of the Tsarist empire. The doomed White alliance of moderate socialists and reactionary monarchists stood little chance against Trotsky’s Red Army and the single-minded Communist dictatorship under Lenin. In the savage civil war that followed, terror begat terror, which in turn led to ever greater cruelty with man’s inhumanity to man, woman and child. The struggle became a world war by proxy as Churchill deployed weaponry and troops from the British empire, while contingents from the United States, France, Italy, Japan, Poland, and Czechoslovakia played rival parts. Using the most up to date scholarship and archival research, Antony Beevor assembles the complete picture in a gripping narrative that conveys the conflict through the eyes of everyone from the worker on the streets of Petrograd to the cavalry officer on the battlefield and the doctor in an improvised hospital.

The Strudlhof Steps NYU Press

A classic, controversial book exploring German culture and identity by the author of *Death in Venice* and *The Magic Mountain*, now back in print. When the Great War broke out in August 1914, Thomas Mann, like so many people on both sides of the conflict, was exhilarated. Finally, the era of decadence that he had

anatomized in *Death in Venice* had come to an end; finally, there was a cause worth fighting and even dying for, or, at least when it came to Mann himself, writing about. Mann immediately picked up his pen to compose a paean to the German cause. Soon after, his elder brother and lifelong rival, the novelist Heinrich Mann, responded with a no less determined denunciation. Thomas took it as an unforgivable stab in the back. The bitter dispute between the brothers would swell into the strange, tortured, brilliant, sometimes perverse literary performance that is *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, a book that Mann worked on and added to throughout the war and that bears an intimate relation to his postwar masterpiece *The Magic Mountain*. Wild and ungainly though Mann’s reflections can be, they nonetheless constitute, as Mark Lilla demonstrates in a new introduction, a key meditation on the freedom of the artist and the distance between literature and politics. The NYRB Classics edition includes two additional essays by Mann: “Thoughts in Wartime” (1914), translated by Mark Lilla and Cosima Mattner; and “On the German Republic” (1922), translated by Lawrence Rainey.

Käsebier Takes Berlin New York Review of Books

A fierce indictment of colonialism, Max Havelaar is a masterpiece of Dutch literature based on the author’s own experience as an administrator in the Dutch East Indies in the 1850s. A brilliantly inventive fiction that is also a work of burning political outrage, Max Havelaar tells the story of a renegade Dutch colonial administrator’s ultimately unavailing struggle to end the exploitation of the Indonesian peasantry. Havelaar’s impassioned exposé is framed by the fatuous reflections of an Amsterdam coffee trader, Drystubble, into whose hands it has fallen. Thus a tale of the jungles and villages of Indonesia is interknit with one of the houses and warehouses of bourgeois Amsterdam where the tidy profits from faraway brutality not only accrue but are counted

as a sign of God’s grace. Multatuli (meaning “I have suffered greatly”) was the pen name of Eduard Douwes Dekker, and his novel caused a political storm when it came out in Holland. Max Havelaar, however, is as notable for its art as it is for its politics. Layering not only different stories but different ways of writing—including plays, poems, lists, letters, and a wild accumulation of notes—to furious, hilarious, and disconcerting effect, this masterpiece of Dutch literature confronts the fixities of power with the protean and subversive energy of the imagination.

Tarka the Otter New York Review of Books

An existential detective story by one of France’s most popular modern writers, set in a mid-nineteenth century mountain village, available in English for the first time *A King Alone* is set in a remote Alpine village that is cut off from the world by rugged mountains and by long months when the ground is covered with snow and the heavens with cloud. One such winter, villagers begin mysteriously to disappear. Soon the village is paralyzed by terror, which gives way to relief and eager anticipation when the outsider Langlois arrives to investigate. What he discovers, however, will leave no one reassured, and his reappearance in the village a few years later, now assigned the task of guarding it from wolves, awakens those troubling memories. A man of few words, a regal manner, and military efficiency, Langlois baffles and fascinates the villagers, whose different responses to him shape Jean Giono’s increasingly charged narrative. This novel about a tiny community at the dangerous edge of things and a man of law who is a man alone could be described as a metaphysical Western. It unfolds with the uncanny inevitability and disturbing intensity of a dream.

Three Summers New York Review of Books

A tender story about three sisters coming of age in Greece over the course of three summers, now available after being out of

print for over twenty years. *Three Summers* is the story of three sisters growing up in the countryside near Athens before the Second World War. Living in a big old house surrounded by a beautiful garden are Maria, the oldest sister, as sexually bold as she is eager to settle down and have a family of her own; beautiful but distant Infanta; and dreamy and rebellious Katerina, through whose eyes the story is mostly observed. Over three summers, the girls share and keep secrets, fall in and out of love, try to figure out their parents and other members of the tribe of adults, take note of the weird ways of friends and neighbors, worry about and wonder who they are. Karen Van Dyck's translation captures all the light and warmth of this modern Greek classic.

Omer Pasha Latas Penguin

"A postmodern literary masterpiece." -The Times Literary Supplement Two hundred years after civilization ended in an event known as the Blast, Benedikt isn't one to complain. He's got a job—transcribing old books and presenting them as the words of the great new leader, Fyodor Kuzmich, Glorybe—and though he doesn't enjoy the privileged status of a Murza, at least he's not a serf or a half-human four-legged Degenerator harnessed to a troika. He has a house, too, with enough mice to cook up a tasty meal, and he's happily free of mutations: no extra fingers, no gills, no cockscombs sprouting from his eyelids. And he's managed—at least so far—to steer clear of the ever-vigilant Saniturations, who track down anyone who manifests the slightest sign of Freethinking, and the legendary screeching Slynx that waits in the wilderness beyond. Tatyana Tolstaya's *The Slynx* reimagines dystopian fantasy as a wild, horripilating amusement park ride. Poised between Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, *The Slynx* is a brilliantly inventive and shimmeringly ambiguous work of art: an account of a degraded world that is full of echoes of the sublime literature of Russia's past; a grinning portrait of human inhumanity; a tribute to art in both its sovereignty and its helplessness; a vision of the past as the future in which the future is now.

Stalingrad Bloodaxe Books Limited

A poignant collection of short pieces about the author's hometown, St. Petersburg, Russia, and the siege of Leningrad that combines memoir, history, and fiction. *Living Pictures* refers to the parlor game of tableaux vivants, in which people dress up in

costume to bring scenes from history back to life. It's a game about survival, in a sense, and what it means to be a survivor is the question that Polina Barskova explores in the scintillating literary amalgam of *Living Pictures*. Barskova, one of the most admired and controversial figures in a new generation of Russian writers, first made her name as a poet; she is also known as a scholar of the catastrophic siege of Leningrad in World War II. In *Living Pictures*, Barskova writes with caustic humor and wild invention about traumas past and present, historical and autobiographical, exploring how we cope with experiences that defy comprehension. She writes about her relationships with her adoptive father and her birth father; about sex, wanted and unwanted; about the death of a lover; about Turner and Picasso; and, in the final piece, she mines the historical record in a chamber drama about two lovers sheltering in the Hermitage Museum during the siege of Leningrad who slowly, operatically, hopelessly, stage their own deaths. *Living Pictures* introduces a startlingly daring and original new voice from world literature.

Images and Shadows New York Review of Books

A beguiling fable about a summer holiday in the Swedish countryside that transforms into a provocative parable about oppression and the evil awaiting Europe as the Nazis came to power. *Castle Gripsholm*, the best and most beloved work by Kurt Tucholsky, is a short novel about an enchanted summer holiday. It begins with an assignment: Tucholsky's publisher wants him to write something light and funny, otherwise about whatever Tucholsky wants. A deal is struck and the story is off: about Peter, a writer; his girlfriend, known as the Princess; and a summer vacation far from the hurly-burly of Berlin. Peter and the Princess have rented a small house attached to a historic castle in Sweden, and they have five weeks of long days and white nights at their disposal; five weeks for swimming and walking and sex and talking and visits with Peter's buddy Karlchen and with Billie, the Princess's best friend. It is perfect, until they meet a weeping girl fleeing the cruel headmistress of a home for children. The vacationers decide they must free the girl and send her back to her mother in Switzerland, which brings about an encounter with authority that casts a worrying shadow over their radiant summer idyll. Soon they must return to Germany. What kind of fairy tale are they living in?

Motley Stones Macmillan

An extraordinary memoir by Iris Origo, who chronicled political life in *A Chill in the Air* and *War in Val d'Orcia*, and now turns inward to describe her own family, the work of writing, and the transience of memory. *Images and Shadows*, Iris Origo's autobiographical account of her early life, is as perceptive and humane and beautifully written as her celebrated memoir *War in Val d'Orcia*. Origo's father came from an old and moneyed American family, her mother was the daughter of an Irish peer, and Iris grew up in the most privileged of circumstances. Her father died of tuberculosis when he was only thirty, and her mother moved to Fiesole, Italy, where she and Iris developed a close friendship with the great connoisseur and art historian Bernard Berenson. Later, Origo and her Italian husband transformed a desolate and deforested Tuscan property into a flourishing estate, and it was there that she discovered her true calling as a writer. In *Images and Shadows*, Origo paints portraits of her shy, loving father and her headstrong mother, and describes beloved places, the books that formed her sensibility, and how she grew up and made her way in the world. She reflects on the pleasures and challenges of writing and evokes the persistence and fragility of memory. *Images and Shadows* is an autobiography that is as thoughtful as it is profoundly touching.

Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man New York Review of Books

A moving, darkly funny road trip novel about World War II, returning to one's birthplace, and coming to terms with tragedy. *West Germany, 1988*, just before the fall of the Berlin Wall: Jonathan Fabrizius, a middle-aged erstwhile journalist, has a comfortable existence in Hamburg, bankrolled by his furniture-manufacturing uncle. He lives with his girlfriend Ulla in a grand, decrepit prewar house that just by chance escaped annihilation by the Allied bombers. One day Jonathan receives a package in the mail from the Santubara Company, a luxury car company, commissioning him to travel in their newest V8 model through the People's Republic of Poland and to write about the route for a car rally. Little does the company know that their choice location is Jonathan's birthplace, for Jonathan is a war orphan from former East Prussia, whose mother breathed her last fleeing the Russians and whose father, a Nazi soldier, was killed on the Baltic coast. At first Jonathan has no interest in the job, or in dredging up ancient family history, but as his relationship with Ulla starts to wane, the idea of a return to his birthplace, and the money to be made from

the gig, becomes more appealing. What follows is a darkly comic road trip, a queasy misadventure of West German tourists in Communist Poland, and a reckoning that is by turns subtle, satiric, and genuine. *Marrow and Bone* is an uncomfortably funny and revelatory odyssey by one of the most talented and nuanced writers of postwar Germany.

The Slynx New York Review of Books

A wealthy family tries--and fails--to seal themselves off from the chaos of post-World War II life surrounding them in this stunning novel by one of Germany's most important post-war writers. In East Prussia, January 1945, the German forces are in retreat and the Red Army is approaching. The von Globig family's manor house, the Georgenhof, is falling into disrepair. Auntie runs the estate as best she can since Eberhard von Globig, a special officer in the German army, went to war, leaving behind his beautiful but vague wife, Katharina, and her bookish twelve-year-old son, Peter. As the road fills with Germans fleeing the occupied territories, the Georgenhof begins to receive strange visitors--a Nazi violinist, a dissident painter, a Baltic baron, even a Jewish refugee. Yet in the main, life continues as banal, wondrous, and complicit as ever for the family, until their caution, their hedged bets, and their denial are answered by the wholly expected events they haven't allowed themselves to imagine. *All for Nothing*, published in 2006, was the last novel by Walter Kempowski, one of postwar Germany's most acclaimed and popular writers.

Castle Gripsholm Vintage

Marina Tsvetaeva (1892-1941) was one of the four great Russian poets of the 20th century, along with Akhmatova, Mandelstam and Pasternak. She also wrote outstanding prose. Endowed with 'phenomenally heightened linguistic sensitivity' (Joseph Brodsky), Tsvetaeva was primarily concerned with the nature of poetic creation and what it means to be a poet. Among the most exciting of all explorations of this theme are the essays 'Art in the Light of Conscience', her spirited defence of poetry; 'The Poet on the Critic', which earned her the enmity of many; and 'The Poet and Time', the key to understanding her work. Her richly diverse essays provide incomparable insights into poetry, the poetic process, and what it means to be a poet. This book includes, among many fascinating topics, a celebration of the poetry of Pasternak ('Downpour of Light') and reflections on the lives and works of other Russian poets, such as Mandelstam and

Mayakovsky, as well as a magnificent study of Zhukovsky's translation of Goethe's 'Erlking'. Even during periods of extreme personal hardship, her work retained its sense of elated energy and humour, and Angela Livingstone's translations bring the English-speaking reader as close as possible to Tsvetaeva's inimitable voice. First published in English in 1992, "Art in the Light of Conscience" includes an introduction by the translator, textual notes and a glossary, as well as revised translations of 12 poems by Tsvetaeva on poets and poetry.

Art in the Light of Conscience New York Review of Books

Marina Cvetaeva's biography and her relationship with visual arts, drama, folklore, music, translation, and the work of other poets, as well as her continuing influence on subsequent Russian poetry.

A Companion to Marina Cvetaeva New York Review of Books

A classic of nature writing beloved by Rachel Carson, Ted Hughes, and Thomas Hardy. *Tarka the Otter* is one of the defining masterpieces of modern nature writing, a model for books like J. A. Baker's *The Peregrine* that seek to transcend the boundaries between the human and the animal worlds. Henry Williamson's tale of the struggle for survival draws on his years of observing otters in the wild. It is also thought to reflect his traumatic experiences in the First World War.

Political Action New York Review of Books

This companion comprises 28 essays by international scholars offering an analytical overview of the development of Russian history from the earliest Slavs through to the present day. Includes essays by both prominent and emerging scholars from Russia, Great Britain, the US, and Canada Analyzes the entire sweep of Russian history from debates over how to identify the earliest Slavs, through the Yeltsin Era, and future prospects for post-Soviet Russia Offers an extensive review of the medieval period, religion, culture, and the experiences of ordinary people Offers a balanced review of both traditional and cutting-edge topics, demonstrating the range and dynamism of the field

Marrow and Bone New York Review of Books

In English for the first time, a panoramic satire about the star-making machine, set in celebrity-obsessed Weimar Berlin. In Berlin, 1930, the name Käsebier is on everyone's lips. A literal combination of the German words for "cheese" and "beer," it's an unglamorous name for an unglamorous man—a small-time crooner who performs nightly on a shabby stage for laborers,

secretaries, and shopkeepers. Until the press shows up. In the blink of an eye, this everyman is made a star: a star who can sing songs for a troubled time. Margot Weissmann, the arts patron, hosts champagne breakfasts for Käsebier; Muschler the banker builds a theater in his honor; Willi Frächter, a parvenu writer, makes a mint off Käsebier-themed business ventures and books. All the while, the journalists who catapulted Käsebier to fame watch the monstrous media machine churn in amazement—and are aghast at the demons they have unleashed. In *Käsebier Takes Berlin*, the journalist Gabriele Tergit wrote a searing satire of the excesses and follies of the Weimar Republic. Chronicling a country on the brink of fascism and a press on the edge of collapse, Tergit's novel caused a sensation when it was published in 1931. As witty as Kurt Tucholsky and as trenchant as Karl Kraus, Tergit portrays a world too entranced by fireworks to notice its smoldering edges.

Earthly Signs New York Review of Books

The first English translation of an essential Austrian novel about life in early-twentieth-century Vienna, as seen through a wide and varied cast of characters. *The Strudlhof Steps* is an unsurpassed portrait of Vienna in the early twentieth century, a vast novel crowded with characters ranging from an elegant, alcoholic Prussian aristocrat to an innocent ingenue to "respectable" shopkeepers and tireless sexual adventurers, bohemians, grifters, and honest working-class folk. The greatest character in the book, however, is Vienna, which Heimito von Doderer renders as distinctly as James Joyce does Dublin or Alfred Döblin does Berlin. Interweaving two time periods, 1908 to 1911 and 1923 to 1925, the novel takes the monumental eponymous outdoor double staircase as a governing metaphor for its characters' intersecting and diverging fates. *The Strudlhof Steps* is an experimental tour de force with the suspense and surprise of a soap opera. Here Doderer illuminates the darkness of passing years with the dazzling extravagance that is uniquely his.

Letters: Summer 1926 New York Review of Books

The first complete English translation of the nineteenth-century Austrian innovator's evocative, elemental cycle of novellas. For Kafka he was "my fat brother"; Thomas Mann called him "one of the most peculiar, enigmatic, secretly audacious and strangely gripping storytellers in world literature." Often misunderstood as an idyllic poet of "beetles and buttercups," the nineteenth-

century Austrian writer Adalbert Stifter can now be seen as a radical experimenter with narrative and a forerunner of nature writing's darker currents. One of his best-known works, the novella cycle *Motley Stones* now appears in its first complete English translation, a rendition that respects the bracing strangeness of the original. In six thematically linked novellas, including the beloved classic "Rock Crystal," human dramas play out amid the natural cycles of the Alps or the urban rhythms of Vienna—environments so keenly observed that they emerge as the tales' most indomitable protagonists. Stifter's human characters are equally haunting—children braving perils, eccentrics and loners harboring enigmatic torments. "We seek to glimpse the gentle law that guides the human race," Stifter famously wrote. What he glimpsed, more often than not, was the abyss that lies behind the idyll. The tension between his humane sensitivity and his dark visions is what lends his writing its heartbreaking power.

Outside the "Comfort Zone" BRILL

Now in English for the first time, the prequel to Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate*, the War and Peace of the twentieth Century. In April 1942, Hitler and Mussolini meet in Salzburg where they agree on a renewed assault on the Soviet Union. Launched in the summer, the campaign soon picks up speed, as the routed Red Army is driven back to the industrial center of Stalingrad on the banks of the Volga. In the rubble of the bombed-out city, Soviet forces dig in for a last stand. The story told in Vasily Grossman's *Stalingrad* unfolds across the length and breadth of Russia and

Europe, and its characters include mothers and daughters, husbands and brothers, generals, nurses, political activists, steelworkers, and peasants, along with Hitler and other historical figures. At the heart of the novel is the Shaposhnikov family. Even as the Germans advance, the matriarch, Alexandra Vladimirovna, refuses to leave Stalingrad. Far from the front, her eldest daughter, Ludmila, is unhappily married to the Jewish physicist Viktor Shtrum. Viktor's research may be of crucial military importance, but he is distracted by thoughts of his mother in the Ukraine, lost behind German lines. In *Stalingrad*, published here for the first time in English translation, and in its celebrated sequel, *Life and Fate*, Grossman writes with extraordinary power and deep compassion about the disasters of war and the ruthlessness of totalitarianism, without, however, losing sight of the little things that are the daily currency of human existence or of humanity's inextinguishable, saving attachment to nature and life. Grossman's two-volume masterpiece can now be seen as one of the supreme accomplishments of twentieth-century literature, tender and fearless, intimate and epic.

My Friends New York Review of Books

The weather in Moscow is good, there's no cholera, there's also no lesbian love...Brrr! Remembering those persons of whom you write me makes me nauseous as if I'd eaten a rotten sardine. Moscow doesn't have them--and that's marvellous." —Anton Chekhov, writing to his publisher in 1895 Chekhov's barbed comment suggests the climate in which Sophia Parnok was writing, and is an added testament to the strength and

confidence with which she pursued both her personal and artistic life. Author of five volumes of poetry, and lover of Marina Tsvetaeva, Sophia Parnok was the only openly lesbian voice in Russian poetry during the Silver Age of Russian letters. Despite her unique contribution to modern Russian lyricism however, Parnok's life and work have essentially been forgotten. Parnok was not a political activist, and she had no engagement with the feminism vogueish in young Russian intellectual circles. From a young age, however, she deplored all forms of male posturing and condescension and felt alienated from what she called patriarchal virtues. Parnok's approach to her sexuality was equally forthright. Accepting lesbianism as her natural disposition, Parnok acknowledged her relationships with women, both sexual and non-sexual, to be the centre of her creative existence. Diana Burgin's extensively researched life of Parnok is deliberately woven around the poet's own account, visible in her writings. The book is divided into seven chapters, which reflect seven natural divisions in Parnok's life. This lends Burgin's work a particular poetic resonance, owing to its structural affinity with one of Parnok's last and greatest poetic achievements, the cycle of love lyrics *Ursa Major*. Dedicated to her last lover, Parnok refers to this cycle as a seven-star of verses, after the seven stars that make up the constellation. Parnok's poems, translated here for the first time in English, added to a wealth of biographical material, make this book a fascinating and lyrical account of an important Russian poet. Burgin's work is essential reading for students of Russian literature, lesbian history and women's studies.