



Grigorii Mark. Glagolandiya. St Petersburg. Fond Russkoĭ Poëzii. 2003 (released 2004). 148 pages. ISBN 5-89108-048-6

ON THE DUST JACKET of Grigorii Mark's *Glagolandiya* (Verbolandiya), one observes that a reader of Mark's poetry "feels like he is hanged by the ribs" (*Literary Gazeta*). The U.S. magazine *Panorama* adds that Mark lives in "unconscious expectation of a miracle." And *Znamya* writes that Mark's poetry "searches for a miracle" and at the same time "has a fear of a miracle."

In his first poem (untitled), Mark proclaims that in his *Glagolandiya*, no one possesses evil, since there is no place for it among the VERBS. However, his verses do not attain the beauty of the Russian poetry of the last three centuries. One acquainted with Russian poetry does not find in his verses the Parnassian musical quality, the symbolist excellence, and the lyrical and metaphorical expressions of Russia's legendary poets. Whereas Mark's poetry depicts suffering (akin to A. N. Nekrasov), it lacks Nekrasov's passion, intensity, and strong optimism as well as Nekrasov's lyricism, musicality, euphony, and mellifluousness. Metaphors in Mark's verses limp along, as in "chess bishops' soles stomping the facts." In "Hollywood Apocalypse," Mark writes: "Into the night, a driverless hearse is creeping, and the wheels, instead of spokes, have eyes."

In general, Mark's poems are full of sick people, as in the poem "Memories of a Great Kommunalka": "A patient has an iv in his yellow arm and his temples feel little jolts." In his poem "Romance," we see "the street lantern yellow from rain, whitish flesh and the kiss on mangy lip." In his description of an open book, "letters are teeming like cockroaches." In an untitled poem on page 112, he bemoans the fact that he didn't have any childhood and that the yard-man calls him *zhidyonok* (littlejewboy), and he laments that these memories haunt him forever.

In the section entitled "Poems One Must See," Mark emulates ego-futurists and such cubo-futurists as Khlebnikov, Kruchonikh, Burlyuk, and Zdanevich. Mark's poem "Living Prayerful on the Thread of Soft Signs" resembles a teardrop. His poem "Set" (Net) is very close to Zdanevich's "Dunke for Rent."

In general, when confronted by Mark's poetry, the reader is enveloped in a gloomy, pessimistic, merciless atmosphere, one without pity. His *Leidendarstellung* is written hurriedly, as if the poet were trying to escape his angst-ridden soul.

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