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| Vaginov, Konstantin Konstantinovich Wagenheim [ВАГИНОВ, КОНСТАНТИН КОНСТАНТИНОВИЧ ВАГЕНГЕЙМ] (1899-1934) |
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| Konstantinovich Wagenheim Vaginov was a Russian poet and novelist affiliated at different points with a number of literary groups in Petrograd/Leningrad. While originally born in St. Petersburg, he spent most of his life in Petrograd, which occupies a central position in his writings. He is best known for his four novels in which he ironically depicts the demise of Russia’s pre-revolutionary Silver Age in the Soviet Union of the late 1920s and early 1930s.  Born on 16 April 1899 in St. Petersburg, he died in Leningrad on 26 April 1934. Vaginov grew up in the family of a high ranking police official of German (and possibly Jewish) background. The family Russified their name after the start of the First World War. Vaginov attended the Law Faculty of Petrograd University from where he was called upon to join the Red Army in 1919. Upon returning to his home city, he was active in several literary circles, including Acmeist Nikolai Gumilev’s Poets’ Guild, which he joined in 1921. He co-founded the Islanders group, in whose collected volume his poetry was first published. In 1924, Vaginov met the critic and philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin. Members of Bakhtin’s intellectual circle later served as prototypes for Vaginov’s first novel *Goat Song* (1927). After 1927 Vaginov was affiliated with the avant-garde group Oberiu and, together with its key members, participated in Oberiu’s famous evening ‘Three Left Hours,’ which he parodied in his second novel *Works and Days of Svistonov* (1929)*.* In 1931, Vaginov was subjected to a vicious attack by members of the proletarian writers’ group RAPP. His last two prose works *Bambocciada* (1931) and *Harpagoniana*  (1933, unpublished in his lifetime) explore many of the same themes as his first two novels, but irony and the carnivalesque give way to the grotesque in both. Vaginov died of tuberculosis in 1934, after a long illness. |
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| Further reading:  (Brandist)  (Roberts)  (Shepherd) |