vago, Ireneusz Szarycz’s comparison of Siniavskii and Vonnegut, Agata KrzyChyl-
kiecz on the clash of generations in recent Russian literature, Elena Krasnostche-
kova on Vladimir Makanin’s artistic evolution, Harold D. Baker on Bitov’s Pushkin
House, Ryan on Sasha Sokolov’s Palisandriya, Eugene Zeb Kozlowski on multiple
comic coding in the Strugatskis’ Monday Begins on Saturday, Catharine Theimer
Ne-pomyashchyn Tatyana Tolstai’s “The Heavenly Flame,” Valentina Polukhina
on doubles in Joseph Brodsky’s poetry, and Henrietta Mondry on nationalism in re-
cent Russian literary criticism. While all are well-supported and worthy scholarly con-
tributions, and in some cases fascinating reading as well, I would particularly like to
draw attention to three outstanding pieces on Russian post-modernism. Nina
Kolesnikoff’s “Metafictional Strategies of Russian Post-modern Prose” outlines tac-
tics for foregrounding story elements “through four possible techniques: over-
abundance and exaggeration, absence or reduction, eccentric execution, or overt self-
consciousness” (p. 281), citing numerous examples of each from a wide variety of
writers. Alexander Ge-nis’s “Borders and Metamorphoses: Viktor Pelevin in the Con-
text of Post-Soviet Literature” offers cogent and suggestive characteristics of several
other writers, then returning to its focus on Pelevin’s works and style. Mark Lipovet-
sky’s “On the Nature of Russian Post-modernism” gives a broadly informed survey of
critical and creative writings from and about post-modernism, with reference to its an-
tecedents in Russian or Soviet art and literary history and to Latin American authors.
Genis’s article is translated with only occasional infelicities by Slobodanka Vladiv-
Glover, while Lipovetsky’s is rendered into supple and idiomatic English by Eliot
Borenstein; in both cases, the aesthetic pleasures of the text balance the intellectual
value of the authors’ work.

This collection should be in any research library, and many of its articles can be
recommended with profit to undergraduate students and non-specialists as well.

Sibelan Forrester

Edythe C. Haber. Mikhail Bulgakov: The Early Years. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Uni-

Edythe Haber’s recent monograph on the biography and early writings of Mikhail
Bulgakov is a welcome addition to the field of Bulgakov studies. It follows in the tra-
dition of such other wide-ranging works as Colin Wright’s Mikhail Bulgakov: Life
and Interpretations (1978), Ellendea Proffer’s Bulgakov: Life and Works (1984), J. A.
E. Curtis’s Bulgakov’s Last Decade: The Writer as Hero (1987), M. O. Chudakova’s
Zhizneopisanie (1988), which is currently available only in Russian, and Lesley
Milne’s Mikhail Bulgakov: A Critical Biography (1990). Haber’s work differs from
these in that its primary concern is Bulgakov’s early works, neatly tying his life to
them and then linking this entire literary and biographical package to his novel The
Master and Margarita. As Haber herself notes in the Introduction, she emphasizes
this early period of his life because “on the whole critical works so far have been ei-
ther too broadly or too narrowly focused . . . to permit a sustained exploration of un-
derlying patterns, which originate in Bulgakov's first writings and take their final form in *The Master and Margarita*. By concentrating here on the early years I hope to do just this: to probe to the very roots of Bulgakov's creative life and follow from there both the diverging branches of his literary production and their hidden interconnectedness" (p. 4).

Haber's discussion begins with a detailed examination of his earliest years, starting with his first short story, written when he was only seven years old. This is an adventure tale of a knight on horseback, "The Adventures of Svetlan," a force of light (svet = light) against the darkness. Although she correctly argues that it is not possible to link this story directly to his later works, a story about a knight carries with it the connotations of honor, chivalry, and personal sacrifice for a greater good, themes that do appear throughout his mature works. Concerning his civil war stories, she notes that "the hero is literally called upon to oppose the dark forces of violence and death" (p. 12), while in his satire, "it is the writer's venomous pen that fights ignorance and sham" (p. 12). In both genres, Bulgakov's hero must stand up alone and fight for truth and justice, as in a traditional knightly tale.

In Part I, "Early Life and Later Reflections," Haber discusses the interesting detail that his published works, which contain his autobiographical hero, are composed in the exact opposite of his own biography: the events that mirror the later part of his life appear in his earlier writings; the events that mirror the earlier part of his life appear at the end of this literary period. *Notes on the Cuff* (1921) is roughly contemporaneous with his actual life. He then reaches back with three civil war stories: "Unusual Adventures of a Doctor" and "The Red Crown," both about the events of late 1919, and "On the Night of the Second," concerning events of February 1919. These, and his feuilletons which were published in *Nakanune* and *Gudok*, would ultimately lead to the writing of the novel *The White Guard* and the play *The Days of the Turbins*, both of which reach further back in Bulgakov's life and give us an indication of how he perceived his life during the tumultuous period of the civil war.

Although the autobiographical nature of these early writings reaches backwards in time, Haber notes that there is a steady progression in the development of the hero. The hero is first presented as weak in the face of the horrors of the civil war and the events that are sweeping around him. However, as Bulgakov proceeds with *White Guard* and *The Days of the Turbins*, the hero begins to change in the face of adversity. The hero is gradually transformed from a weak intellectual into a stronger and more central character who can begin to speak out against the violence around him. In a time when Bulgakov himself faced greater confrontations with critics and censors — autobiographical material which would serve him well when writing *The Master and Margarita* — his characters grow more strong.

In Part II, "Satire—Comedy—Fantasy," Haber treats works of these genres stretching from the feuilletons up to his three fantastic novellas: *Diaboliad*, *The Fatal Eggs*, and *The Heart of a Dog*. In these works, Bulgakov emphasizes a different set of themes; he shifts from a study of the role of an individual in history to a study of the future and the implications of technology upon humanity. In this way, Bulgakov joins his present life as a writer to his past as a doctor. Bulgakov the present-day writer deals with issues of science and experimentation, the life he had given up when he turned