

Chorb has effected a 'misplaced reincarnation' of his wife or that the Kellers gain 'a new credibility' (p. 10).

The volume is bizarrely edited: it is usual that these collections have no index, which is regrettable; this one also lacks a bibliography, except for individual essays, and of the twelve, six have footnotes, four have endnotes, and Malin and Dillard even have no notes at all. There are enough typos that one begins to lose confidence; in Christian Moraru's interesting and subtle discussion of the blurring of art and reality in 'The Assistant Producer', in which he usefully refers to Erving Goffman's *Frame Analysis*, there is a growing subplot bred by typos: the substitution of the letter 'a' for the initial quotation mark ambiguously yields 'areal' several times when 'real' is meant. The culminating typo renders the cosmic comic, when Moraru quotes Nabokov's 'My real [sic] is running too fast' (cf. VN, *Stories*, 'My reel is running too fast', p. 545). And why chose the lugubrious 'Torpid Smoke' for the title when it could have been, say, 'Perfection'? The collection nonetheless contains illuminating readings of a variety of stories, connected by the theme of the shimmering line between art and reality. While it does not take a feminist to see that the narrator of 'The Vane Sisters' is vile (Linda Wagner-Martin), Irving Malin's deranged enactment of paranoid referential mania, Julian Connolly's survey of the increasing subtlety of the supernatural stories, Irving Strandberg's relating Nabokov's views of the importance of the inner world to the work of William James which he first read at age twelve, Brian Walter's reading 'The Forgotten Poet' in the light of Nabokov's own career in the United States, Nassim Balestrini's discussion of 'Music' and Tolstoi's 'Kreutzer Sonata', and Shrayner's well-researched and closely-argued article on 'Vasily Shishkov' taken from chapter two of his book add texture to our understanding of Nabokov's stories.

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Eliot Borenstein, *Men without Women: Masculinity and Revolution in Russian Fiction, 1917-1929* (Durham NC and London: Duke University Press, 2000), pp. xiii + 346. £14.50. ISBN 0 8223 2592 6.

In Borenstein's highly readable study the masculinized society depicted in 1920s fiction by Babel, Olesha, and Platonov is set in the context of contemporary radical utopian thinking which saw the imminent decline of the family and its replacement by new state and social structures. Drawing on theorists including Edward Said, John Remy and Lionel Tiger, Borenstein makes a convincing case for viewing the 1920s as a time when, in the imaginary if not in actuality, family ties were supplanted by ties of affiliation on the basis of shared ideology, and the idea of comradeship depended exclusively on male bonding. The author then addresses his own question: '...where does this leave women?...' (p. 46) by demonstrating the ways in which fictional women characters are repeatedly outnumbered by male characters, and either placed on a pedestal or, more frequently, humiliated in the pursuit of male collective solidarity.

In his analyses of *Red Cavalry*, *Envy*, and *Chevengur* Borenstein shows that the depiction of all-male communities in fact focuses on their failure. While Babel' and Olesha explore the predicament of men who are unable to gain admission to the community, Platonov portrays an attempt to create an all-male community which culminates in disaster. In the chapter preceding his discussion of *Chevengur*, Borenstein explores a number of essays written by Platonov in the early 1920s which set out his radical attack on sexuality and the family, and his forceful support for male comradeship.

This is a study which leads the reader through a coherent, well-presented series of arguments, making many illuminating observations on texts which are familiar to many. There are, however, occasional signs of insufficient attention to detail. The transliteration is inconsistent at times; perhaps the reader should be alerted by the error in the 'Note on Translations and Transliteration' (p. xiii). On the first page of the introduction Chekhov's three sisters are given the wrong surname, Prokhorov, instead of Prozorov (p. 1), while later it is implied that Dostoevskii wrote *Crime and Punishment* after, rather than before *The Idiot* (p. 49). This kind of error in no way detracts from the overall merit of the work, but suggests that copy-editing was done at high speed.

From this study it is clear that the topic of masculinity in Russian culture provides a rich vein for the researcher, and that Borenstein has made a fine contribution to the growing field of gender studies.

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Robert Russell, *Zamiatin's We* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2000), vi + 131 pp. £7.95. ISBN 1 85399 393 X.

The Bristol Classical Press series has added several important volumes to its list in the last few years; invidious as it may be to select, Andrew Kahn's study of *The Bronze Horseman* and Julian Graffy's wide-ranging work on *The Greatcoat* come to mind as particularly valuable. Robert Russell's book, treating one of the most extensively studied of all Russian twentieth-century novels, is another most welcome addition. There can hardly be a course on Russian twentieth-century literature that does not include Zamiatin's novel, from whatever perspective the syllabus is selected, and the established format of the Bristol Classical Press series is well attuned to delivering what students most need for their orientation. The first chapter of this study considers the history of the Russian text, surveys the existing critical tradition and discusses the three English translations. The chapter is conveniently subdivided into sections on such issues as 'Myth', 'Utopias/ Antiutopias', 'Modernist Aesthetics'. The short second chapter concentrates precisely upon the time of writing and reviews the novel's relation to the Civil War period; it is particularly useful in establishing the immediate context and explaining the topical references (especially the parody of Proletkul't poetry) which might otherwise be missed. The rest of the volume, divided into a further four chapters, takes the reader