desperate straining toward conformism, so disconcerting in the congenital rebel, which accounts, one suspects, for the palpable coolness toward Mayakovsky on the part of some latter-day Soviet iconoclasts.

Though, on the whole, Brown does a careful and lucid job of locating Mayakovsky among the literary-artistic crosscurrents of his era, some of his generalizations are more persuasive than others. I share his uneasiness over the excessively inclusive notion of "futurism" which informs Vladimir Markov's excellent study. But his own attempt at definition whereby "futurism" is subsumed under the primary concern with the medium, "color, line, form . . ." (p. 71), endemic in all artistic endeavor and especially pronounced in modern art, does not come significantly closer, I feel, to defining that "ism's" distinctive place within the modernist spectrum.

Yet abstractions such as these clearly are not the stuff Brown's *Mayakovsky* is made of. It is first and foremost a richly textured *story*—a story of a major poet and a remarkable human being, told with authority, grace, and acumen.

Victor Erlich
Yale University

EVGENIJ ZAMJATIN: AN INTERPRETIVE STUDY. By *Christopher Collins*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 282. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1973. 117 pp. 30 Dglds., paper.

Christopher Collins sensibly avoids giving us yet another survey of Zamiatin's life and work, which Alex Shane's competent and thorough study (1968) has rendered unnecessary. He instead sets out to deal with the "central literary puzzles in Zamjatin's major works."

Collins sheds light on a number of areas of Zamiatin's art, and the reader will find his book suggestive. He also obscures much, and here the theory that guides his work, or his use of it, is at fault. In his introduction Collins disclaims commitment to a theoretical principle, preferring rather a multiplicity of approaches. His most frequent approach, however, is to refer the work at hand to a context outside of it, which he finds in literary tradition, folk rituals, and, most often, in the psychoanalytical theories of Jung.

Every artist has at hand a storehouse of received values, ideas, images, forms, symbols, and myths. The interest of literary criticism lies in uncovering the ways in which the individual artist shapes his cultural inheritance into unique visions and forms. In Collins's book we are treated instead to manifestations—of Gogol, of Dostoevsky, of the *anima*, the "maternal monster," the "Great Man Within," the mandala. The author indulges in a new scholasticism, until recently very fashionable, which treats every tree not as a part of the forest but as the incarnation of some hidden mystery obscure even to the artist who painted it. Collins quotes Zamiatin from the essay "Back Stage" ("Zakulisy") to support his thesis that the "ultimate source of the characters and the structure" of *We* is the unconscious. He makes little of the latter part of Zamiatin's statement, which speaks of the "consciousness" that "carefully guides" the dreams of which art is made. It is the conscious Zamiatin—the Zamiatin who wrote at a particular moment in literary and human history and shaped what he had inherited, seen, thought, and felt into the forms of art—who is largely absent from Collins's study. Fortunately, Collins

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is a better critic than his theory permits him to be, and his many nice perceptions will prove helpful to those who continue to concern themselves with an important modern Russian writer.

MILTON EHRE
University of Chicago

"SUPERFLUOUS MEN" AND THE POST-STALIN "THAW": THE ALIENATED HERO IN SOVIET PROSE DURING THE DECADE 1953–1963. By *Thomas F. Rogers.* Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 108. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972. 410 pp. 84 Dglds.

The concept of the "superfluous man" is ordinarily traced to Turgenev's *Diary of a Superfluous Man*, published in 1850. The post-Stalin *Kratkaia Literaturnaia Entsiklopediia* identifies the term with a phenomenon characteristic of Russia in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Although many students may regard this as overly restrictive, no Soviet scholar is likely to concede in print that the concept and the phenomenon it reflects retain their validity in Soviet conditions as well. Thomas F. Rogers of Brigham Young University disagrees. His monograph examines over two hundred works of Soviet prose printed between 1953 and 1963 which feature "fictional characters who—by virtue of their critical or antisocial thoughts, victimized condition, or rebellious action—can be considered socially and/or ideologically alienated." A survey of these flawed heroes and anti-heroes against a background of their prerevolutionary and earlier Soviet antecedents leads Rogers to the conclusion that "conflicts of integrity vs. duplicity and apathy vs. responsibility" seem in many respects "unique to the 'Thaw' period." Conversely, such traditional themes as "atavism; self-destructive nihilism, the theoretician's envy of the practical man, etc.," no longer occur.

With the possible exception of hardened sociologists, most readers are likely to find Rogers's monograph as difficult to read as the often turgid prose it analyzes. Many may, indeed, be intimidated by tables bearing such titles as "Approximate Ratio of Incidence of Thematic Categories per Total of Situations and per Total of Works Sampled." The amount of research in secondary sources is huge, though it is not always the most apposite and occasionally is inaccurately interpreted. Thus a verification of the claim that Rufus Mathewson of Columbia discusses "nineteenth-century [Russian] classicism," reveals, of course, that Mathewson spoke of the "classical tradition," which is a different matter altogether. There are enough references to this reviewer's own writings to satisfy his vanity, but these are, alas, to essays only marginally relevant to the volume's concerns. There is no justification—literary or sociological—for lumping together Soviet novels printed legally in the USSR (and, perhaps even more important, *written* with an awareness of certain requirements and taboos that are all too familiar) and works intended only for *samizdat* circulation (for example, Siniavsky, Daniel, Tarsis). Similarly, in a book published for a Western academic audience, Russian works never translated into English should have been referred to by their original Russian titles. There are more misprints than we have grown accustomed to tolerate, and it is a sad commentary on the decline of national consciousness that a book originating in The Hague refers to a "flying Hollander."

An unexpected fringe benefit to potential buyers is eighty pages of plot summaries of recent Soviet novels. This offers a unique opportunity for checking

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