technological developments and interrelationships. By putting these individually interesting and illuminating essays between two covers, Reitblat recreates a simulation of the nineteenth-century connectedness for the twenty-first century reader.

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Khudozhnik miróvogo rastsveta: Pavel Filonov, 2nd ed. By Gleb Yu. Ershov. St. Petersburg: Izdatel′stvo Evropeiskogo Universiteta v St. Petersburg, 2020. 293 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Illustrations. $47.00, paper.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2022.211

Divided into twelve chapters, *Khudozhnik miróvogo rastsveta: Pavel Filonov* is the second edition of Gleb Ershov's fundamental study of the artist and writer Pavel Nikolaevich Filonov (1883–1941) which first appeared in 2015. Initially a specialist in the experimental poetry of Velimir Khlebnikov and with a doctoral dissertation on Filonov, Ershov comes to his subject from a synthetic perspective, referencing sources in critical and creative literature, philosophical treatises, and political tracts so as to provide an illuminating account of a painter who, in spite of publications and exhibitions, remains baffling and enigmatic. Indeed, although the subject of several monographs and numerous articles, Filonov remains the "odd man out" in the course of the Russian avant-garde, with the result that, in Ershov's words, such an outsider status renders him "inconvenient and marginal" (28) within the context of twentieth century European art. Ershov makes copious reference to those scholars, Russian and western, such as John E. Bowlt, Evgenii Kovtun, Jan Kriz, Nicoletta Misler, Irina Pronina, Dmitrii Sarab′ianov, Elena Selizarova, and others, who, after a long period of Soviet disregard, pioneered the study of Filonov's *oeuvre* in the 1960s onwards.

Ershow pursues his narrative via detailed discussions of Filonov's images of renunciation, color theory, pedagogical activities, and other issues, touching on the problems of style, messianism, ideological imposition, and the literary sources of what Filonov called "analytical art," "painterly formula," and "madeness" (*sdelannost′*). Ershov reinforces his arguments with close-reading analyses of individual paintings such as the *Feast of the Kings* as well as of Filonov's single poema *Propeven′ o prorosli mirovoi*, thereby offering a rich appreciation of Filonov, not only as painter, but also as writer and spiritual leader. In this respect, Ershov's commentary on Filonov's three pilgrimages to the Holy Land, on his religious symbols and icon of St. Catherine, and on his manifest debt to the mediaeval traditions of Russian culture is especially rewarding. In turn, Ershov emphasizes the curious position that Filonov holds within Russian Modernism: if colleagues such as Kazimir Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin often rejected academic convention in search of the new and radical, Filonov remained loyal to the classical canon, convinced that rules were first to be observed and then broken, a procedure reflected not only in his love-hate relationship with the St. Petersburg/Leningrad Academy of Arts, but also in his evident debt to the masters of the Renaissance such as Leonardo Da

Vinci, Albrecht Dürer, and Matthias Grünewald—prompting Ershow to give substantial space to the discussion of Filonov's graphic work. Ershov also helps us to understand the constancy of Filonov's theory and practice through the revelation of motifs which dominate the artist's *oeuvre*, whether pre- or post-Revolutionary, such as the cultivation of the solitary figure (*Vanquisher of the City*) or of the twosome (*Man and Woman*) or of creative methods such as the experimentation with *zaum'*. Ershov also tries to define Filonov's idiosyncratic method by investigating the influence of the Russian *lubok* and the icon (as in the peculiar rendering of architecture) as well as Filonov's parallel interest in biology, genetics, and engineering, an amalgam that informed the artist's application of notions such as "world flowering" and "atomic structure" to his painting and drawing. True, these particular disciplines still do not help us fully understand the "graphems, letters, and symbols" in Filonov's later works—perhaps the weakest segment of Ershov's account.

Also wanting is Ershov's discussion of Filonov's philosophical canons, because, although the artist was obviously well read and studious, it is dangerous to conclude that Filonov was indebted, for example, to Henri Bergson or Arthur Schopenhauer, when documentary evidence to this effect is completely missing. On the other hand, Ershov's collocation of Filonov within Soviet criticism of the 1920s and 30s, with ready references to Vera Anikieva, Osip Beskin, Ieremiia Ioffe, Sergei Isakov, and Filonov's uneasy position vis-à-vis communism, the Soviet regime of Vladimir Lenin and Iosif Stalin is especially useful and enlightening. On the other hand, the final section of the book, devoted to the "totalitarian" explications of Filonov, man and artist, by contemporary critics Aleksandr Rappoport and Boris Groys, is rather redundant, if not disconcerting, and perhaps should have been relegated to a separate investigation. Even so, such minor blemishes do not detract from the value of this brave and forthright attempt to study and reassess one of the foremost heroes of Russian Modernism.

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Word Play: Experimental Poetry and Soviet Children's Literature. By Ainsley Morse. Evanston, Il: Northwestern University Press, 2021. xiv, 251 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. $39.95, paper.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2022.212

This ambitious book grew out of a 2016 dissertation entitled *Detki v kletke: Experimental Poetry and Soviet Children's Literature*. It is a pity that the original title could not be retained, for the image it evokes of poets whose unpublishable work for adults consigned them to the cage of writing for children is more apt than the "Word Play" that replaced it. Word play, as the reader learns, is just one of the "[c]hildlike forms, themes, tropes and speakers" (14) at the center of Ainsley Morse's inquiry.

Morse uses the term "childlike aesthetic" to refer to two separate strands that often tug in different directions: childlike formal elements on the one hand and a "childlike lyric speaker" (8) on the other. Childlike formal