

Kinbote. He terms Nabokov's threat to resume writing only in Russian "a statement which was made, I judge, primarily in order to surprise or tease his closest confidant, who reacted to this sudden public pronouncement with amused lack of interest." There is also a streak of unabashed cuteness: we encounter "cousins by the dozens"; mention of "chintz" breeds the witticism "chintzy"; the name Yurick inevitably acquires the adjective "poor"; and I shall spare you what is done with the name "Cross."

Jane Grayson's book examines Nabokov's translations (and concomitant revisions) of his own works, with particular attention to resulting alterations of characterization and style. This examination aptly illustrates Nabokov's "developing preoccupation with pattern and artifice," as well as "the increased detachment and stylization of his later writing." Some of Grayson's details and observations (perhaps necessarily) seem to repeat those of other critics. For example, Carl Proffer's article "A new deck for Nabokov's Knaves" (*TriQuarterly*, Winter 1970) also discusses the following material from *King, Queen, Knave*: two allusions to Flaubert, two prophetic clothing associations, and five new sexual details in the English version (see Proffer, pp. 308, 304, 295, 302; Grayson, pp. 92, 93, 104, 112). Grayson repeatedly refers to Proffer's article but does not acknowledge, either generally or specifically, these and other similarities. Credit could also have been given to Dabney Stuart (p. 39) for the detection of three hidden prophecies in *Laughter in the Dark*, to Stephen Suagee (p. 67) for a glimpse of the future in *Despair*, and to Andrew Field (p. 117) for his discussion of the Vasilii Shishkov affair.

Grayson's book contains worthwhile discussions on the use of color in *Laughter in the Dark*, Nabokov's "false alarm device," and the "Tamara theme." A chapter called "Technique of Translation" (treating the problems of "cultural translatability" and of maintaining stylistic effects) and the conclusion are also quite valuable. As could be expected, the reader of this specialized, thorough study should know Russian.

WILLIAM W. ROWE

George Washington University

IZBRANNYE PROIZVEDENIIA. By *B. Pil'niak*. Compiled, with an introduction and commentary by *V. Novikov*. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1976. 702 pp. 1.41 rubles.

Following his arrest and probable death in 1937, Pil'niak's work was not published again in Russia until 1964, when a portion of the unpublished *Solianoï ambar* (approximately 70 pages of a 442-page manuscript) appeared in the journal *Moskva* (1964, no. 5, pp. 97-132). Only after a further lacuna of twelve years has an approximately 650-page selection of Pil'niak's works become "available" (in a pressrun of 30,000 copies, most of which were distributed through restricted shops for members of the Writers' Union and "Berezka" foreign-currency stores, or were exported to foreign countries). A twenty-six page introduction and twenty-five pages of notes and commentary to the texts accompany the selection of works.

The volume contains Pil'niak's best-known achievement, *Golyi god*, and a moderately good selection of short stories, including "Tselaiia zhizn'," "Smertel'noe manit," "Lesnaia dacha," "Speranza," "Rasplesnutoe vremia," and "Rozhdenie cheloveka," as well as the much less successful publicistic travel documentary about the United States, *O'Kei*, written in 1931. One regrets the absence of such works as "Tysiacha let," "Mat' machekha," "Staryi syr," *Mashiny i volki*, "Mat' syra-zemlia," "Rossiia v pölete," "Povest' nepogashennoi lunny," "Korni iaponskogo solntsa," "Ivan Moskva," "Krasnoe derevo," *Odinnadsat' glav iz klassicheskogo povestvovaniia*, and *Solianoï ambar*.

The selection, introduction, and commentary are the work of Vasilii Vasil'evich Novikov, professor of Russian literature at the Moscow Academy of Social Sciences of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. During the last decade at least three other compilers—M. Drozdov, M. Kuznetsov, and N. Bannikov—prepared Pil'niak's works for publication, but Novikov alone received official authorization to publish the long-forbidden author.

Novikov's introduction is uneven. It is weakened by reliance on critics of an anti-Pil'niak bias. His frequent use of emotionally charged labels and rhetoric ("Freudianism," "expressionism," "modernism," "naturalism," "decadent symbolism," "distortions of Soviet reality," "blatant contradictions") is evidently intended to obviate logical argument. Novikov too often depends on inaccurate secondary material, which results in errors that could have been easily avoided by consulting primary sources in the Lenin State Library. For example, he seriously distorts the controversies surrounding the publication of both "Povest' nepogashennoi lunny" and "Krasnoe derevo": in the latter case he upbraids Pil'niak for publishing abroad a work which had been rejected "at home" (although in the Soviet Union it had been accepted for publication by *Krasnaia nov'*). On the other hand, Novikov provides a reasonably good, though brief, description of *Golyi god* and Pil'niak's short stories. Nonetheless, a better introduction to Pil'niak is available to the Western reader in Evelyn Bristol's article, "Boris Pil'nyak" (*Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 41, no. 97 [June 1963]: 494–512).

In general, the comparatively objective notes and commentary following the texts are superior to the introduction. Here Novikov provides the publication history of each work and quotes the contemporary critics who reviewed Pil'niak's works when they appeared. For *O'Kei* Novikov supplies nine pages of commentary, beginning with Ivan Bunin and ending with Theodore Dreiser.

Most important, Pil'niak's texts themselves are accurate. *Golyi god* is printed according to the standard 1923 edition, and the stories are taken from collections of Pil'niak's works which appeared in 1930 and 1935. Contrary to Novikov's assertions, the stories from the 1935 volume are essentially the same as when first published, although occasional and minor stylistic changes were made.

GARY L. BROWNING
Brigham Young University

RUSSIAN MODERNISM: CULTURE AND THE AVANT-GARDE, 1900–1930.

Edited by *George Gibian* and *H. W. Tjalsma*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1976. 239 pp. Figures. Appendixes (Russian texts).

SNAKE TRAIN: POETRY AND PROSE. By *Velimir Khlebnikov*. Edited by

Gary Kern. Introduction by *Edward J. Brown*. Translated by *Gary Kern*, *Richard Sheldon*, *Edward J. Brown*, *Neil Cornwell*, and *Lily Feiler*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1976. 338 pp. \$4.95, paper.

The reader who turns to *Russian Modernism: Culture and the Avant-Garde, 1900–1930*, expecting a comprehensive study of the cultural history of that period, will be sorely disappointed. In fact, the volume is simply a collection of nine articles—seven on literature, and one each on art and architecture—based on papers delivered at a conference at Cornell University in 1971. This is a case where a slick packaging job belies the actual contents. A more legitimate approach to the material would have been to identify it as "proceedings" on the title page, rather than withholding that information until the fifth paragraph of the introduction. As George Gibian startlingly admits there, not even a consensus as to the meaning of modernism emerges from the