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## BOOK REVIEWS

### LITERATURE AND FINE ARTS

Khapaeva, Dina. *Nightmare: From Literary Experiments to Cultural Project*. Russian History and Culture, Vol. 10. Leiden: Brill, 2013. vi + 263 pp. \$156.00. ISBN 978-90-04-22275-5.

In this densely written and ambitious study, Dina Khapaeva writes that studying “nightmare as a mental phenomenon” can contribute to our understanding of both classic literature and contemporary culture. Essentially, her argument is that the nightmares that today play such a critical role in Russian and Western culture actually derive from literary works composed over the past two hundred years. By analyzing the techniques (“literary hypnotics”) used to simulate the nightmare in classic literary texts by Gogol, Dostoevsky, Pelevin, Charles Maturin, Vladimir Sorokin, H. P. Lovecraft, and, surprisingly, Thomas Mann, she hopes to create a new branch of literary criticism: “nightmarology.” After close readings of works by these authors, Khapaeva turns to larger questions of the role and meaning of the nightmare in contemporary life, culture, and society.

She begins by reading Gogol’s Petersburg tales as psychological “experiments on readers” in which the readers experience the characters’ inability to locate a stable border between reality and the nightmare (fantasy, the absurd, and so on) (p. 47). By analyzing “The Portrait,” “Nevsky Prospect,” “The Nose,” and “Diary of a Madman,” Khapaeva identifies some of the basic techniques of “literary hypnotics” used to simulate the nightmare: these include deliberately confusing dreams and reality, the sensation of being chased, and constant shifts between the realistic and the absurd. Additional elements of “literary hypnotics” come to light in Khapaeva’s reading of Pelevin’s 1996 novel *Chapaev i pustota* (translated as *The Clay Machine-Gun*) and H. P. Lovecraft’s stories (which Khapaeva calls “a textbook for nightmare aesthetics” [p. 83]), including *déjà vu*, the good dream that turns into a nightmare, the chase, hopeless flight, the sensation of falling, space that is represented as a circle or labyrinth, and time that is collapsed.

In the longest chapter of the book, Khapaeva focuses on the collapse of language in several nightmarish stories by Dostoevsky, especially “The Double” and “Bobok.” Her argument grows out of a long polemic with Bakhtin’s notion that Dostoevsky’s literary world is built on a dialogue between various “independent” voices: Khapaeva adds her voice to a growing number of scholars who see Bakhtinian emphasis on the dialogue as more closely related to the Soviet philosophy of language in the 1920s and 1930s than to Dostoevsky’s actual works. But when she concludes that Dostoevsky’s achievement was “to convey, through literature, a non-verbal experience of pre-verbal emotion” (p. 144), some readers might feel that her reading of Dostoevsky tells us more about the contemporary cultural moment than about Dostoevsky’s works. Finally, she turns to Thomas Mann’s epic *Joseph and his Brothers*, presumably because of its close connection to the interpretation of dreams and nightmares. She argues that Mann’s view of the history of humanity as “a history of catastrophe” led him to develop additional forms of “literary hypnotics” to investigate nightmares, their interpretation, and their relation to history (p. 195). Although the parallels between lived and literary reality and the nightmare in life and literature fascinated Mann (as they fascinated the other writers Khapaeva discusses), his place in her argument is neither fully nor convincingly explained.

In *Nightmare's* final chapter, Khapaeva turns from nightmare as a literary trope in classic literature to nightmare's role in the aesthetics of "Neo-Gothic." She sees the flood of books, movies, and video games about vampires, werewolves, and zombies, in which human beings usually play a secondary role, as "the new aesthetic ideal of contemporaneity" (p. 5). While the monsters of traditional Gothic literature represented obstacles to human desires, they have become the heroes in much contemporary media. In Khapaeva's chilling account, this new aesthetic represents a rejection of morality, rationality, progress, and even civilization itself in favor of a monstrous world in which people "achieve passive hedonistic self-satisfaction" by contemplating death, suffering, and destruction (p. 242).

While Khapaeva has many interesting things to say about the Gothic elements in classic literature and contemporary culture, the book's organization raises many problems: the relations between individual writers are never explained, some obvious texts (for example, Gogol's "Ivan Fyodorovich Shponka and his Aunt") are omitted, while some of the author's choices seem perverse (for example, she spends more pages critiquing Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* than discussing Lovecraft's works). A larger problem is that while Khapaeva's brief diagnosis of the aesthetics and ideology of Neo-Gothic is accurate and insightful, her attempt to locate the roots of this cultural phenomenon in classic literary texts is far less convincing. She is on much surer ground, for example, when she traces the recent genealogy of Neo-Gothic in Western music, computer games, literature, television, and cinema to the influence of Lovecraft and Tolkien, or when she reads the Gothic element in works by Pelevin's *Empire V* (2006) and Sorokin's *Day of the Oprichniks* (2006) as a response to contemporary Russian society's inability (or unwillingness) to confront the horrors of its Stalinist past ("selective historical amnesia," [p. 232–40]). While it might have made more sense to concentrate on either analyzing the nightmare in classic Russian literature or to focus on the meaning of contemporary Neo-Gothic culture, *Nightmare* is a challenging and thought-provoking study of special interest to students of the Gothic element in contemporary culture.

#### Anthony Anemone, *The New School*

Bagshaw, Hilary B. P. *Religion in the Thought of Mikhail Bakhtin: Reason and Faith*. Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies Series. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. xvi + 159 pp. \$99.95. ISBN 978-1-4094-6240-8.

Of the many difficulties facing scholars of Bakhtin, perhaps the most vexing, yet crucial, is bringing to light the varied sources of Bakhtin's thought. Doing so is a formidable challenge because Bakhtin himself was, at best, casual in his handling of sources and, at worst, dismissive of the conventional norms of citation. In a famous passage from one of his early aesthetic texts, Bakhtin announces that the following study has been "freed" from the "superfluous ballast of citations and references," adding that "[f]or the qualified reader," such acknowledgements are "unnecessary, and for the unqualified, useless."

A statement like this one certainly lends urgency to the need for source scholarship on Bakhtin's works, and in fact, an admirable body of such scholarship has emerged, especially in the last decade or so. Among Bakhtinian scholars, Caryl Emerson, Brian Poole, Galin Tihanov, Ken Hirschkop, Craig Brandist, and others have all made important contributions to the project of identifying Bakhtin's intellectual sources. Hilary Bagshaw's *Religion in the Thought of Mikhail Bakhtin* falls squarely in line with this scholarship, drawing

extensively on the prior work of such scholars as those noted here, but its originality lies elsewhere. Before discussing its unique contributions, an overview will prove useful and illuminating.

As its title clearly indicates, Bagshaw's study aims to place front and center the significance of religion to Bakhtin's thinking. Other Bakhtin scholars, of course, have addressed this obvious and pervasive aspect of his writings, but not in the way Bagshaw approaches this question. Rather than interpret Bakhtin's writings as a disguised theology, or worse perhaps, as an indirect expression of personal faith, Bagshaw argues that "Bakhtin was first and foremost a philosopher in the tradition of Kant" (p. 19). This premise does not gainsay the fact that Bakhtin was a person of faith, nor does it overlook the fact that he often used religious ideas and metaphors in explicating his own themes. Nonetheless, it does attempt to remain faithful to the various ways that Bagshaw imagines how Bakhtin understood his own intellectual projects. She thus examines the religious features of Bakhtin's philosophical thought, from his earliest aesthetic and ethical concerns, through dialogue, carnival, the utterance, and especially outsidedness. Her approach is simultaneously thematic and (for the most part) chronological, as she acquaints readers with the many sources that informed Bakhtin's thinking at different junctures in the development of his ideas. It is in this sense that Bagshaw aligns herself with the considerable source scholarship of other Bakhtin scholars.

Interestingly, as Bagshaw tells us, she has no new sources to reveal, nor does she offer new knowledge about already identified sources. Rather, she aims to contextualize extant source scholarship so that she might draw upon this ample body of work for her specific purposes, one of the most important of which is to trace Bakhtin's interests in "the intellectual dimensions of the Russian Orthodox tradition rather than the devotional ones" (p. 4), a task which she executes with admirable clarity and care. Her familiarity with existing source scholarship is impressive, but her real contribution, at least for this reader, is to be found in the uses to which she puts such material. Not only does she deploy source scholarship to frame her discussion of Bakhtinian themes in all of their religious dimensions, but in the process, she directs our attention to questions of methodology, and inadvertently perhaps, to the rhetoric of source scholarship.

On two occasions, for example, she cites Brian Poole approvingly, when Poole claims that "Bakhtin's own sources clarify his intentions" (pp. 20, 137). Perhaps. But such a claim is by no means absolutely true, as Bagshaw demonstrates. Among the many virtues of her discussion is the choice to lend emphasis to sources that do not always receive prominent notice. Yes, all the usual figures are here—Herman Cohen, Nikolai Marr, Max Scherer, et al., but Bagshaw draws our attention to what she perceives to be the (not fully appreciated) influence of Ernst Cassirer on Bakhtin's understanding of myth; or the (mostly unfamiliar) writings of Israil' Frank-Kamenetskji and Ol'ga Friedenberga, and how their ideas may have contributed to Bakhtin's constructions of literary history; or the (largely unexplored) importance of James George Fraser on Bakhtin's particular version of carnival. In all of these illuminating discussions, Bagshaw reminds us that sources cannot escape the necessity of being ordered and selected, and while sources may tell us much about the intentions of the primary author who was influenced by them, they also tell us much about the secondary authors who uses them for definite rhetorical purposes.

At the end of her study, Bagshaw makes a noticeable shift from examining Bakhtin's sources to examining Bakhtin as a pivotal source in methodological disputes within the interdisciplinary field known as the study of religion. Within this field, Bagshaw tells us, the question of insider versus outsider accounts of religious understanding has generated a

good deal of conflict, owing in part to the work of Gavin Flood, who casts Bakhtin as a narrative or semiotic thinker rather than one who throughout his career remained indebted to the phenomenological influences of his early writings. Much of this discussion is somewhat technical, and concerns itself with the rarefied disputes of a particular area of inquiry, but readers will sense right away that the questions raised—and answers proffered—in this final section will have implications for any discipline where qualitative researchers must grapple with ethical matters surrounding the problem of epistemological location, of the insider/outsider problem discussed here. For this reader, though, Bagshaw's final chapters illustrate why source scholarship is so important. By understanding the sources that inform the work of an original thinker like Bakhtin, we better understand the limits, strengths, and appropriateness of how his work might be, and should be, used as a source for other people's thinking.

Hilary Bagshaw tells us that she desires to identify the “appropriate place of religion in the work of Bakhtin.” To this ambitious end, she “plots a middle course between those who would neglect and disregard any reference to religious themes in the texts as irrelevant and those who would read the texts as theological at their foundation” (pp. 131–32). Bagshaw successfully avoids both of these extremes and, in so doing, offers readers a thoughtful, well-researched, and illuminating account of a Bakhtin we have not previously encountered.

**Frank Farmer, University of Kansas**

Depretto, Catherine, ed. *Un autre Tolstoï*. Paris: Institut d'études slaves, 2012. 288 pp. €24.00 (paper). ISBN 978-2-7204-0491-7.

In this volume of twenty-one essays, originally presented in Paris at the 2010 conference “L'œuvre de Léon Tolstoï, bilan du XIXe européen,” a group of mostly European scholars explores topics related to Tolstoy, ranging from “aesthetic questions,” his influence on historical and cultural contexts, and the reception of his literary and philosophical texts. The scholars are predominantly French, but they are joined by British, Finnish, Italian, Russian, and North American colleagues. Two of the articles, both by Scandinavians, are inexplicably in English; the rest are in French.

The editor of the volume, Catherine Depretto, remarks in the introduction that the aim of these essays is less “to shake up the classic approaches” and more to “make insights by taking up old questions or by focusing on topics that have been little explored” (p. 11). Depretto's description of the articles' modest aims hold true. They largely concentrate on narrow problems; none of them quite fulfills the title's promise of presenting “another” Tolstoy. Most are quite short—the volume is just over two hundred fifty pages. All the essays are of interest to Tolstoy scholars, and a few of them are provocative and sufficiently broad to merit consideration outside Tolstoy studies. Given the number of essays, this review will concentrate on the contributions with the broadest appeal.

In its rejection of the “metaphysics of origin” and its emphasis on integration of common properties to predict the course of history, Andreas Schönle's “The Criticism of Modernity in *War and Peace*” argues that “literary criticism has disregarded the sociological dimension of Tolstoyan thought, particularly his elaboration of a critique of modernity” (p. 60). This critique has “certain convergences” with Michel Foucault's description of *l'épistémè moderne*, particularly in Tolstoy's “sliding scale” of freedom and necessity. Though Foucault himself does not focus, as Tolstoy does, on freedom and necessity, the French philosopher

does describe a similar oscillation between eschatological and postivistic truths that, like Tolstoy's dichotomy, sets up universal relations rather than any absolute opposition. Both writers likewise "share a hesitation between the primacy of the individual act and those of monolithic forces that traverse and govern the social tissue" (p. 59).

Peter Ulf Møller's English-language "Bitter Harvest: Tolstoj as Witness to the Literary Debate on Sexual Morals at the Turn of the Century," continues his excellent literary history of sexual morality debates in Russia. His 1988 book, *The Postlude to the Kreutzer Sonata*, focused on Tolstoy's role in initiating the debate; the focus in this essay is instead on Tolstoy's reaction to the subsequent debate. Ironically, the *Kreutzer Sonata* marked the start of a most licentious period in Russian literature—the "bitter harvest" for Tolstoy. Tolstoy's reaction to this lurid turn is predictable enough: In a published interview, he reacted to Leonid Andreev's 1902 sexually charged story "The Abyss" with disgust: "Such filth. ... Such filth! ... Ugh!" Andreev, understandably unhappy with Tolstoy's reaction, replied that the story was "a genuine, albeit illegitimate daughter of [Tolstoy's] *Kreutzer Sonata*" (p. 80). It might have been inevitable that these remarks led to a media-fed fray, with the Countess Tolstaya penning a letter to the editors defending her husband's reaction, and leading writers like Fedor Sologub and Vasiliï Rozanov responding to the Countess' response to Andreev's response to Tolstoy's response to a story ... Møller also frames Tolstoy's response to Mikhail Artsybashev's *succès de scandale* novel, *Sanin*, within the context of the "sex question." Anyone researching the social dynamic of the period should read Møller's piece, ignoring the infelicitous English that sometimes veers into mystery.

Michel Niqueux in "L. Tolstoï et M. Menchikov" traces the decades-long literary and personal relationship between Tolstoy and the prolific and influential journalist M. O. Men'shikov. Despite the journalist's conversion from a Tolstoyan in the 1890s to a right-wing nationalist during the next decade, Tolstoy and Men'shikov remained on remarkably friendly terms. Uncharacteristically, even when Tolstoy fundamentally disagreed with Men'shikov, he continued to admire him for his literary style, and for outspokenness in criticizing the state and church. Tolstoy "accepted with humility Men'shikov's critiques." In studying their correspondence, "we see a Tolstoy who is non-dogmatic, non-partisan, very natural" (p. 108).

Like most conference proceedings, *Un autre Tolstoï* is not a terribly coherent volume. The articles vary greatly in scope, quality, and methodology, and, aside from being linked to Tolstoy, in subject matter. Tolstoy scholars will profit from the volume as a whole, but generalists will likely want to read selectively.

**Michael Denner, Stetson University**

Beretta, Cristina. *Das erotische Unbehagen in der russischen Literatur um 1900: Subversive Entsagung von Arthur Schopenhauer über Lev Tolstoj und Vladimir Solov'ev zu Fedor Sologub*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter GmbH, 2011. xii + 519 pp. €68.00. ISBN 978-3-8253-5927-0.

The title of the reviewed book does more than indicate its subject and scope, that is the influence of Schopenhauer on the Russian Silver Age very concerned about sex (all fairly well known themes). It alludes as well to the issues that are less evident and that the chosen perspective may put into light. There is a problem of reception and interrelations between philosophy and literature. There is a cultural situation reputed to be one of an emancipated

if not flourishing sexuality; the title not only points out a feeling of unease permeating this period, it also suggests the important role played in the literature by the Schopenhauerian refusal of physical relations. Far from being an expression of dominant traditionalist mentality, this renunciation is qualified as subversive, which implies further questions about the norm, its construction, and its ideological, social, and so on, conditioning.

The dialogue with Schopenhauer is a key which permits penetrating the work of three essential Russian writers/thinkers and demonstrating the ambiguous and/or transgressive character of their counterproposals while observing (mostly through its perception in Russia) the new understanding of sexuality as it unfolds in the European *fin-de-siècle*. After a methodological introduction and an overview of Schopenhauer's metaphysics of love, Cristina Beretta analyzes very thoroughly the three authors' chosen production: celebrated late stories and essays by Tolstoy, several writings on love by Solovyev, and two novels (*Heavy Dreams* and *The Petty Demon*) and some articles by Sologub. They do not receive an equal treatment; the shortest chapter is dedicated to Solovyev, the longest (almost half the book) to Sologub. However, such composition is coherent with the intention to show an evolution from the older writer to the younger, with the philosopher as a link between the two.

Following Schopenhauer, they give in their thought a key role to the love relations and depreciate their bodily manifestations. Like Schopenhauer, Tolstoy magnifies love as Agape, or compassion, and condemns sexual attraction. Solovyev defends the latter, but on the spiritual level, and dreams about the wholeness of a divinized human being achieved as androgynous union of opposites. Sologub, whose knowledge of Schopenhauer may have been only indirect, rehabilitates the bodily desire, exploring sublimated ways to satisfy it different from a vulgar intercourse. All of them are subversive, because their rejection of the genital reproductive act opposes the bourgeois norm, the family model, and the double morality admitting prostitution as a necessary answer to natural male needs. Sologub goes further beyond the norm when he advocates bodily pleasure, effaces limits between biological sexes, and plays with sex roles. No wonder he is the hero of this narrative.

The book is a remolded doctoral dissertation; the author displays great erudition in the fields of philosophy and literary theory, her text is built up with numerous notes, references, and quotations (an excellent formula: the originals in Russian are there to check). Here is a very sound piece of academic work; it should deserve the highest praise were it not for certain shortcomings that sometimes diminish the effectiveness of its analysis and argumentation. The close reading can fail to convince when it compels the literary texts to reveal the "philosophemes" they are supposed to illustrate. Some of the imperfections, such as typing errors, are minor; others are less so. One could make a list of gaps in bibliography, but this is of no real matter. However, some gaps can have distorting effects. To spell Michel Aucouturier "Okuter'e" (a reverse transcription from Russian) means that the Tolstoyan research of this great specialist is ignored. In fact, not only French Slavists, but French thinkers whose importance for the studied subjects could compete with that of Schopenhauer—Montaigne, Rousseau, Fourier—are never mentioned in Beretta's book. Several words should have been dedicated to the Russian radicals of the 1860s; to Nikolay Fedorov; to teachings of the Esoterics; to the neo-Malthusian fighters against procreation; and so on. In short, the context for the ascetic utopia and construction of the new sexuality in Russia is still to be explored, but the book does explore a lot of good questions and leads to the formulation of new ones: we ought to be grateful for this.

**Leonid Heller, University of Lausanne**

Kalb, Judith E. *Russia's Rome: Imperial Visions, Messianic Dreams, 1890–1940*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010. xiv + 299. \$29.95 (paper). ISBN 978-029922924-5.

In 2010, the industrial metal band Geval released a music video entitled “Tretii Rim” (Third Rome), in which its lead singer, Oleg Iurgens, proclaimed in his death-growl vocals that the entire course of Russian history, shaped as it was by “the harmony of contradictions,” “the symphonia of church and formidable tsars,” and “the shadow of a future always looking back to Constantinople,” had been foretold in the early sixteenth century by the monk Filofei (*o tom li pisal Filofei*). The content of “Tretii Rim” and its eschatological narrative “from the old world to the new world” would not have been unfamiliar to a contemporary Russian audience. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, the doctrine “Moscow, the Third Rome” has regained explanatory value in Russian public opinion. On such disparate websites as 3rm.info and trome.ru, in videos uploaded to YouTube and Rutube, and in more conventional media like print, television, and icon painting, a bricolage of Orthodox, apocalyptic, monarchist, humanist, fascist, anti-Semitic, anti-globalization, and/or anti-Western symbols are varyingly deployed to convey a singular message: only Russia, as the final inheritor of Rome’s Christian and imperial legacies, can save humanity from the demonic forces that divide the world.

If any of the present-day advocates of Moscow as the Third Rome were to read Judith Kalb’s wonderful study, they would likely be disappointed to learn that the trope they essentialize as the key to understanding Russia was not meaningful in Russian discourse until the very late imperial period. Instead, as Kalb expertly demonstrates in a series of chapters devoted to the “Rome texts” of Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, Valerii Briusov, Aleksandr Blok, Viacheslav Ivanov, and Mikhail Kuzmin, Russia’s historiosophical connection to Rome is a modern invention created almost exclusively by a handful of authors who “used Rome as a myth-making tool” (p. 7) to explain epistemological, historical, and experiential ruptures—the crisis of reason, war and revolution, Bolshevism, emigration—specific to their time and place. With a historicist sensibility uncommon to many scholars of Russian literature, Kalb grounds the discursive origin of her subject matter in a complex of historiographical developments and methodological innovations particular to the nineteenth century. These included the Pan-European recovery of ancient Rome through history, archaeology, museum, art, and illustrated guides; the imperialist and salvational reconfiguration of Filofei’s Third Rome utterance by V. S. Ikonnikov in 1869; a growing interest in antiquity studies at Russia’s imperial universities, largely informed by concerns about anomie and barbarism in the present age; the messianic narrative of Russia as “Christian kingdom,” to use V. S. Solov’ev’s terminology, that reconciles East and West, God and man, faith and reason; and the advent of new modes of thinking about the past organized around historical idealism, comparative analysis, cyclical patterns, rise-and-fall narratives, myth, and Nietzschean categories of opposition, struggle, and eternal recurrence.

With the publication of the first two books of Merezhkovskii’s *Christ and Antichrist* trilogy in 1895 and 1900, which scripted Russia as the theocratic unification of the spiritual East and the secular West, followed in 1904–5 with the publication of the trilogy’s final installment, which gave apocalyptic expression to the impossibility of such a reconciliation, the basic contours of the “Russia-Rome paradigm” were set (p. 26). Russia could be read either as a Third Rome that unifies within itself a new imperial order and a renovated form of Russian Orthodoxy or as a Third Testament that vanquishes the satanic institutions of empire and organized religion to establish Christ’s dominion over the world. Yet as we

learn from the subsequent iterations of this paradigm, Rome was never static in the figural hermeneutics of symbolist and Soviet-era writers. The other protagonists in Kalb's book constantly reimagined Rome to address changes in political reality and personal circumstances. In their writings, Rome became a warning about the consequences of imperial collapse and ideological zeal; the symbol of Bolshevism as a new faith; a narrative about the sacred mission of the Red Guards; the subtext of artist as creator of synthesis, myth, and memory; a lens to critique the communist dictatorship; and, once again, the possibility of reconciliation between the spiritual and the secular. It is thanks to Kalb's hard work and erudition that this wide-ranging, yet widely neglected, thought world has been recovered. And like several other titles recently published by the University of Wisconsin Press, such as Anton Fedyashin's *Liberals under Autocracy* (2012) and Olga Maiorova's *From the Shadow of Empire* (2010), Kalb's book offers its readers new vistas into the study of Russian intellectual history, imperial discourse, national identity, and historiography. Just as importantly, Kalb helps to remind us that eternal cities are often historical constructs.

**Patrick Lally Michelson, Indiana University**

Rubin, Dominic. *The Life and Thought of Lev Karsavin: "Strength made perfect in weakness ..."*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013. xii + 479 pp. \$112.00. ISBN 978-90-420-3646-8.

Dominic Rubin has done the field of Russian religious-philosophical studies in the English-speaking world a service by writing a comprehensive survey of the life and thought of Lev Karsavin (1882-1952), one of the major figures of Silver Age religious philosophy during its afterlife in the first emigration. For a number of reasons, Karsavin has received less scholarly attention than many other Russian religious thinkers. He was less of a churchman than Bulgakov or Florenskii, less of a networker and self-promoter than Berdiaev. He elaborated a vision of *vseedinstvo* (all-unity) that was similar to Semën Frank's, but more difficult to categorize because of its variegated and diffuse content. Karsavin's influence was also diminished by a scandal: the adulterous love affair which he celebrated in his best-known work, *Noctes petropolitanae* (1922).

Rubin made a good decision when he resolved to write about Karsavin's life as well as his thought. Karsavin's thought is existential, and seeing how it unfolded in his life helps one appreciate it. Karsavin's life was also interesting in its own right, punctuated as it was by unconventional decisions. Karsavin achieved early distinction as a historian of the Latin Middle Ages, but as he turned to metaphysics and religion, relations with his mentor (Ivan Mikhailovich Grevs) and other professional historians deteriorated. Then came the affair with Elena Cheslavna Skrzhinskaia. The relationship began in 1915-16, when Skrzhinskaia was one of Karsavin's graduate students, and was still in bloom when it was interrupted by Karsavin's expulsion from the Soviet Union in 1922. (Skrzhinskaia went on to have a significant career as a Soviet medievalist.) In 1927, Karsavin turned down an invitation to teach history at Oxford and moved instead to Lithuania, where he lived and worked until his incarceration in the Abez prison camp in the Russian north (1950-52). Karsavin's long involvement in the Eurasianist movement, which Rubin discusses in welcome detail, was another feature of his activity that set him apart from most of the Paris-based religious philosophers.



Despite the biographical information it contains, Rubin's monograph is not a biography in the strict sense. The biographical material serves mainly as a backdrop for the discussion of Karsavin's thought, which Rubin presents by means of detailed summaries of the philosopher's published works in chronological order. Rubin is very thorough, canvassing most of Karsavin's writings, large and small, while focusing on the most important works, such as *Noctes petropolitane* (1922), *The Philosophy of History* (1923), *On First Principles* (1924), and *On Personhood* (1928). The only part of Karsavin's *oeuvre* that escapes Rubin's net is the untranslated (larger) portion of the voluminous survey of world history that Karsavin wrote in Lithuanian. Rubin also includes, as an appendix to his monograph, his own English translation of Karsavin's *Poem on Death* (*Poema o smerti*, 1931). This is a valuable addition, but, ironically, the task of translating *Poem on Death* seems to have deflected Rubin from writing a detailed analysis of the text comparable to his commentaries on Karsavin's other major works, making it more difficult for readers to appreciate Karsavin's most idiosyncratic composition.

As was true of most of the Silver Age religious philosophers, the overarching problem to which Karsavin devoted himself was what he called the "religious paradox"—in Rubin's words, the "dynamic whereby God, Who is by definition the Non-Other, allows for an other to exist 'outside' Him" (p. 135). How is this possible? How can God and the world coexist without compromising either the sovereignty of God or the integrity of the world, or both? While this question was raised already in ancient times in an abstract way, it became a much more pressing and more practical question in modern times with the rise of vigorous claims on behalf of secular experience. The challenges involved in reconciling religious faith with modern secularity were nowhere more seriously confronted than in the Russian Silver Age and the emigration that succeeded it. Rubin's book constitutes a running commentary on Karsavin's life-long effort to measure up to these challenges. To his credit, Rubin does not oversimplify Karsavin's response. He may be criticized, however, for erring in the opposite way. His summaries of Karsavin's works are sometimes so detailed and dense as to obscure the point under scrutiny. While the source of the problem may lie to some extent in Karsavin himself, an expositor is still called first of all to serve the cause of clarity.

Rubin's book may also be criticized for paucity of attention to contemporary Russian scholarship on Karsavin. This is a deficiency which the author himself notes, observing that his chief aim was to explicate the primary sources. Still, greater integration of some of the results of contemporary scholarship, especially the indispensable work of S. S. Khoruzhii, would have made the task of rendering a clear exposition of Karsavin's thought easier in the end.

Despite these shortcomings, however, Rubin's book is an admirable contribution to the scholarly literature on Russian religious philosophy.

**Paul Valliere, Butler University**

Sicher, Efraim. *Babel' in Context: A Study in Cultural Identity*. Borderlines: Russian and East European Jewish Studies. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2012. 309 pp. \$80.00. ISBN 978-1-936235-95-7.

*Babel' in Context*, Efraim Sicher's second monograph devoted to Isaac Babel, synthesizes and builds on essays written since the publication of his *Style and Structure in the Prose of*

*Isaac Babel* in 1986. The author of something like three dozen publications on Babel, Sicher provides exactly what he promises here: context. Most impressive is the sheer range of Sicher's research. He tracks down and gathers obscure and archival sources, photographs, and images for the seven chapters (plus annotated bibliography) that comprise this volume. Among twenty-eight illustrations, I found several I had never seen before, including the unpublished version of Boris Efimov's caricature based on "My First Goose," which depicts Babel, wearing phylacteries and a prayer shawl over a Red Cavalry uniform, sitting on a trunk of manuscripts, looking sadly at a goose. Chapter 1 is a useful addition to the ranks of brief Babel biographies, especially in its detailed treatment of the author's final years and arrest. The chapters that truly play to Sicher's strengths, however, are the next three on Babel's Jewish contexts—characterized (in a borrowing from Michel Serres) as "reference, interference, and inter-reference" from Biblical and Midrashic sources, Yiddish and Hebrew writers and speech patterns. Particularly fascinating are the intertextual connections to the short-lived Hebrew Communist literary movement, whose journal published translations of "The Rebbe's Son" and "Line and Color" in 1926. Their bombastic attempt at Judeo-Bolshevik synthesis—a Messiah on a Red Horse, as my great-grandmother described the Revolution to the Jews of her *shtetl*—offers a poignant context for Babel's view, which Sicher characterizes as "conflicted," though "tragic" might be a better word. These chapters are especially good for calling up not only Bialik and Sholem Aleichem, but also lesser-known Jewish writers, such as Elizaveta Polonskaia, all of whose works echo Babel's own depiction of how the contingent "un-freedom" of Jewish origins pushes through the acquired literary "freedom" of the assimilated writer. Chapter 5 deals with Babel's non-Jewish influences (Maupassant, Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Chekhov), while chapter 6 situates *Red Cavalry* within, and in contrast to, the literature of the Russian Civil War. The final chapter covers Babel's last years, as he attempted to write about collectivization. Sicher notes bluntly that, in contrast with *Red Cavalry*, "this time there was no diary, and intermediary peripatetic narrator who could mediate the moral shock of what was happening. Not only was the scale of the mass deportations and forced starvation nationwide, but it was all orchestrated by the state, efficiently and under strict ideological control. There was no room here for ambiguity or irony. How was it to be conveyed without compromising the writer's integrity?" (p. 220) Indeed, it could not. And artistic integrity was not a choice for Babel; it was a way of being.

This is an important contribution by a distinguished scholar and belongs on the shelf of any student of Isaac Babel, but it suffers from certain flaws of composition. Perhaps because Sicher is so exhaustively contextual, some of his close readings can seem a bit abrupt, implausible, or unsubtle. For example, his treatment of such motifs as voyeurism and Jewish emasculation in Babel's work sounds oddly literal-minded, failing to consider the moral irony of the former and the latent power of the feminine that inheres in the latter—aspects to be found throughout these fictions. Moreover, the book does not adequately consider how and why Babel typically *lies* about the details of other literary works, such as Turgenev's "First Love" and Maupassant's "The Confession"—a phenomenon much discussed by other recent critics, such as Batuman, Stanton, and myself. Finally, although the book helpfully includes quotations in the original Russian, Yiddish, and Hebrew, it is frustrating to encounter infelicities of translation, one of which first appeared in a footnote to Sicher's essay (published in Freidin's edited volume *The Enigma of Isaac Babel*), a footnote now part of the main text of chapter 6 of *Babel in Context*: "Thus begins Gedali entwining me in the silken throngs [sic] of his smoked eyes" (p. 203). This is an attempt to quote McDuff's unfortunate translation—odd, since Sicher cites Constantine's slightly better

version of the same story on the previous page—of a line from “Gedali” that should probably sound like this: “Thus began Gedali, wrapping me in the silken straps of his smoky eyes.” I am not sure what “smoked eyes” are or if they taste like smoked whitefish, but only negligence can explain why McDuff’s already uncomfortable “thongs” appear here as nonsensical “throngs.” I mention this not because I am morbidly obsessed with how Babel is (mis)translated—obviously, I *am*—but because I have now had occasion to read this particular error in two different published works by the same author. It is unfortunate to be distracted by such quirks in an otherwise generous and engaging work of literary scholarship.

**Val Vinokur, Eugene Lang College / The New School**

Ivashkin, Alexander, and Andrew Kirkman, eds. *Contemplating Shostakovich: Life, Music and Film*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012. xxviii + 285 pp. £65.00. ISBN 978-1-4094-3937-0.

The increased attention to Shostakovich is a characteristic feature of the present-day musicology—a phenomenon that, according to the editors of the book under review, is likely to arouse wonder among scholars in other branches of musical science. Be that as it may, this is at least the tenth collection of articles on Shostakovich in English that has appeared since the beginning of the twenty-first century. Its materials are largely based on the papers presented at the Shostakovich symposium of 2006, organized by the Centre of Russian Music of the Goldsmith College on the occasion of Shostakovich’s centenary. Half of the contributors are from Russia—a significant fact proving that specialists from Shostakovich’s homeland are already quite well integrated into the international context (this was not so a decade ago, let alone earlier).

The collection comprises eleven articles distributed into three sections: “Music and Style,” “Film,” and “Life and Documents.” Each section has its single high point. In the latter one, this is the article “Shostakovich in the Mid-1930s: Operatic Plans and Implementations (Regarding the Attribution of an Unknown Autograph)” by Olga Digoskaia, chief archivist at the Shostakovich Archives in Moscow, who is internationally known as the discoverer of the operatic fragment *Orango*, which successfully premiered in Los Angeles in 2011. Her new text is dedicated to another previously unexplored archival document of the 1930s—a sketch of an operatic scene whose music blends materials from the Fourth Symphony and the piano fugue in A minor, which until now was believed to be a much later work. The “Film” section is dominated by the study by another Shostakovich Archives employee, Olga Dombrovskaia, who has shown the affinities between Shostakovich’s music to *Hamlet* and *King Lear* and his chamber music of the same period. As regards the “Music and Style” section, its high point is the article of the pianist and composer Ivan Sokolov on Shostakovich’s last work, the Viola Sonata. More than three decades after its completion, Sokolov revealed that its third movement contains veiled quotations from all Shostakovich symphonies—as if the composer made a valedictory survey of whole his career. No doubt, Sokolov’s discovery will predetermine the perception of the Viola Sonata for decades to come.

The other articles also contain much valuable information and important insights. Elisabeth Wilson, cellist and Shostakovich scholar, reflects on the significance of words and symbols in Shostakovich’s music. Another cellist and musicologist, Alexander Ivashkin—the founder of the Centre of Russian Music and the collection’s co-editor—

relates Shostakovich to Old Believers on the one hand and to the recent Russian minimalism on the other. Gilbert C. Rappaport, a Slavist from the University of Texas at Austin, presents a thorough analysis of Shostakovich's *Five Satires*. No less thorough is the analysis of Shostakovich's music for the film *Hamlet*—one of his strongest, most carefully crafted, and psychologically nuanced film scores—realized by Erik Heine of Oklahoma City University. John Riley, a noted specialist in the history of Soviet cinema, gives an overview of Shostakovich's Lenin and Stalin filmography. Inna Barsova, the leading music historian from the Moscow Conservatory, discusses the place of piano duet arrangements in Shostakovich's oeuvre and performance, while Terry Klefstad from Belmont University in Nashville offers an American view on the early reception of the opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District* in the United States. Somewhat strange to the book's general context is the piece by Vladimir Orlov concerning the erotic motives in Shostakovich's works in relation to the sexual politics of the Soviet state on various stages of its evolution.

As is well known, Shostakovich's works often contain enigmatic associations and allusions calling for some hermeneutics (this, perhaps, is the main reason why Shostakovich is so popular among writers on music) and easily leads to various kinds of over-interpretation. A degree of over-interpretation can be found in some of the texts presented in this collection. For instance, I am not sure that Shostakovich's *Satires*—a rather modest work, by no means a masterpiece—is as imbued with hidden meanings as Gilbert Rappaport tries to show in his essay. Regardless, this is a highly readable, excellently edited collection and an important contribution to the burgeoning science of “Shostakovichology.”

**Levon Hakopian**

Rofe, Michael. *Dimensions of Energy in Shostakovich's Symphonies*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2012. xviii + 274 pp. \$104.95. ISBN 978-1-4094-0745-4.

Since the demise of the Soviet Union, Shostakovich research has been marked by a highly mediatized conflict on the composer's politics. The controversy has masked an older debate that was more concerned with the question of the autonomy versus social determinism of music. To defend Shostakovich in that context amounted to a demonstration of the value of his music without regard to its societal context. In this book, Michael Rofe redirects Shostakovich studies toward a concern for the actual music, with reference to political meaning only when it serves the analysis. The author shows himself to be fully aware of the actual state of Shostakovich scholarship. He contends, however, that Shostakovich's appeal to audiences that have no detailed knowledge of the facts of Soviet history offers proof enough of the transcendent qualities of his music.

We may doubt, however, that the reception by contemporary audiences is as spontaneous and unbiased as the author supposes. In the post-Soviet decades, the music of Shostakovich has been thoroughly marketed as part of the spiritual process of settling scores with the vanished state and the belief system on which it had been based. Shostakovich's music continues to thrive on the mystique of individual resistance under dictatorship. Rofe seems to admit as much in his discussion of the disquieting extra-musical import associated with Shostakovich's music as part of the energy that it projects on its listeners. In this way, the author can keep controversial interpretations, such as those offered in Volkov's *Testimony* or in Ian MacDonald's *The New Shostakovich*, on board. Rofe may argue that political

interpretation is not his issue, but this strategy comes close to an easy way out of making unavoidable critical choices of his own.

Rofe argues that longstanding debates should be solved on the basis of musical fact. To achieve this end, he focuses on Shostakovich's supreme mastery of the dimensions of musical energy as the defining trait of the composer's individuality. Rofe's theoretical background to his analytical method is double. On the one hand, he relies on the empirical results of research in embodied cognition, on the other he reconstructs a hypothetical theoretical background to Shostakovich's own understanding of symphonic music in the theories such contemporaries as Asafiev, Yavorsky, Shcherbachev, and Rozenov, the latter with special poignancy in relation to the question of the golden section that the author detects in Shostakovich's handling of different layers of energy. While the ultimate proof that Shostakovich actively used their theories is lacking, the connections are plausible and offer the huge advantage that Shostakovich's approach to the symphony is grounded in his own intellectual milieu.

Analysis based on dimensions of energy liberates the analyst of the criteria with which form and structure are conventionally described. Rofe admits that his analytical lens does not unearth in Shostakovich an approach to symphonic composition that is entirely new. The analysis does demonstrate, however, the extraordinary quality and refinement of Shostakovich's musical thinking. Rofe offers new arguments to defend Shostakovich's music as highly sophisticated, even when its surface qualities are meant to be readily accessible.

The author examines in detail four symphonies, which are notorious for their challenges to analysis and criticism. The analysis of the Sixth Symphony is entirely convincing, the one of the Fourteenth Symphony is subtle, but the author refrains from applying his musical discoveries to an in-depth reading of the work's philosophical content. The analysis of the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies is proposed as a way out of the long-standing critical question about Shostakovich's about-face in the Fifth Symphony under political pressure. The author is undoubtedly right that the story of Shostakovich's repression in 1936 and 1937 and his restructuring as a Soviet personality in the Fifth Symphony has been over-dramatized. He also demonstrates convincingly that the Fifth could be understood as a consequence of Shostakovich's discoveries in the Fourth, but with an audible return to a balance that the Fourth Symphony shunned. This observation does not silence, however, the vexed question of the relationship between art and the pressures of a totalitarian state. The hypothesis that Rofe puts forward about the relationship between the two works as a result of Shostakovich's independent artistic evolution could never be proven. Political pressure did interfere, even if not in the dramatic form that has previously been read into it. We shall never know what would have happened to Shostakovich's creative path had things been different.

As an appendix to his main argument, Rofe proposes a theory on the meaning of the golden section in music. However tentatively announced, the chapter is excellently argued. The author incorporates all possible objections to his theory in his own argumentation. He concludes that the golden section appears so often in music because it is a logical outcome of any approach to composition that is based on energy streams rather than on symmetrical structures.

Rofe's study is a welcome addition to Shostakovich scholarship and will certainly influence the analysis of his music. On the consequences of his analytical method for solving critical questions, the author is less clear, with the exception of the case concerning the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies. In searching for what is constant in Shostakovich's style, the author gives no clue of how we should deal with the apparent heterogeneity of

Shostakovich's output as a whole. This is a book that could open new vistas, on the condition that its scientism is complemented with more pronounced critical choices.

**Francis Maes, Ghent University**

Kleberg, Lars, and Aleksei Semenenko, eds. *Aksenov and the Environs*. Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2012. viii + 242 pp. ISBN 978-91-86069-54-4.

For those scholars who study Russian avant-garde art, poetry, and film of the first third of the twentieth century, the name Ivan Aksenov would sound familiar. This impressive volume reintroduces this fascinating and controversial figure to the studies of Russian avant-garde. Aksenov was a poet, a prose writer, and a translator of Elizabethan playwrights, as well as a literary, art, and film critic. He interacted with many important representatives of the Russian avant-garde: from Mayakovsky and Khlebnikov, to Gumilev and Akhmatova (he was the best man at their wedding in 1913), to Alexandra Exter and Sergei Eisenstein, among others. He held the important position of the commissar for the arts and in this capacity helped the Futurists organize poetry readings and publish their works. Then he “mechanically withdraws” (p. 16) from the Communist Party and dies of cancer in 1935.

The volume has grown out of the symposium “Aksenov and the Environs” held in May 2008 at Krusenberg, Sweden. The collection is comprised of fourteen essays (ten in Russian and four in English) and one previously unpublished work of Aksenov's on Velimir Khlebnikov.

The volume opens with an article “‘Bel'ye' i 'temnye' piatna biografii I. A. Aksenova” by Natalia Adaskina, the pioneering biographer and publisher of Ivan Aksenov's works. In her essay she sets the background for the future discussion of this controversial figure in the history of the Russian avant-garde. Adaskina's essay is followed by Aleksandr Parnis's work on the relationship between Aksenov and Khlebnikov and Tatiana Nikol'skaia's essay on Susanna Mar, who was Aksenov's wife from 1925 to the year of his death in 1935. Parnis says that Aksenov's papers on Khlebnikov “formulated a series of principles along which the future Khlebnikov scholarship would develop” (p. 46).

Three essays discuss Ivan Aksenov's own literary works and their connection to visual art. Lars Kleberg focuses on Aksenov's prose work *The Pillar of Hercules*, pointing out the fragmentary nature of Aksenov's prose, while John Bowlt in “*Vitrina and afisha*” and Kornelia Icin in “*O poezii i zhivopisi: Ivan Aksenov i Aleksandra Ekster*” discuss the connection between Aksenov's poetry and his vision of the Cubo-Futurist art.

The title of the volume represents a paraphrase of Aksenov's pioneering 1917 study of Picasso, *Picasso and the Environs*. Daniela Rizzi and Nicoletta Misler discuss Aksenov's unique approach to Picasso which the critics term “baroque,” saying that by this Aksenov meant “ornamental treatment of the structural elements,” “diagonal placement of light and color lines,” and definition of historical epochs of violence and world cataclysms (p. 157).

The four essays dedicated to the interactions between Aksenov and Sergei Eisenstein, each in its own way, add new and original insights to the analysis of the works of this master of the Soviet cinema. Oksana Bulgakova and Natasha Drubek discuss Aksenov's influence on Eisenstein. Thus, Bulgakova states that Aksenov “could be the ghost of Hamlet's father, instructing and directing Eisenstein in the areas that were alien to him (for example, the studies of Shakespeare)” (p. 177). Drubek suggests that Aksenov could be a “possible source of the musical metaphors [*metaforika*] in Eisenstein works” (p. 206). Irina

Belobrov'tseva in "*Eyzenshteyn – Aksenov – Eyzenshteyn: Kak sozdaiutsia biografii*" offers an interesting discussion of the relationship between Aksenov's book on Eisenstein and Eisenstein's "Essay about the Essayist," saying that the result of this interaction was the biographical portrait of Eisenstein written by Aksenov on Eisenstein's prompting. Finally, Janne Risum discusses Eisenstein's transposition of Kubuki theater techniques, combined with the images he found in Elizabethan playwrights (Aksenov was essential in Eisenstein's understanding of the Elizabethan playwrights), into his own films. This essay is connected with an earlier essay by Mikhail Meylakh, "*Aksenov – perevodchik elizavetintsev*," which raises an interesting question of literalist translation as a deliberate violation and deformation of the target language for sake of keeping up with the original (both stylistically and ideologically).

The volume concludes with Aleksei Semenenko's essay summarizing the main themes in Aksenov's literary and critical works, which will be of great interest to scholars in different fields of the humanities, from literary scholars to art historians and to film critics, as well as to biographical writing and translation theorists.

**Slava I. Yastremski, Bucknell University**

Maguire, Muireann. *Stalin's Ghosts: Gothic Themes in Early Soviet Literature*. Russian Transformations: Literature, Thought, Culture 4. Bern: Peter Lang, 2012. xii + 331 pp. \$73.95 (paper). ISBN 978-3-0343-0787-1.

In her intriguing new book, Muireann Maguire defines the Gothic-fantastic as marked by the supernatural and at least one of three themes: liminality (blurring of distinctions such as human and animal or living and dead), regression (evolutionary degeneration or psychological regression), and revelation (of repressed memories, emotions, crimes, and secrets). Chapter 1 discusses the use of Gothic figures such as ghosts and vampires in early Soviet propaganda and examines previous approaches to the Gothic fantastic. Maguire then moves on to four tropes of the Gothic tradition that she finds recurring in Soviet, dissident, and emigre literature from 1920 to 1940: the haunted castle, the deformed body, the uncanny corpse, and the monster/villain.

Chapter 2 locates the Gothic castle in familiar literary spaces such as Zamiatin's Ancient House and Gladkov's cement factory. Like representations of the castle in Gothic literature, these spaces are marked by the presence of the "Gothic chronotope," in which past and present merge in an interrogation of the rights of inheritance. Maguire also argues that depictions of Soviet "castles" center on downward movement, a subversion of the Soviet motif of soaring upward—architecturally, historically, and emotionally. Chapter 3 focuses on anxieties over degeneration and inheritance, a subversion of the utopian body. The next two chapters continue this discussion of physical and spiritual degeneration and recurrence of the past. Chapter 4 focuses on "mortality myths" that subvert both the Soviet cliché of heroic death and physical sacrifice and the optimistic assertion that Soviet science would soon overcome death. Chapter 5 examines villains that resemble vampires, the undead, doubles, and demons. This last chapter is intriguing but could have used a stronger (and lengthier) conclusion drawing the different ideas together, as was done in previous chapters. As a unit, chapters 2–4 on the subversion of the Soviet New Person constitute an invaluable contribution to recent work on the Soviet body. Chapter 6 examines all four tropes in the work of writers whom Maguire calls the "Bulgakov cohort": Mikhail Bulgakov, Sigizmund

Krzhizhanovskii, Aleksandr Chaianov, and Nikolai Ognev. She argues that this “cohort” explicitly adopted the Gothic fantastic, whereas other writers incorporated Gothic tropes mainly as stylistic devices. Other than this commonality, the grouping is not strongly motivated and the four writers could have easily been placed into separate discussions. A stronger cohesion might have been achieved by focusing the chapter on one of its most fascinating ideas, the “cohort’s” creation of a mythology for Moscow similar to that previously created for Petersburg.

Maguire concludes her innovative study with a very brief discussion of literature after 1940, when the Gothic fantastic retreats into samizdat, tamizdat, and children’s literature only to reemerge with glasnost and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. I suspect that Maguire has much more to say on this period and hope that we will see a continuation of her work on the Gothic fantastic in the near future. In its focus on Soviet literature before 1940, *Stalin’s Ghosts* makes a wonderful companion piece to Maguire’s collection of translations of Soviet Gothic tales, *Red Spectre*, which includes many of the authors she treats here. As a standalone text, this book constitutes a valuable contribution to Soviet studies, introducing us to many lesser-known stories and writers and to new sides of more commonly studied texts. Most important, it reveals the dark underside of Soviet culture in the period from 1920 to 1940, the ghosts and vampires that haunted the dark corners of brightly-lit Socialist Realism.

**Eric Laursen, University of Utah**

Lalo, Alexei, trans. and ed. *The Birth of the Body: Russian Erotic Prose of the First Half of the Twentieth Century: A Reader*. Russian History & Culture. Leiden: Brill, 2013. xiii + 154 pp. \$125.00. ISBN 978-90-04-23775-9.

This anthology presents “erotic prose” by eight Russian authors—four from the Silver Age (Vasilii Rozanov, Leonid Andreev, Aleksandr Kuprin, Fedor Sologub), two from the interwar émigré milieu (Vladislav Khodasevich, Georgii Ivanov), and two from the early Soviet period (Panteleimon Romanov, Vikentii Veresaev). The authors and genres represented in this collection are quite heterogeneous, encompassing short stories, philosophical fragments, and a critical essay. Contrary to what one might perhaps expect, the term “erotic prose” does not entail a titillating presentation of a sexually arousing content. Rather, Lalo is concerned with documenting how “Russian culture had to liberate itself from the shackles of ubiquitous ‘spirituality’ or self-imposed ‘chastity’ that had pre-determined its deeply ingrained sexophobia” (p. xi). In this sense, the book is a companion volume to Lalo’s recent monograph *Libertinage in Russian Culture and Literature: A Bio-History of Sexualities at the Threshold of Modernity* (Leiden, 2011), which argues that the lack of an erotic discourse in Russia led to either the silencing of sexual content in literary texts or its transformation into a “grotesque burlesque.” Lalo locates this pernicious prudishness both in the classics of nineteenth-century Russia and in the literature of the Soviet period. According to him, only Aleksandr Pushkin and certain modernist writers and thinkers, foremost among them Vasilii Rozanov, constitute a rare ray of light in this kingdom of darkness.

Unsurprisingly, then, the anthology opens with a few excerpts from Rozanov, including his provocative proposal to cleanse prostitution of its bad image by making all unmarried women sexually available to the general population. Although sexuality is indeed presented



as a positive force in Rozanov, this contrasts with the rest of Lalo's anthology. Andreev's melodramatic story "In the Fog" depicts in gruesome detail how a sexually repressed, unhinged youth stabs a prostitute to death before committing suicide. Kuprin's "Seasickness" tells the story of a woman who, living in a "chaste" marriage with a fellow socialist, is being gang-raped on a ship. In Sologub's "The Tsarina of Kisses," the female protagonist engages in a public orgy in the street before turning into her murderer's necrophiliac object of desire. In all three of these Silver Age stories, the nexus of *eros* and death betrays a complicated attitude that seems to confirm Lalo's diagnosis of "sexophobia" while at the same time highlighting the nefarious consequences resulting from a suppression of the sexual urge. None of these texts qualifies as pornographic, though, a point highlighted by Khodasevich's coolly formalist essay "On Pornography," which defines the genre as a matter of device rather than plot. Ivanov's densely intertextual experimental prose work "The Decay of the Atom" harkens back to the earlier Silver Age presentations of sexual pathologies, including prostitution, rape, and necrophilia. The two Soviet stories, finally, illustrate the return of "Victorian" prudishness to Russian literature under the Bolshevik regime.

The target audience of this book is presumably the general reader rather than a Slavic specialist. Lalo keeps his introduction and notes to a minimum, however, which may leave an unprepared reader confused. Another, more serious shortcoming is the poor quality of the English translations and copy-editing. There are numerous missing articles, typographical errors, and questionable word choices. For example, "*govori mne 'ty'*" is rendered as "call me 'tu'" (p. 115), or "*ty odna*" becomes "you are sole" (p. 116). The syntax at times borders on the incomprehensible (for example, "this frightful and obscure in its power body of the woman" [p. 42], "in clear, albeit sunset, rays" [p. 105], "the lightest, ephemeral and yet not destroyable by any loveliness, any innocence, any social inequality smell" [p. 107]). All in all, this collection does have the merit of making some interesting and previously untranslated Russian texts accessible to an Anglophone reader, but the dubious quality of the translation (as well as the prohibitive price tag) may hamper its usefulness.

**Adrian Wanner, Pennsylvania State University**

Hägglund, Martin. *Dying for Time: Proust, Woolf, Nabokov*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012. 197 pp. \$45.95. ISBN 978-0-674-06632-8.

Dense and tangled with respect to sequentiality, literary works associated with the label "modernist" pose special temporal problems for their readers. A convenient and powerful trick is to lay out all the confusing elements before one's mind like so many photographs on a table, omnidirectional in their potential connections. One interpretive tendency associated with this way of reading is to say that the authors (or the texts) themselves favor a spatial rather than temporal arrangement, and even that the effect or intention is a kind of escape from time itself. In *Dying for Time*, Martin Hägglund rejects this interpretation and instead treats the temporal complexities of Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf, and Vladimir Nabokov as intrinsic to and constitutive of their works.

Hägglund's key conceptual move is to distinguish between what he calls immortality and survival, as well as to interpret apparent references to the former as actually rooted in the latter. "Survival," as distinct from "immortality," denotes continuing existence in a world where all things are subject to the erosion of time. The desire for survival, implying

as it does both an investment in the temporal qualities of what one loves and knows to be passing away (Hägglund calls this “chronophilia”) and a fear of those same temporal qualities that threaten survival (“chronophobia”), is a manifestation of “chronolibido,” a term Hägglund uses to underscore the connection between desire and time.

This focus on the persistence of temporal attachments through all sorts of literary experiments with time frames, and even through the apparently detached phenomena of memory and imagination, proves tremendously fruitful in Hägglund’s readings of his authors. To my mind he is strongest with Woolf and perhaps most forced with Proust, but everywhere he illuminates aspects of his texts that had eluded the notice of at least this reviewer. To the extent that literary criticism exists to return the reader to the text, to reveal how much richer and more complex it is than one’s memory of it or thesis about it, Hägglund succeeds admirably.

*Dying for Time* is, however, not only a book of criticism, but also a book of theory. Here Hägglund’s mode is different: less interpretive and more argumentative. He treats the “transcendence” hypothesis and his own alternative, the theory of chronolibido, with attention to contrast and contradiction, as is no doubt necessary, but one misses the sense of patient curiosity that guides Hägglund’s literary readings.

In the abstract portion of the argument, for example, one might want Hägglund to devote more time to the implications of his theory. Is *all* attachment chronolibidinal? Can one love the moon in a way not colored with the pang of knowing that one will eventually not be around to see it, and that it too will eventually succumb to cosmic processes? Can one love Bach without this coloration? Or Proust, Woolf, and Nabokov? One might also want a richer engagement with the many thinkers who have treated Hägglund’s theme. The *locus classicus* for the argument with which he contends is Joseph Frank’s “Spatial Form in Modern Literature,” but he does not introduce it; nor does he engage with T. S. Eliot’s notion of tradition, which might have proven congenial to his theory.

Hägglund treats an enormous topic in fewer than two hundred pages, so it would be unfair to blame him for the omission of this or that reference. Moreover, he does engage the arguments of other thinkers both in the introduction and the final chapters—primarily Plato in the former, and Freud, Lacan, and Derrida in the latter. Perhaps the desire for a fuller, more leisurely, and expansive treatment of the theory is itself a sign of success—theories, after all, should survive beyond the particular book in which they are introduced, and Hägglund’s notions of survival and chronolibido have the potential to do just that.

**Tim Langen, University of Missouri at Columbia**

Norman, Will. *Nabokov, History and the Texture of Time*. Routledge Transnational Perspectives on American Literature. New York: Routledge, 2012. xvi + 205 pp. \$125.00. ISBN 978-0-415-53963-0.

This tightly printed book is a converted doctoral dissertation that, at a hundred thousand words, must have looked much heftier at the defense. Its platform carries all the usual structural pieces of an academic composition, from prolegomena and premises to local conclusions at the end of each chapter to the grand total at the close. Not that there is anything wrong with stamped structure, although the apparatus, which takes up one-fifth of the book, is a typical D.Phil. overkill: just the list of “works by other writers” runs to about 250 titles.

Dr. Norman puts six of Nabokov's English books and one Russian through a series of tests seeking to prove that, notwithstanding Nabokov's well-known refusal to be swayed by "the intrusions of history," he in fact admits and even engages contemporary disturbances; when, in later years, he does banish them from his fiction (so goes the thesis), his prose gets entangled in internal contradictions and putters in dialectical dead ends. The seven books under study span thirty years, from *The Gift*, Nabokov's last Russian novel, to *Ada*, a curious scope, the reason for which is not quite explained. One does not expect a thematic monograph to cover the range soup to nuts, but the inclusion of the two post-*Ada* novels might have upset, or at least baffled, the theory Norman advances for Nabokov's Montreux series.

There are six chapters in all. The first is an attempt to trace the lineage of Nabokov's "troubled relationship to modernism" (p. 4) to the Russian nineteenth-century Hegel-nursed critics who measured art's worth by its ability not merely to take in the complex of public life they thought was backward, but to push toward its radical change. Further, Nabokov's *The Gift* is found not only to lampoon these "pre-historicist" critics (and not only in the famous chapter on Chernyshevsky), but, less obviously, to bear on the early Soviet "formalist" theory of literary procession from the past to the future by way of innovation. This makes for a smooth thematic transition to the study of *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* through the prism of the European avant-garde in the second chapter, and, less smoothly, to the perceived resemblance between Walter Benjamin's views of time, personal and common, and those of Nabokov, as derived from his autobiography. Moving chronologically, Norman then takes up *Bend Sinister* in order to set this novel's theme of murderous and vulgar left-handed pressure upon an individual against the theoretical observations of Theodor Adorno on the subject of "popular culture" in contemporary America. Chapter 5 offers a reading of *Lolita* from the angle of its "unspoken" consciousness of the plight of the European Jews in World War II, a subterranean theme that the author thinks is "intimately bound up with [Nabokov's] ethical critique of psychoanalysis" (p. 120). The last chapter considers *Pale Fire* and *Ada* as Arcadian novels, geographically and ideologically removed from the disturbing coarsening of American life: artificial pastorals enclosed in a conservatory. The book concludes with a very lucid five-page *auto-referat*.

The very first page carries what can be the book's master motto: "Nabokov's fiction and autobiography stage a tension between the desire to achieve the texture of time and the menacing presence of history which frustrates that dream." I am not sure how one *achieves* "the texture of time," a phrase by which Nabokov meant a temporal intaglio, a superimposed weave of sorts. I question as well the wisdom of compelling, *passim*, the term "history" to imply current events. Even though Norman presumes that the crowd he calls "historicist readers" has been "tempted to dismiss Nabokov's fiction for ... its apparent refusal to engage the contemporary" (p. 31), and even though he is careful to qualify that refusal as only perceived, this non-historicist reader cannot shake off the impression that the author himself also disapproves of Nabokov's aloofness, whether perceived or real. Accordingly, on the one hand, Norman wants to undeceive proponents of the writer's "engagement" by showing that Nabokov's novels are not hermetic, and takes care to keep a certain vertical clearance between himself and "historicist" critics; on the other, he appears to share with them the view that fiction is suspect, morally and artistically, and wilts from an internal dissonance, unless it engages the concerns of the period.

In the summer of 1917, on the eve of the cataclysm that flat-lined his country, a lyric poet, after a night of intense inspiration, asks the children playing outside his window, "Which millennium is it out there?" The poet (Pasternak) later said that *My Sister Life*, for which this poem served as a sort of epigraph, contained the closest depiction of that

“revolutionary summer”—and he would be perennially assailed by hack Soviet critics for exempting himself from the “new reality,” and the millennium verse would always be used as irrefutable damning evidence. Although Nabokov—who three fatidic months later, on October 25, 1917, was composing a letter in verse in his St. Petersburg house to the accompaniment of the machine-gun staccato of the *coup d'état* that was to expel him from his native land for good—was spared, in exile, this sort of vulgar abuse, he did receive his share of sharp criticism of the same kind. One can see why communist critics may vilify art alien to the current day and “the evil thereof,” as one understands why a concentration camp guard may mistreat inmates with impunity. But why should supposedly free observers insist on the artist’s engagement with “history”? Is there anything essentially wrong in his purposely banishing the racket of the contemporary from his figments?

Both artistically and philosophically, it can be argued that in any Nabokov novel the diachronic distance between the narrative tense and the surface of the narrated one (his dystemporal fiction, such as *Invitation to a Beheading* or *Ada*, presents exceptions, duly arguable) never exceeds ten years. In other words, the in-studio built reality in which he stages the acts of his novel is never so obsolete or so fanciful as to strike the contemporary reader as not his own. There are always clear signs, features, and fashions of the time that the reader either recognizes as spot-on from his own memory and experience, or else accepts them as indelibly true under the force of Nabokov’s art of depiction. In principle, to claim real artistic immunity to one’s time is absurd, while to seek to shield one’s art from the political currents of the day is the only way to produce anything that will endure time’s test. The tense of his fiction is the simple narrative past, with few and usually brief pluperfect backslides. He wrote no so-called historical novels. Would the same critics accuse Walter Scott of being snobbishly out of step with his time? Was it rather because Nabokov refused to submit to the spirit of the age (in J. S. Mill’s sense), refused to bend to the sinister side, to protest and applaud what the twentieth century intelligentsia saw fit to protest and to praise at a given decade, changing their collective mind in the next?

The book contains a number of keen and happy observations, especially fresh in the section on Nabokov’s Swiss period, which should indeed be studied as such (but with the inclusion of the two last novels). Norman rightly points out that the problem of time—its flow, swirling, bucking, backing—is at the core of the Nabokov novel, indeed of any good novel, because time management is what sets it apart from other genres of fiction. There are errors of fact or expression: Montreux in general, and certainly Nabokov’s hotel by the lake there, is not “in the heights of the Swiss Alps” (p. 4); Rudolph Hess was not sentenced in 1946 to death for “war crimes and genocide” (p. 124): indeed, he outlived Nabokov by ten years; and the phrase “Christian, pre-lapsarian incarnation [of a pastoral time]” (p. 137) is at best puzzling. And it is odd to state that by 1939 Nabokov’s “Russian prose [was] left with nowhere to go” (p. 33), whereas Nabokov regarded his next novel, *Solus Rex*, unfinished because of the intrusion of *history*, as his best Russian prose ever.

There are a few typos (some curious: “Frédéric and Rosanetta *wile away* blissful days” (p. 40); infelicitous wording and dense jargon requiring special tools to reconstruct, for example, when Norman “wish[es] to place the cultural opposition between high modernist subjective temporal mastery and the temporal homogeneity of mass culture within the context of *Bend Sinister* composition” (p. 79); and ill-formed clichés, such as the sledging “impacted upon” (p. 3) or the dreary “critically acclaimed” (p. 130, about *Pale Fire* of all books)—these and others should have been edited at the dissertation stage or at the publisher’s. The latter, by the way, by setting the price at \$125 for a two-hundred-page book, has effectively precluded private sales and severely limited library acquisitions, which is to be regretted

because scholars interested in the philosophy of time within and without fiction may wish to profit by reading it.

**Gennady Barabtarlo, University of Missouri**

Glazov-Corrigan, Elena. *Art after Philosophy: Boris Pasternak's Early Prose*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2013. xvi + 348 pp. \$79.95. ISBN 978-0-8142-1206-6.

Elena Glazov-Corrigan begins her book by stating her intent to “redefine an area in Slavic Studies that has, quite inexplicably, suffered from critical neglect for at least a quarter of a century—the innovative art of Boris Pasternak’s early prose, interdisciplinary to its core” (p. 1). She notes the “absence of innovative approaches” to Pasternak and warns of the “danger” of his becoming a “stranger, ‘postoronnij,’ not only to the development of contemporary art and literary theory, but also to the very core of intellectual intercultural discourse” (p. 2). Because of these alleged shortcomings in Pasternak scholarship, Glazov-Corrigan proposes to correct the “reductive portrait” of the poet’s early “absent-minded exuberance” (p. 5) by examining his early prose in the context of his studies in philosophy at Moscow University and the University of Marburg. When Pasternak embraced philosophy, it affected his entire *oeuvre*, and his early prose is a testament to his philosophical affinities. To prove it, Glazov-Corrigan sets out to analyze Pasternak’s three early short stories, “The Mark of Apelles,” “Letters from Tula,” and “The Childhood of Luvers,” all completed before 1918, as a “means of uncovering some of the most significant and recurrent networks and patterns of thought that will never disappear from [his] writing” (p. 11).

Despite her claims, Glazov-Corrigan is hardly a trailblazer in interpreting Pasternak’s poetics through philosophy. Lazar Fleishman, Christopher Barnes, Igor Smirnov, and Elliot Mossman, among other Pasternak scholars, have firmly established a close affinity between the poet’s art and philosophy, and most recently this connection was reexamined by Iuliia Briukhanova in *Tvorchestvo Borisa Pasternaka kak khudozhestvennaia versia filosofii zhizni* (2010). Thus, rather than “redefining” Pasternak studies, *Art after Philosophy* expands and refines our understanding of the poet’s thought. Scrupulously and with great attention to detail, Glazov-Corrigan examines Pasternak’s early prose and points to the “multi-voicedness” (p. 30) of its philosophical themes and penchant for *Naturphilosophie*, expressed most prominently by the poet’s view of the “interconnectedness of natural, vegetative, intellectual, and spiritual processes” (p. 33). It is Pasternak’s indebtedness to several philosophical influences that allows him to fulfill his artistic challenge, namely, “to portray the relationship between ideas and actions as engendered by a multiplicity of causes and influences, by generations of thinkers, natural processes, and historical events” (p. 34).

While this assertion may not be revealing, Glazov-Corrigan uses it for building critical ground for questioning and critiquing Roman Jakobson’s appraisal of Pasternak as the “master of metonymy” in his seminal essay, “Marginal Notes on the Prose of the Poet Pasternak” (1935). Although Jakobson’s judgment has been widely accepted among Pasternak scholars, Glazov-Corrigan finds it problematic for analyzing Pasternak’s early prose and argues that Jakobson’s metonymic evaluation of Pasternak’s poetics “implies a weakened role for the human subject” (p. 40). To her, this is incompatible with the poet’s philosophical views, especially since Pasternak himself never used the word “metonymy” or perceived his poetic world in formalist terms. With gusto and confidence, Glazov-Corrigan argues that Jakobson’s metonymic reading of Pasternak’s poetics is insufficient

and limiting for grasping the poet's "experimentation with time," his "indebtedness to Kant's inner and outer a priori intuition" (p. 60), his "Humean sensibility," and the "whole scope of the paradigms that consolidate the reality of Pasternak's ... highly significant evocations of major philosophical themes" (p. 304).

In Glazov-Corrigan's view, the answer to Pasternak's "puzzle"—the word she uses frequently to describe his poetics—is essentially in philosophy, and she reads his short story "The Mark of Apelles" through Plato. Her discussion highlights Plato's parable of the cave as a source of inspiration for Pasternak's story, in which the poet consistently uses the tropes of the sun and the light/darkness, both of which also figure in his mature work. For Glazov-Corrigan, Kantian—rather than Platonic—ideas saturate the philosophical dimension of "Letters from Tula," and her analysis focuses on the connection between the story's themes and the Kantian concepts of apperception, self, and creativity. Her discussion of "The Childhood of Luvers" once again emphasizes Kantian concepts of *a priori* and *a posteriori*, but also includes the neo-Kantian approach to the formation of the self, a central theme in Pasternak's description of Zhenia Luvers's inner world. In her conclusion, Glazov-Corrigan returns to critiquing Jakobson for overlooking the metaphoric depth of Pasternak's work and thus cutting out a "whole scope of the paradigms that consolidate the reality of Pasternak's metaphors, namely, his highly significant evocations of major philosophical themes" (p. 303).

Glazov-Corrigan's book is well researched and thought provoking, but her ardor for presenting as much evidence as possible for the prevalence of philosophy in Pasternak's early prose results not only in redundancy and excessive quotations but also in a single-minded picture of the poet's formative sources. The reader may forget that the early Pasternak was, above all, a brilliant practitioner of Russian modernism, and his early prose captured the emergence of the new aesthetic imperatives in the arts, when innovative narratives were forged in response to the new conceptualization of consciousness, perception, time, and memory. As a modernist author, Pasternak deliberately experimented with narrative forms and devices, and this is precisely what Jakobson's "metonymic" approach to the poet's prose delivered to the reader.

**Larissa Rudova, Pomona College**

Pontieri, Laura. *Soviet Animation and the Thaw of the 1960s: Not Only for Children*. Bloomington: John Libbey Publishing Ltd, 2012. viii + 248 pp. \$28.00 (paper). ISBN 978-0-86196-705-6.

Scholars and students of Soviet cinema have long lamented the lack of English-language texts on Soviet animation, one of the richest and yet least studied fields of Russian and Soviet culture. Laura Pontieri's small but excellent volume goes a long way to fill this niche.

Originating as a doctoral dissertation, this well-researched text presents Soviet animation produced at the Soiuzmul'tfil'm studio in its historical context. Although the focus of this work is the Thaw period of the 1960s, which arguably produced the most varied and interesting animated films of the Soviet era, the author provides a comprehensive overview of the state of animation in Russia and the Soviet Union during the preceding decades as well. In particular, she draws attention to the prerevolutionary stop-motion

works of Starewicz, the political satire of the 1920s, and the early 1930s visual and sound experimentations of Tsekhanovsky.

The book is clear in its layout and organization, thanks in part to the chronological presentation of the material, but also to the logical and clearly labeled subdivisions of each chapter and the strategically placed illustrations. Chapter 1 offers the “background history” of Russian and Soviet animation up to the late 1950s, while chapter 2 presents a detailed discussion of Soviet animation during Khrushchev’s Thaw. In chapter 3, Pontieri analyzes two films as case studies, *Great Troubles* (*Bol'shie nepriiatnosti*, Valentina and Zinaida Brumberg, 1961) and *Story of a Crime* (*Istoriia odnogo prestupleniia*, Fedor Khitruk, 1962), and in chapter 4 she provides additional commentary on selected films from the 1960s. The brief concluding chapter offers some discussion of the trends that began in the 1960s and further developed in Soviet animation of the 1970s, with nods to the most significant films and directors of this later period.

One of the great possibilities in a volume on animation is the opportunity for visual examples, and this book does have a number of important illustrations. However, the inconsistent quality of the images is disappointing; some stills have sharp lines and rich colors while many others are blurry and unclear. This is especially unfortunate in chapter 3, where the author focuses on specific details of the two films under discussion.

This small criticism notwithstanding, this book is an important contribution to the fields of Soviet cinema and Russian and Soviet culture. Pontieri’s work is well researched and provides an extensive bibliography on Soviet animation as well as a list of suggested readings on animation art and history. The author also includes a substantial and thorough, although by no means complete, filmography of Soviet animated films. This book would be of interest to scholars working in animation, Russian and Soviet cinema, twentieth-century history and culture, but at the same time should not be overlooked as a possible text in an undergraduate course on any of the above topics.

**Bella Ginzursky-Blum, College of William & Mary**

Brintlinger, Angela. *Chapaev and His Comrades: War and the Russian Literary Hero across the Twentieth Century*. Cultural Revolutions: Russia in the Twentieth Century. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2012. 286 pp. \$69.00. ISBN 978-1-61811-202-6.

In this book, Angela Brintlinger embarks on the ambitious task of interpreting Soviet culture through the lens of the war hero. Although she notes that “coming to terms with the Soviet legacy and the legacy of the hero may take another century,” she hopes that this book might start us on the right path (p. 31). She examines works that she deems “are among the most important ones through which to look at how war formed the central experience of Russians across the twentieth century and into the twenty-first” (p. 23): works of official literature, underground or dissident literature, and émigré literature. She analyzes mythologization, heroism, anti-heroism, and the tensions between collectivity and individualism. Brintlinger traces how the Soviet political situation shaped both the literary output, publication, and reception of works about heroes and antiheroes. She considers numerous works and authors who have received little attention in the West in spite of their prominent roles in Soviet culture. Clearly written, *Chapaev and his Comrades* is invaluable to scholars of war culture and scholars of Soviet and post-Soviet literature.

The text unfolds chronologically into four parts. In Part I, “Creating Heroes from Chaos,” Brintlinger begins her analysis with discussion of the prerevolutionary forerunners to Soviet heroes. She then moves on to interpret several texts that proved to be foundational for Soviet hero mythology: Gorky’s *Mother*, Gladkov’s *Cement*, and Furmanov’s novel based on the life of Civil War hero Vasilii Chapaev.

The second part, “World War II and the Hero,” might prove to be this monograph’s most significant contribution to the field. After detailing the role of propaganda in war culture, namely the work of Simonov and Tvardovskii, Brintlinger provides an excellent analysis of Tvardovskii’s “Vasilii Terkin: A Book about a Soldier” and of the work’s lasting appeal. She discusses Kazakevich’s “Star” and Panova’s *Traveling Companions* and the manners through which these two journalists blurred the lines between journalism and fiction. She concludes this section with a discussion of Viktor Nekrasov’s contribution to war literature, his ambiguous perspective, and the manner in which his intended audience shaped his work.

In the first chapter of Part III, Brintlinger examines the work of three writers—Tvardovskii (particularly his satirical poem “Vasilii Terkin in the Other World”), Solzhenitsyn, and Voinovich—and the postwar heroes they created within the context of the Cold War. She argues that “each in their own way, Tvardovskii, Solzhenitsyn, and Voinovich rewrote the myth of the Soviet soldier in response to postwar life, when victory brought Cold War rather than peace” (p. 150). In the second chapter, she argues how *shestidesiatniki* Dovlatov and Makanin responded to the period of stagnation by emphasizing antiheroism and by focusing “on the individual who reacts against the rhetoric of war, collectivism, and patriotism” (p. 178). While much of Dovlatov’s and Makanin’s work relates to war literature only tangentially, the chapter contributes to our understanding of literary protest during stagnation.

In the final part, Brintlinger returns to her discussion of war literature by situating Astaf’ev’s *The Accursed and the Damned* within the context of post-Soviet commemoration of World War II. In her final chapter, she analyzes Pelevin’s and Aksenov’s employment of the myth of Chapaev and other hero narratives in their attempts to define the military hero in a post-heroic, post-Soviet context.

Brintlinger demonstrates that although the Soviet people did not experience war on a national scale after World War II, war remains a dominant trope for the remainder of the twentieth century. The monograph is not without its shortcomings: in several cases, the reader is left to draw his or her own conclusions about sections. Most notably, a chapter on literature related to the Afghan war might have enriched the book. Regardless, this volume contributes greatly to the body of scholarship addressing the field of Soviet war literature, an understudied field in the West. Brintlinger’s engagement with Russian secondary literature related to these authors may be particularly helpful to specialists.

**Adrienne M. Harris, Baylor University**

Banerjee, Anindita. *We Modern People: Science Fiction and the Making of Russian Modernity*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2012. vii + 206 pp. \$24.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-8195-7334-6.

Densely written and theoretically sophisticated, Anindita Banerjee’s *We Modern People* engages treatments of space, time, [electrical] power, and the nature of the human in Russian



science fiction. This serves as a thematic base for the broad argument that the Russian sense of the modern emerged out of “science fiction’s dialogic relation to the real” (p. 157).

The first chapter notices that popular fiction’s penchant for the faraway and the exotic led to visualizations of the possible in the great unknown space of Siberia. Siberian space could conceptually contain a work such as Vladimir Odoevskii’s mid-nineteenth century work *4338*, which envisioned a technologically modernized Russia whose electrical railway network successfully interconnected the empire from European Russia to the Pacific Ocean. By the early twentieth century, the literary imagination surpassed terrestrial space, and so Bogdanov’s *Red Star*, for example, showcases that writer’s sense of technological possibility and his ambivalence toward his Martians’ advanced socialist society. (Here, *We Modern People* might have profitably engaged *Engineer Menni*, as well as *Red Star*). Whether one imagined possible Russias through Siberian space or cosmic Space, Russian science fiction writers ultimately created a body of work that fails to fit neatly into binaries of dystopia/utopia and dissidence/conformism, thus grounding Banerjee’s argument that the Russian sense of the modern transcends these easy categorizations.

Chapter 3 contains Banerjee’s most compelling evidence that science fiction played a tangible role in creating Russian modernity analysis. Here, *We Modern People* argues that science fiction helped shape the discursive significance of electrification, prior to Lenin’s formulation: “Communism is equal to Soviet power plus the electrification of the entire country” (p. 90). Among many examples, Odoevskii’s *4338* portrays a future St. Petersburg that fuses the technological possibilities of electricity (for example) lighting with its aesthetic/moral possibilities, as the characters undergo moral improvement in the electrically charged water of Mesmeric tubs. Banerjee’s Odoevskii undergirds the argument that when Lenin made his famous pronouncement, he was drawing on a long-existing well of discursive capital, and because electrical technology had been unavailable to all but a few, its possibilities got envisioned through science fiction. In Banerjee’s phrase, “electricity in Russia was nationalized through the frame of science fiction long before it could be materially domesticated” (p. 102).

*We Modern People* concludes with analysis of Russian science fiction’s engagement with the question of what it means to be human. Here, Banerjee argues that while it adopted the language of science and technology in engaging the possibility of biological human progress, Russian science fiction writers did not posit any restrictive aim or definite telos for this process. Banerjee’s most compelling example of this lies in discussion of Bogdanov’s two-way blood transfusions, which Banerjee reads as a fusion of scientific method with a mystical, highly speculative outlook which consistent with the Medieval view that “blood was the mediator between flesh and spirit” (p. 143).

So, the Russian sense of the modern emerged from the intertwining of the real and the imagined, with literary reflections on space, time, electrical power, and the nature of the human illustrating a process at once descriptive and constitutive of reality. The thoroughness with which *We Modern People* demonstrates this broad thesis largely depends on where one comes down on the dictum that “modernity is not an epoch but an attitude” (p. 11). If “modernity” is an aesthetic category, not a chronological one, then it is hard to see how Russian science fiction could have been anything *but* “a way of not just telling but also of making modernity in Russia” (p. 3). Those inclined to doubt that modernity is best classed as an aesthetic category should still find compelling chapter 3’s evidence that Russian science fiction played a practical role in determining public attitudes toward electricity, but these readers will probably be disappointed in the other chapters’ relatively brief attention to questions of reception and readership.

Finally, the book contains no general bibliography, only a brief “Further Reading” section. When reading Banerjee’s discussion of the Nietzschean superman in Bogdanov’s thought, or the chapter “Transcending Time,” one wonders to what extent Banerjee has engaged the work of Bernice Rosenthal, or if she has read Tim Harte’s recent book on the aesthetics of speed. These quibbles aside, *We Modern People* is a solid addition to the ever-expanding array of scholarship that addresses questions of art and life in the late imperial and early Soviet eras. (*Slavic Review* recently devoted much of an issue to science fiction). While occasionally straining under its theoretical commitments—“heterochronotopia” (p. 160) seems unlikely to clear up exactly how science fiction both described and constituted the real—*We Modern People* provides plenty of evidence that imaginative fiction was no passive bystander in the emergence of a uniquely Russian sense of the modern.

**Aaron Weinacht, University of Montana Western**

#### HISTORY

Uspenskij, Boris, and Victor Zhivov. *“Tsar and God” and Other Essays in Russian Cultural Semiotics*. Edited by Marcus C. Levitt. Ars Rossica. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2012. vi + 273 pp. \$99.00. ISBN 978-1-936235-49-0.

The republication in English of six classic essays by B. A. Uspenskij and the late V. M. Zhivov is a welcome addition to the field of Russian studies. Since the value of Uspenskij and Zhivov’s work in liberating the narrative of Russian history from the dead hand of Marxist and Cold War teleology is indisputable, I shall limit this review to a brief description of the book’s contents and a discussion of its technical aspects: its organization and translation.

These essays address aspects of the historical process through which the monarchy in Russia came to be identified as an ontological marker within the religious realm; or, as Pavel Florenskii put it in 1916, “in the consciousness of the Russian people autocracy is not a judicial right but a fact, manifested by God and God’s mercy, and not a human convention” (p. 2). For Uspenskij and Zhivov this process is not the consequence of some vague predilection for “oriental despotism,” arising out of geography or family structure, but a concrete and direct result of the semiotic havoc wrought by the heavy-handed reforms of the first Russian emperor; thus it is Peter I and his energetic acolyte, Catherine II, who provide the bulk of the materials discussed in this book. This is the counterintuitive heart of the Zhivov-Uspenskij paradigm of Russia and the West; it is Westernization itself which made that most Russian of all institutions—the sacred autocracy—semiotically possible.

The first essay, the eponymous “Tsar and God: Semiotic Aspects of the Sacralization of the Monarch in Russia,” written jointly, sets the stage by discussing pre-Petrine Russian monarchic culture, including the Byzantine influence, Ivan the Terrible, the Time of Troubles, the Polish-Ruthenian Baroque, the Church Schism of 1666, and Peter’s cooption of aspects of all of these to create a qualitatively new image of Russia. The resulting clash of “two perceptions of the sign—conventional and non-conventional—led to the expansion of the civic cult of the monarch into the religious sphere” (pp. 60-61); traditional Muscovites took the Baroque identification of “tsar” and “God” literally, not metaphorically, and thus either had to reject old Russian notions of just and unjust rulers, replacing them with the

idea of the omnipotent monarch beyond all judgment, who can establish any norm or practice, including religious, moral, cultural, and behavioral, or they had to flee into the apocalyptic world of the Old Belief.

V. M. Zhivov's "Cultural Reform in Peter I's System of Transformation" focuses on the role of blasphemy and the All-Jesting and All-Drunken Council in the project of Russia's transformation; again, the clash of two semiotic systems is underscored—traditional Russian religiosity reacted to the multivalent Baroque sensibility of parody and play underlying Peter's mock church council by labeling the tsar Antichrist. Uspenskij's "Tsar and Pretender: *Samozvanchestvo* or Royal Imposture in Russia as a Cultural-Historical Phenomenon" and "Enthronement in the Russian and Byzantine Tradition" fill in other aspects of the monarchic paradigm. Zhivov's "The Myth of the State in the Age of Enlightenment and its Destruction in Late Eighteenth-Century Russia" discusses the disconnect between Enlightenment ideology as professed by Catherine II and the actual functioning of the state. The resulting appearance of the poet as rival to the tsar in the ontological realm, at least for the Westernized elite, demonstrates the open-endedness of the Zhivov-Uspenskij paradigm; there are no predetermined endings, even in Russian history.

In "Europe as Metaphor and Metonymy (in Relation to the History of Russia)," Uspenskij offers a theoretical framework for these discussions based on Jakobson's juxtaposition of metaphor/metonymy. Instead of building on the common Christian European values which medieval Russia shared with Europe, albeit from a peripheral and thus metonymic position, Peter I's imaginary Europe precluded any actual convergence, remaining an unachievable (because unreal) metaphor for what Russia *should* become: "Peter I created European Russia, but at the same time he created its opposite: the image of Asiatic Russia as backward, obscure and ignorant. Consequently, he is responsible for the basic, cultural tension which determined the subsequent evolution of Russian culture, and, more generally, the course of Russian history" (p. 188).

Unfortunately, copy-editing problems mar what would otherwise be an excellent English-language resource for the study of Russian history and culture. For example: lack of consistency—"Iugozapadnarusskaia" is rendered "Ruthenian" in one paragraph and "southwest Russian" in the next (p. 18); errors in translation—"Khrista Gospodnia" [the Lord's Christ or Anointed] is translated as "the Lord Christ" (p. 26); "*ne svidetel'stviuit ... o real'noi sakralizatsii monarkhii*" is translated "testifies to an actual sacralization of the monarchy" (p. 59). This error, along with a change in the authors' original paragraph organization obscures the main point of Section III of "Tsar and God": that Baroque panegyrics did not, by their very nature, lead to a sacralization of the monarchy, that it was Peter's idiosyncratic understanding of the Baroque which resulted in the semiotic changes in Russia's political culture. The "List of Original Publications" does not include the earliest dates for the essays in question.

Finally, this book needs an Introduction. Why were these essays chosen, what particular aspects of their authors' creative legacy do they reflect, how are they interconnected, what is their context? Will the non-Russian reader—since I assume that specialists will have already read these essays in their original Russian—know Tartu, Bakhtin, Uspenskij's work with icons and Old Believers, or Zhivov's Orthodox Christianity? Without such knowledge the binary structure underlying the semiotic discussions of sacred monarchy in this collection could lead to the perception of the very "semiotic totalitarianism" which Uspenskij and Zhivov worked so hard to overcome; in other words "Peter equals Russia's doom." While it is impossible to convey the richness and complexity of Uspenskij and Zhivov's

understanding of history in any single book, some context is necessary to do these essays justice.

In lieu of the missing Introduction I would like to end with a few lines from Zhivov's essay, "On the Vicissitudes of History and the Open-Endedness of Historical Paradigms," not included in "Tsar and God" but characteristic of that resistance to closed explanations of history, to lack of alternatives which is the essence of Zhivov's and Uspenskij's work and which I see as a fitting epitaph for Viktor Markovich Zhivov: "History is a continuous process of forgetting, always creative and always incomplete. The demiurge of history is Charon, but after the golden age of Herodotus he has worked slowly, with the result that history, in its march forward, keeps stumbling over the shades of the dead left behind ... we create finished historical paradigms but the paradigms realized through actual historical events remain open-ended. They inscribe the past in the present, but there is always an overabundance of past, which is why these paradigms must contradict each other, so that in their diverse parts there can appear nooks in which different pasts may shelter."

Царствие Вам Небесное, дорогой Виктор Маркович.

**Elizabeth Kristofovich Zelensky, Georgetown University**

Vishlenkova, E., R. Galiullina, and K. Il'ina. *Russkie professora: Universitetskaia korporativnost' ili professional'naia solidarnost'*. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2012. 656 pp. R364.00. ISBN 978-5-86793-945-8.

At present the government of Vladimir Putin is overseeing wholesale reform of the university system in Russia. This top-down initiative to increase efficiency and reduce corruption is an attempt to revitalize the international standing of Russia's top universities. With this in mind, the authors of *Russkie professora*, which is devoted to a study of the "professional culture" (p. 7) of academics in Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century, have produced a timely and relevant work.

As the authors attest, universities in Russia were established "in the context of the Westernization politics of the Russian authorities" (p. 10). However, the persuasive argument put forward in *Russkie professora* is that a new type of university emerged "on the periphery of the Western world" in Russia under conditions rationally controlled by the government (p. 10). Thus, Russian professors never experienced the freedom from political agency espoused by Wilhelm von Humboldt in *The Sphere and Duties of Government*. Indeed, the authors of *Russkie professora* argue that many university pedagogues and administrators willingly collaborated with the government in order to mold a new cultural elite (p. 13). In an epoch in which romanticization of science promoted both individual scientific genius and exotic expeditions, many academics in Russia were seemingly more than happy to acquiesce to the authorities in order to benefit their own research and careers.

The publication of *Russkie professora* represents the culmination of extensive research undertaken between 2008 and 2010 as part of a project entitled "Gde universitet, tam i Evropa: Transfer i adaptatsiia universitetskoi idei v Rossiiskoi imperii vtoroi poloviny XVIII–pervoi poloviny XIX veka," supported by the German Historical Institute in Moscow and the Gerda Henkel Foundation. The researchers focused on the archives of three universities—Moscow, Kharkov, and Kazan—and drew on documents dating from 1802, when the Ministry of Education was established, until 1858.

The first part of *Russkie professora* contains an analytical study divided into three sections. The first section gives a good overview of how *popechiteli* (superintendents) quickly went from being envisaged as the patrons and planters of the Enlightenment during the first decade of Alexander I's reign, to being converted to the role of enforcers of state power during the Nicholaevan era (p. 45). This section also includes an insightful account of how the official ideology of "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality" came to play a pivotal role in directing universities toward the construction of supposedly "Russian" identities. What is more, this section contains an excellent analysis of the intensive bureaucratization of university life that occurred as a result of the "revolutionary phobia which seized hold of government circles after 1848" (p. 65).

The second section of analysis concentrates on the manner in which professors were expected to exercise authority and control over students, both within the lecture hall and in society in general. According to the authors, the militarization of university life accorded with Foucault's theory of the panoptical regime of power, in which "observation and punishment" formed the crux of educational policy (p. 107).

The final section of analysis focuses on how professors were likely to prosper if their subject of expertise was perceived to validate and bolster the regime's political and ideological narrative. Naturalists and philologists, in particular, could seemingly count on financial and administrative support (p. 153).

The second part of *Russkie professora* is devoted to collating and publishing a wealth of material related to the three universities from numerous Russian archives. The broad scope of archival documents published in the book provides many fascinating insights into the professorial milieu of the age. Thus, one can read copious letters written by the *popechiteli* of the six regional university districts, as well as by S. S. Uvarov, the minister of education between 1833 and 1849. Various official records (protocols, reports, expeditionary journals) are also published, which add to the rich stock of primary material published for the first time in this work.

This volume, in sum, is a worthy addition to the growing body of literature on educational policy in early nineteenth-century Russia. Not only does it provide fresh analytical insights, but it also acts as an indispensable sourcebook of primary material for historians of the Russian pedagogical system.

**Robert Collis, University of Helsinki**

Drozdov, Iu. N. *Tiurkskoiazychnyi period evropeiskoi istorii*. Moscow: "Litera," 2011. 600 pp. ISBN 978-5-904729-20-2.

Yuri Drozdov opens his book with the statement that "from the great number of ethnonyms and other terms cited in the ancient sources, [we know that these eastern European languages] differed fundamentally from those spoken by European populations today." He then inquires: "What were these languages? Who spoke them? What is the relationship of their speakers to today's European peoples? In what way and for what reasons did their languages change to those we hear today?" (p. 7). His answer is grounded in postulating Turkic as the language spoken by the Scythians (also Sarmatians, Savromatians), who inhabited a vast territory from the Vistula River to the Ural Mountains, which form a geographic border between Europe and Asia. He claims that "an analysis of the tribal ethnic names of these people shows they were all Turkic-speaking" (p. 8). Drozdov explains that these people had

significant impact on all nations populating the European continent. His book is designed to assess various linguistic and historiographical materials to prove his quite controversial claim. This book is also envisioned as a contribution to the discussions of non-Russian cultural heritage and cultural exchanges on the Eurasian territory—discussions that have been significantly enriched in the ex-Soviet republics since the 1990s.

This book represents a large body of literature published in Russian, which revisits and revises the traditional historiographical sources in the new interpretation of ethnic and linguistic dynamics on the Eurasian territory, especially in Eastern Europe. Two features make this book quite different from other Russian-language publications on this topic: its controversial claim of the Turkic origin of the Scythians and many other tribes on the territory of ancient and medieval Europe, and a very novel and bold use of mainly ethnolinguistic evidence to prove the author's thesis.

*The Turkic-speaking Period of European History* brings together facts from numerous sources, including ancient Greek, Latin, and medieval European texts, to trace the dynamic changes of linguistic and cultural patterns in Europe. Drozdov argues against the school of thought that believes in the Indo-Iranian origin of the languages spoken by the Scythian tribes and claims that there is a large body of chronicles that include many words and terms of Turkic origin. He cites Turkologist M. Zakiev as stating that “the [many] words with non-Iranian roots, especially Turkic, prove the inclusion of Turkic-speaking tribes into the Scythian unions” (p. 19) and takes a step further in asserting that “the Scythians were Turkic-speaking people” (p. 22). He also argues that despite substantial documented evidence, mainstream historians “do not accept this fact” (p. 22). He structures his arguments around the discussion of specific geographic sub-territories and groups of people to uncover Turkic roots and Turkic cultural links. For example, he suggests that the northern parts of Europe were “conquered by migrants from Asia” (p. 135) and thus were “conquered by Turkic-speaking tribes” (p. 135). In order to support this claim he uses two sets of evidence: first, his reinterpretation of the ancient and medieval sources, and, second, the linguistic analysis of certain words and geographic, social, and ethnic terms. In this case he maps the migration of Turkic-speaking tribes from the Kama and Volga rivers to the Dnepr River and the Baltic region and from there to the territory of Denmark and Scandinavia. He hypothesizes that although Turkic-speaking tribes conquered northern Europe, they were gradually assimilated by the Scandinavian native population and by the twelfth century had accepted local languages. Using a similar approach Drozdov assesses cultural, ethnic, and tribal links between Turkic-speaking people and medieval Vandals, Germans, Franks, Galls, Brits, and Italians. There is also a separate chapter devoted to a search for historical and ethno-linguistic links between the Turkic-speaking people and the eastern Slavic tribes, including ancestors of the Rus (Russians). In the conclusion the author discusses the role of Christianity in the formation of the “language and consequently ethnic environment” (p. 546), which again included the interaction between the Turkic-speaking peoples and those speaking other languages.

In sum, this book represents an interesting cultural, linguistic, and ethnographic overview of the historical development of Europe, written from an alternative Turkic-centric view. Although discussion of the Turkic roots of Russian culture is not new—this theory was widely popularized by Russian scholar Lev Gumiliev—Drozdov takes this interpretation of history significantly further. His claims are certain to spark debates about the nature of cultural and linguistic relations between the various tribes and nations of Europe.

**Rafis Abazov, Al Farabi Kazakh National University**

Schippan, Michael. *Die Aufklärung in Russland im 18. Jahrhundert*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012. 493 pp. €88.00. ISBN 978-3-447-06626-6.

In the historiography on eighteenth-century Russia, much of the most important work in recent decades has been devoted to cultural and intellectual history and to Russia's interactions with the West. An overarching question raised by this scholarship is whether and how Russia participated in the European-wide project of the Enlightenment. Michael Schippan's new book seeks to provide answers with a synthetic overview of eighteenth-century Russian culture.

The book is divided into four parts. The introductory section discusses the concept of "enlightenment" and introduces historiographical themes. This is followed by a chronologically arranged history from Peter the Great to Alexander I. The third section takes a geographic approach, looking at St. Petersburg, Moscow, several provincial towns, and Siberia. The last section is thematic: it examines attitudes toward Asia, the problem of war and peace, economic and religious thought, and the writing of history.

Michael Schippan is a distinguished historian of eighteenth-century Russia. He began his career in the 1970s in East Germany and the Soviet Union, and in some ways the book reflects these influences. It highlights the role of European, especially German, emigrants and influences in Russian society; exploring this was a great contribution of East German scholarship, which thereby helped to integrate Russia into the wider European history of the Enlightenment. Schippan expands on this by examining how influences from Russia—for example, the wide circulation of Catherine II's *Nakaz*—helped in return to mold the Enlightenment in the West. Schippan also maintains a sustained engagement with the Soviet-era Russian scholarship, which does not usually receive comparable attention from the newer generation of historians in the West; readers unfamiliar with Soviet scholarship will gain a new appreciation for its achievements. This engagement is by no means uncritical. For example, Schippan takes Marxist-Leninist historians to task for claiming that there were atheists in eighteenth-century Russia, that Russia was in a transition from feudalism to capitalism, that Russians who promoted the Enlightenment were usually critics of the regime, or that foreigners played only a marginal part in the Russian Enlightenment. The Soviet historiography has a strong presence in the book, but it is assessed intelligently and critically.

Methodologically, the book takes a conservative approach inasmuch as it treats the Enlightenment primarily as an intellectual movement created by individuals and institutions. Readers learn about Peter and Catherine, Novikov and Karamzin, the Academy of Sciences and Moscow University, and much else. On the other hand, the book shows less interest in semiotic approaches that foreground the Enlightenment's connection with the everyday attitudes and values of the Russian upper class. It also does not engage much with arguments that stress the connections between Enlightenment rationalism and authoritarian power structures or imperialist discourses. The Enlightenment appears in this book more as an enterprise of discrete individuals and organizations than as a larger cultural system or sociopolitical project, and while we learn a great deal about many interesting aspects and actors of eighteenth-century Russian culture, our sense of Enlightenment Russia in its totality remains comparatively vague.

**Alexander M. Martin, University of Notre Dame**

Rey, Marie-Pierre. *Alexander I: The Tsar who Defeated Napoleon*. Translated by Susan Emanuel. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012. xiv + 439 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 978-0-87580-466-8.

Sir Winston Churchill's remark about Russia as riddle, mystery, and enigma is equally apropos for its early nineteenth century emperor, Alexander I. A sovereign whose views oscillated between the Enlightenment's ideals and dark mysticism, reform and reaction, as well as altruistic peace-making and naked national self-interest, the paradoxical tsar bewildered contemporaries and historians alike. The poet Prince Petr Viazemskii characterized him as a "sphinx," to Aleksandr Herzen he was a "crowned Hamlet," and Napoleon dubbed his great rival a "shifty Byzantine." None of this has discouraged scholars from endeavoring to understand Alexander, and Marie-Pierre Rey's recent study is a particularly judicious contribution.

I was a little sceptical about reviewing another French biography of the emperor. Maurice Paléologue's *The Enigmatic Tsar* was in very much in the bodice-ripper camp, and the less said about Henri Troyat's potboiler the better. A respected professor of Russian history at the Sorbonne, Rey is more serious. Only such prerevolutionary works as Nikolai Shil'der's four-volume behemoth and Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich's "attempt at an historical investigation" equal her exhaustive toil with primary sources. These include the usual suspects, such as the imperial family's own papers at the State Archive of the Russian Federation, the Russian State Archive of Early Acts, and the French Foreign Ministry's holdings, as well as a number of private collections in Italy and France.

Rey is generous with her *trouvailles*. Occasionally filling nearly a page, the quotations initially struck me as excessively long. But the author's approach is to allow the sources to speak for themselves. Rather than telling us what to think, she prefers to provide enough evidence for her readers to make up their own minds about the "northern sphinx." This will frustrate those who prefer their history neatly packaged, but we do get a much richer portrait, with all of its shadowy complexities.

Northern Illinois University Press has done a service by making this book available to an Anglophone audience. Well written and thought provoking, it would be suitable for an upper-level course in Imperial Russian history. Unfortunately, the translation can be awkward. Thus "le tsar reçoit avec un faste chaleureux les souverains prussiens" becomes "he received with a warm pomp the Prussian sovereigns" (p. 200) and "elle écrit à sa mere avec une clairvoyance qui fait honneur," is converted to "she wrote to her mother with an honorable clairvoyance" (p. 252).

Part I, which deals with Alexander's upbringing and youth, is particularly illuminating. Some of the tsar's inconsistencies were attributable to his confused loyalties, torn as he was by the attentions of Catherine the Great, a doting grandmother who monopolized his education, and filial affection for the heir she despised, Paul I. Indeed, as Rey reminds us, the empress seriously contemplated passing over her son and bequeathing the Romanov crown to her favorite grandchild. Two dramatic events in Alexander's life also left deep psychological scars: the assassination of his father, Paul, during a palace coup in 1801, as well as Napoleon's invasion eleven years later. Rey's discussion of the latter may strike some as cursory. Then again, that is the subject of her more recent book, *L'effroyable tragédie, une nouvelle histoire de la campagne de Russie* (The terrible tragedy: A new history of the Russian campaign, Paris: Flammarion, 2012).

The biography does not neglect the bizarre second half of Alexander's reign, which saw the emperor retreat from adulation and continental primacy in 1815 to reactionary



obscurantism and a melancholic isolation that ended in his mysterious death ten years later at the relatively early age of forty-eight. There is also brief discussion of the legend that the tsar actually staged his death to take the identity of a Siberian *starets*, Fedor Kuzmich, again without venturing a definitive answer. In short, Rey has given us a sympathetic, albeit not uncritical, portrayal of a remarkably visionary ruler, whose ambitions included ending serfdom, a constitutional monarchy, and a durable mechanism for settling great-power conflicts. What a tragedy that Alexander proved so incapable of realizing them.

**David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, Brock University**

Antonova, Katherine Pickering. *An Ordinary Marriage: The World of a Gentry Family in Provincial Russia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. xx + 304 pp. \$74.00. ISBN 978-0-19-979669-1.

This book describes in detail the recorded activities, worldview, and domestic outlook of one gentry family, the Chikhachevs of Vladimir province, in the nineteenth century. Antonova relies on a unique trove of documents from the Vladimir archive, concentrating on the period from 1830 to the 1860s, and primarily written by a husband, wife, and their son. The monograph opposes the Chikhachevs' experience of marriage to contemporary western ideas about domesticity.

Family writers accepted as "ordinary" a marriage in which the wife managed the finances and estate, while the husband educated the children, including attention to their moral upbringing, and Antonova argues that this acceptance shows the divergence of Russian experience from Western notions of ideal domestic roles. Chapters describe the provincial world of the Chikhachevs, society, the village, estate management, wider society, health and loss, domesticity, education, and relationships with broader understandings of the roles of the nobility and of rural life. The result is rich in detail and contributes to the growing literature on both the nobility in the imperial period and on provincial Russia.

Antonova's study expands upon the numerous books of the last few decades that seek to investigate Russian society and culture on their own terms by providing a microhistorical engagement with gentry records of everyday activities. Because of the serendipitous survival of the large cache of documents, including, as Antonova emphasizes, writing by a middling provincial woman, she is able to provide a compelling and relatively long-term look into the practical and intellectual experiences her narrators recount. This opens a window onto everyday life not usually afforded the historian of the provincial nobility, as records can be spotty and often require interpolation.

The book expands the historical understanding of domestic roles in the provinces in important ways; however, this reader wished for further analysis of the materials, pushing beyond Antonova's well-executed demonstration of the normalcy of these seemingly, for nineteenth-century Westerners, inverted roles. For example, a more nuanced discussion of the author's thinking on microhistory and the history of everyday life would have enriched the deeply illustrative data. In any case, this remains an interesting portrait of a provincial noble family, one that contributes additional evidence for the argument that Russians of the nineteenth century were, as were most Europeans of the time, both European and Russian, in their own ways.

**Mary W. Cavender, The Ohio State University**

Kuxhausen, Anna. *From the Womb to the Body Politic: Raising the Nation in Enlightenment Russia*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2013. xiv + 228 pp. \$29.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-299-28994-2.

European Enlightenment thought filled the pages of Russian publications in the second half of the eighteenth century. The vehicles that carried these ideas into Russia included foreign literature, European visitors, foreign-born employees of Russian institutions of science and learning, and Russians who had studied abroad. The most prominent of these enlighteners, Empress Catherine II, was a foreign-born and -educated occupant of the highest office in the land. Enlightenment discourses appeared in the fields of morals, statecraft, religion, science, medicine, and education. Most have been studied and analyzed in detail, although not always in connection with a broader theme that unifies a number of them. This is the task that Anna Kuxhausen sets herself in this slim volume, in which she examines a series of the discourses associated with childbearing and childrearing and casts them into a larger framework of the emergence and nurturing of a national consciousness. She finds that the cultural meanings of childhood in this era are closely associated in the minds of the elite with aspirations to create a strong, competitive Russia by ensuring the physical survival and appropriate education of Russian children.

Kuxhausen builds her study on life stages, starting with pregnancy and childbirth and the efforts of leading physicians to train midwives and to regulate their practice. She focuses on Pavel Kondoidi, a Russianized Greek doctor, born in Corfu and trained at Leiden, and Nestor Maksimovich Maksimovich (better known as Maksimovich-Ambodik), a Ukrainian-born doctor of obstetrics and pediatrics trained in Strasbourg. Kuxhausen points out the dynamic, often described in studies of this type of other countries, of scientifically trained men striving to assert their authority in a realm traditionally ruled by women. Although the doctors, with the help of Catherine II, were able to create institutes of midwifery, they enjoyed little success in using them to reform childbirth and child nurture. Here Kuxhausen makes an excellent comparative point about the effective licensing of midwives in German cities through local action and the failure to regulate childbirth in Russia as a result of the use of an autocratic authority that was poorly articulated with local governing institutions and social agencies.

The principal texts on the healthy physical upbringing of children were the writings of John Locke and of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Russian enlighteners drew on both sources and, accordingly, purveyed a confusing variety of methods. Effectively, the child's body served as a site for writers to expand on their personal prejudices and to accuse women of every social rank of incompetence in child care, even if a few male writers praised peasant women for breast-feeding their babies and contrasted this practice with wealthy families' use of wet nurses.

The final chapters discuss the education of boys and girls. Here Kuxhausen rehearses the well-known prescriptive texts of the era and highlights their metaphors, in which cleanliness equaled civilization and Russia (as *Rossiia*) referred to a unity of culture and empire. Again using prescriptive moralistic writings and plays about "petimeters," she points out worries that some writers expressed about the blurring of gender boundaries and the need to teach Russian masculinity. A chapter on "the new girlhood" is devoted almost exclusively to the Smolny Institute, which Kuxhausen claims established an expectation that noble girls should be educated. This belief became a norm by the early nineteenth century. The object of a Smolny education, she writes, was to produce a woman guided by

reason, who would be able to recognize a reasonable man and submit to his will, thus preserving patriarchy while promoting civilization. Because Kuxhausen does a good job of gender analysis, I was surprised to see her at one point use “gender” where “sex” was intended and thus collapse an important theoretical distinction.

Kuxhausen has provided a good guide to the rapid entry of Enlightenment discourses into Russian intellectual life in the fields of obstetrics, pediatrics, early child care, and education, and she has done so with an overarching theme that reveals the mutually reinforcing effects and aspirations for national assertion of the Russian court and educated elite of the late eighteenth century. A lasting legacy of this penetration of European ideas and the reception of them by Russians eager to foster an empire of healthy, prosperous, and moral citizens was the notion that children belonged as much to the state as to their parents.

**David L. Ransel, Indiana University**

Wirtschafter, Elise Kimerling. *Religion and Enlightenment in Catherinian Russia: The Teachings of Metropolitan Platon*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013. xiv + 193 pp. \$49.00. ISBN 978-0-87580-469-9.

Until recently, early-modern Russian homiletics has attracted relatively little scholarly attention, especially among historians (literary and linguistic specialists such as Giovana Brogi and the late Viktor Zhivov have been more attentive). True, some panegyric orations to Peter the Great, Elizabeth, and Catherine the Great found their way onto our radar screens, but they constituted rare exceptions. In the last few years, though, a handful of works have appeared, including Marina Kiseleva’s study of Semen Polotskii (2011) and Iurii Kagarlitskii’s dissertation on the rhetorical strategies of selected homilists (1999). To these we can now add Elise Wirtschafter’s very welcome study of the sermons of Platon Levshin, the important Catherinian cleric who became an influential Metropolitan of Moscow.

Written in the clear and succinct style that has been the hallmark of Wirtschafter’s prose, *Religion and Enlightenment* includes three thematic chapters around the intersection of ideas between Platon’s articulation of Orthodoxy and some of the main lines of Enlightenment thinking (for example, “Divine Providence and Human History” and “Free Will and the Human Person”). Bracketing these are introductory and concluding discussions of the meanings of the Enlightenment in both a pan-European and specifically Russian context. This approach reflects a number of recent trends in the history of the European Enlightenment in general which seek to write religion back into the narrative and to question the teleology of secularization (Steve Bruce, S. J. Barnett, et al.).

To her credit, Wirtschafter treats the religious content of the sermons seriously, and rightly considers questions of faith and redemption to lie at their core. Concentrating on the narrative structure and central themes of specific sermons, the interweaving of Scriptural language and earthly ideas, she argues that Platon sought to engage Enlightenment thinking—reason, human improvement, happiness, earthly authority—without sacrificing the core of faith: sin, redemption through Christ, and the primacy of salvation. All of this may seem so obvious as to be unnecessary to mention, but far too many—although by no means all—scholarly discussions of eighteenth-century clerical discourse have all but ignored the theological element in favor of the secular subtext, or have treated it as encoded language

that is really about something else entirely. This book has, perhaps, moved us irreversibly beyond that approach.

Platon's prominence within the intellectual elite of Catherine's Russia, and in particular among the educated milieu of Moscow, has long been recognized (for example, in the brief biography by K. A. Papmehl). Still, although the scholarship situates him comfortably in the literary world of Catherinian Russia, it has not heretofore interrogated Platon's major writings, in this case his sermons, through the conceptual frameworks of the Enlightenment. This latter query frames the entire brief of Wirtschafter's study. To what extent did the sermons merge Enlightenment and Orthodoxy as complementary or compatible modes of thinking and living? How did spiritual and sensual knowledge intermingle in his writings? How did he interconnect earthly happiness and heavenly salvation? How did the light of Christian faith (*prosvet*) relate to the Enlightenment (*prosveshchenie*) of individual reason?

I can only applaud Wirtschafter's effort to bring printed sermons into the mainstream of eighteenth-century Russian intellectual history, and as with any good book, this one stimulates a long list of questions for further discussion. First, how do Platon's sermons compare to those written earlier by his clerical forebears? Many of the themes that Platon raises—of human and divine reason or wisdom, submission to God ("King of kings") and to the earthly ruler ("king"), individual experience versus the body of Orthodox believers, and others—echo those posed by preachers of both Peter's and Elizabeth's day. Was Platon's approach or explanation in any way different from theirs? Similarly, to what extent was Platon addressing explicitly Enlightenment concepts and values versus those that could have been comfortably raised in early times? Did Platon depend upon the Enlightenment, whether as counterpoint, inspiration, or context? Was he an Enlightenment thinker himself? Could sermons with comparable themes and tropes have been written earlier? Regardless of the answers to these questions, might his utterances have resonated differently, or been understood differently, among audiences that themselves embraced Enlightened world views?

The characterizations of both Enlightenment and Orthodoxy that form the backdrop for the exegeses of Platon's sermons consist primarily of a handful of core tenets for each, rather than as specific ideas that were themselves contested. Leading Catherinian *literati* (for example, M. M. Shcherbatov, N. I. Novikov) make little more than cameo appearances. The small but growing cohort of other published Russian Orthodox homilists also gain only passing mention. Thus we do not quite get a sense of the intimate engagements that Platon's ideas may have had with those of his wider milieu. Wirtschafter's many writings on eighteenth-century Russian ideas, laws, and identities entitle her to put forth such a model of Enlightenment. The theological sources on whom she relies are uniformly first-rate (Schmemmann, Florovskii, and so on). Still, Orthodoxy emerges here as a more-or-less fixed body of doctrine, and this model of syncretism runs a bit counter to recent tendencies that have sought to provide more critical readings of the Enlightenment and more fluid or dynamic ones of Orthodoxy.

In sum, this is a sparkling addition to what remains a miniscule scholarly corpus. Lots of questions remain. So, let's talk.

**Gary Marker, State University of New York at Stony Brook**

Leonhard, Jörn and Ulrike von Hirschhausen, eds. *Comparing Empires: Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Bristol: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012. 556 pp. \$69.95. ISBN 978-3-525-31040-3.

This enthralling, yet perplexing, project not only challenges the traditional understanding of the empire but also defies existing historiography. While current historiography tends to study empires as isolated national histories, *Comparing Empires* looks at empire study in a broader sense. The volume compares four major multinational and ethnically diverse Eastern and Western empires that existed between the eighteenth and early twentieth century—the Russian, Ottoman, British, and Habsburg. The volume consists of twenty-nine essays derived from two conferences, which were held in 2007 in Hamburg and Freiburg. It seems that Leonhard Jörn and Ulrike von Hirschhausen began this project in 2009 with the publication of their *Empires and Nationalstaaten im 19. Jahrhundert* and developed it into the current volume, which has become part of a larger project comparing multiethnic empires by exploring the intricacies, experiences, and challenges of the four multiethnic empires in a broader context.

The volume looks past traditional narratives of “rise, decline, and fall” or mere comparison with nation-states, but rather how these multi-ethnic polities efficaciously carried on for so long and survived competition. In the introductory essay, Leonhard and Hirschhausen give a detailed and well-organized assessment of the volume and provide insightful commentaries of each section and every scholarly piece in the collection. The volume is divided into six sections, each of which compares four multiethnic populations in terms of several themes. The first section—“The Challenge of Imperial Space”—argues that in order to move forward both physically and figuratively, railways, telegraphs, and canals were constructed for the mobilization of people and utilization of modern technologies. Imperial infrastructures did not make for improved and more efficient imperial rule, however, as had been the expectation. Paradoxically, the very plan and consequent creation of these imperial projects challenged authority by creating doubt and suspicion. The second section, “Surveying Multi-Ethnic Populations” argues that imperial elites and experts surveyed the people and the land in pursuit of knowledge and control in order to embody the idea of a nation-state. The third section is on “The Monarchy as an Imperial Instrument,” and it contends that in the face of new challenges and to establish legitimate rule, Eastern monarchies looked to West European monarchies for direction. The West European model became that which Eastern monarchies sought to embody. The fourth section, titled “Religion and Education as Media for Imperial Images” looks at how all empires struggled with the powerful socio-cultural issues of religion and education. State religions represented the institute of imperial rule, thereby facilitating the unity of the empire in terms of shared faith. The fifth section, “Conflicts within the Empires,” examines the motives, possibilities, and methods of ethnic resistance. The last, sixth section, the “Empires’ Experiences of the First World War,” investigates the First World War as a human experience as well as ramifications of the war for the elite.

It is logical that scholars of various fields will find shortcomings and offer further suggestions for advancement of this colossal project. For example, the exclusion of the Persian (Qajar) Empire is surprising. Including both Ottoman and Western empires would seem to dictate the inclusion of Persia as an empire that actively engaged the Russian and British empires in the “Great Game.” Another minor quibble is Frithjof Benjamin Schenk’s discussion of railways in Tsarist Russia. Schenk rightly notes the importance of railways as a mode of consolidating and containing autocratic rule while simultaneously, and ironically,

aiding in the political decay and integration of territories. However, by not including further discussion of Russian Central Asia, Schenk misses a crucial way in which transport informed the entire empire. A Central Asian example could illustrate how railway construction made the Central Asian region a crossroad of social and economic activity, as well as revolutionary ideas and actions, and thus threatened the position of imperial rule in Russian Central Asia.

Overall, this is an exceptional volume that contributes considerably to the growing body of literature on comparative empire studies and will be of equal interest to scholars and students alike.

**Yulia Uryadova, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville**

McReynolds, Louise. *Murder Most Russian: True Crime and Punishment in Late Imperial Russia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012. xiii + 274 pp. \$35.00. ISBN 978-0-8014-5145-4.

This book is a thought-provoking, but technically flawed, monograph. Louise McReynolds explores what sensational murder trials operating under the Judicial Reform of 1864, largely as reported in the “boulevard press,” reveal about Russian subjects’ understanding of law and justice, as well as about their emerging civic roles as participants (directly as jurors, or indirectly as members of courtroom, press, literary, or movie theater audiences). She seeks to answer “how Russians engaged with the modern world that they witnessed unfolding around them as the reforms moved from official decree to daily life” (p. 3). She engages with many, perhaps too many, theoretical approaches (subjectivity, masculinity, narrative analysis, contingency, theatricality/performance, modernity, daily life, the social imaginary, and gender) to locate the Russian case in recent studies of murder as a cultural barometer elsewhere. She explains which features distinguished Russian concepts of murder; she also identifies the cultural and political factors shaping those distinctive features. Her broadest argument is that changes across time in how Russian subjects viewed murder contributed to the revolutions of 1905 and February/March 1917.

This ultimately teleological argument rests on her decoupling of jurors’ active engagement with the judicial system from respect for the law, because jurors saw it as an embodiment of the tsarist state. Her focus on the most sensational of murder trials, as reported in the boulevard press, is as representative of the degree of the rule of law in late Imperial Russia as the O. J. Simpson murder trial (which inspired her to write the book), as reported in *The National Enquirer*, was of broad respect for the law in the United States in 1995. McReynolds’s privileging of the view from the city street, usually from the St. Petersburg street, while ignoring the literature on the success of the *volost’* court among the four-fifths of the population who resorted to it for dispute resolution in the late Imperial period, has the distorting effect of reinforcing stereotypical conclusions about the Russian capacity for legal consciousness or the rule of law, past and present. McReynolds’s accompanying conclusion about stereotypical Russian “fatalism” also trumps her nod to contingency in her introduction.

She builds this argument on published sources, many familiar from her previous works on the press and entertainment. She draws on law codes and legal commentary, published transcripts of trials, collections of famous arguments presented by prosecutors and defense lawyers, reports in the “boulevard press,” belles-lettres, crime fiction, movies, and “the occasional archive” (six footnotes mention archives) (p. 7). More explanation of the

relationship between the full trial transcripts and the “slightly abbreviated” (p. 5) published versions she has used would have clarified the relationship between what happened in court and what the public got to read in the press. McReynolds also draws extensively on English-language works about murder in other cultures. Portraits of key jurists and illustrations taken from the boulevard press generously illustrate the volume.

McReynolds opens with a discussion of how the introduction in 1864 of the public, adversarial system with trial by jury invited nonstate participants into the adjudication of justice: jurors, defense lawyers, experts in forensic medicine, the courtroom audience, authors, filmmakers, and journalists. The jurors’ role created a space where prosecutors and defense lawyers vied for the jurors’ and the public’s endorsement of the narrative each presented, drawing on forensic specialists, whose roles expanded. This legitimized agency for all participants, contributing to their confidence that their sense of justice mattered: “Russian jurors, broadly conceived to include all who joined in the discourse of verdicts, gained confidence in their ability to participate in making policies” (p. 111). In this section, McReynolds relies heavily on the research of other scholars, most notably Elisa Becker, Girish Bhat, Alexander Afanas'ev, and Sergei Kazantsev.

McReynolds contends that three features distinguish murder “most Russian”: primacy of the question “whydunit?” over “whodunit?” (p. 117), empathy Russian jurors displayed toward the accused, and jurors’ “antipathy toward the state” (p. 111). The issue of peasant jurors’ reputed empathy has long been in the historiography of peasants’ responses to the *volost*’ court and the Judicial Reform. McReynolds eschews that literature almost entirely, missing the opportunity to add cross-estate implications to her argument. Doing so would have highlighted the state’s consistency in inviting peasant judges and jurors in murder trials to deploy their conscience, as well as laws, when deciding a case. She attributes the legitimacy of conscience as a basis for verdicts in murder cases to Russian Orthodoxy as the common moral code among most jurors. A similar discussion for the non-Russian regions of the empire remains to be done.

The primacy of “whydunit?” over “whodunit?” in Russian murder trials—in the courtroom and representations in the press, literature, and film—undergirds McReynolds’s argument about the intersection between politics and murder in Russia. The balance tipped in favor of the defendant’s intentions and life conditions for jurors, rather than on the crime as a violation of law. McReynolds astutely introduces early in her argument the “splintered” questions Russian judges posed to jurors. These enabled jurors to answer in the positive to the question of whether the defendant had committed the crime, but in the negative on the question of whether that same defendant was guilty. The frequency with which jurors acquitted brutal murderers serves as an indication for McReynolds of jurors’ antipathy to the state. She posits that the jurors viewed defendants’ subjugation to autocratic arbitrariness as the source of thereby excusable acts of violence born of frustration. A male murderer’s lack of self-control in his private life when he murdered female romantic partners was thus a product of adult Russians’ exclusion from agency in public life. Even as jurors displayed increasing agency through engagement with sensational murder trials, their acquittals embodied a fundamental fatalism about the Russian subject’s perennially injured capacity for control.

This thesis permits McReynolds to decouple broad engagement in murder trials from legal consciousness or respect for the rule of law in late Imperial Russia. The very self-confidence Imperial subjects developed as judges of innocence or guilt issued from antipathy toward the state, and thus emboldened popular rebellion in 1905 and 1917. Trial by jury nurtured the popular determination to seek justice according to popular conscience. This is

a stimulating addition to historical debates about the rule of law and legal consciousness in pre-revolutionary Russia. It is not convincing, but it warrants further consideration.

Unfortunately, technical problems obscure the work's scholarly contribution. Throughout early chapters, spelling and usage errors (course/coarse, principle/principal; affect/effect; rolls/roles; farther/further) appear at a bewildering rate, as do problems with syntax and composition. These mistakes will create confusion for students and non-native English speakers about proper English usage. Such errors join problems of transliteration (*vinost/vinovnost'*; *gigeny/gigieny*) in the text and footnotes. Sloppiness in spelling and transliteration made me less sympathetic to McReynolds's stylistic decision to refer to children as "kids" and policemen as "cops." The book has no bibliography, and the index is superficial. All of us make mistakes dealing with the complexities of Russian language materials. Indisputable financial pressures may invite publishers to take short-cuts in manuscript production. Even so, we scholars and such publishers as Cornell University Press must do better. This is especially true when the manuscript is a serious product of years of costly research, as is *Murder Most Russian*. Let us hope for a revised paperback edition.

**Cathy A. Frierson, University of New Hampshire**

Tanny, Jarrod. *City of Rogues and Schnorrers: Russia's Jews and the Myth of Old Odessa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012. xviii + 265 pp. \$27.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-253-22328-9.

In this lively cultural study, Jarrod Tanny explores the origins, development, and echoes of a cultural trope: the myth of old Odessa, "an improbable fusion of criminality, Jewishness, and humor" (p. 3). Rooted in the traditional sensibilities of East European Jewry and in Odessa's unique brand of celebrity gangsterism, the myth took on a life of its own and eventually became a Soviet-wide phenomenon. Drawing on a wide array of cultural artifacts, including literature (especially the works of Osip Rabinovich, Sholem Aleichem, Mendele Moykher Sforim, Semen Iushkevich, Isaak Babel, and Il'ia Il'f and Evgenii Petrov), music (principally the songs of Leonid Utesov), the press, *anekdoty*, films, and other cultural artifacts, the book—written in a style as colorful and engaging as the city and characters it seeks to describe—also hangs on a solid framework of historical argumentation.

Tanny shows how the myth emerged in the late imperial period, when Odessa was one-third Jewish and its culture and mores were heavily influenced by Jewish culture in all its varieties; this period was in many ways the apex of the myth of old Odessa, "a gilded city of sin" (p. 109). After the Bolshevik Revolution, argues Tanny, the new regime tried to suppress certain aspects of the myth and the reality that undergirded it in a drive to transform Odessa into a model proletarian city. In doing so, Bolshevik cultural apparatchiks paradoxically reinforced the myth of Odessa as a gangster city and, despite their efforts, the myth continued to flourish and even spread beyond the boundaries of the city itself to become a universally recognized cultural trope within the borders of the Soviet Union. After tracing the near-destruction of the old Odessa legend by postwar Stalinism, Tanny chronicles its sometimes stop-and-start revival in the Khrushchev and Brezhnev periods in a fascinating analysis of an array of memoirs, films, theater, *magnitizdat*, and humor. He brings the book to a close with the present-day renaissance of the legend, particularly in the



Odessa diaspora and on the internet—though perhaps “recreation” might be more apt, given the heavily nostalgia-laden content of contemporary culture based on the Odessa myth.

One of the primary contentions of the book is that the Odessa myth, with its “idioms of Jewishness,” was “a surrogate channel” for Jewish expression in a period when many aspects of Jewish identity were being stifled (p. 107). It might seem like a near-impossible task to show how a cultural trope about Jewish Odessa could survive without explicit mention of either Jews or Odessa, but Tanny does just that, thanks to his attention to the fine and subtle nuances of the constituent parts of the myth, such as the Yiddish curse that survived in Russian as a recognizable marker of Jewishness. Strangely, though, at times the author seems to overlook the widespread suppression of many aspects of Jewish culture and group identity during this decade; the “Yiddish-inflected Jewish culture” that he claims thrived in the 1930s was a state-sponsored Yiddish proletarian culture that held little attraction for most Soviet Jews.

Given the gradual decoupling of the Jewish aspect of the Odessa myth from any genuine expression of Jewish identity, at times I wondered what the “Jewishness” to which Tanny refers throughout the book actually consisted of. Tanny maintains that “Jewishness diffused in Odessa, and to be an Odessite was to be Jewish, regardless of one’s ... ethnic descent” and that “in rendering the Jews of Odessa nameless they were rendered, ironically, the most authentic Odessans” (p. 145). But it could also be argued that they were simply rendered nameless, period. If “Jewishness,” or “Odessanness,” meant nothing more than a set of stereotypical cultural traits, with all markers of corporate Jewish identity erased or banned, then Jewishness as such did *not* exist in the city. What does it mean, then, to claim that “Odessa was implicitly a Jewish city, even if the Jews were expunged from the historical record” (p. 145)? Can a place be Jewish without being Jewish?

**Natan M. Meir, Portland State University**

Miller, Burton Richard. *Rural Unrest during the First Russian Revolution: Kursk Province, 1905–1906*. Historical Studies in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2013. xvi + 448 pp. \$60.00. ISBN 978-615-5225-17-8.

There has been a recent wave of studies on the provinces during the nineteenth century and the 1917 Revolution, but the 1905 Revolution remains the forgotten stepchild of provincial studies. Burton Miller’s deep study, based on his 1992 dissertation, of 1905 in the Black Earth province of Kursk sets out to rectify this unfortunate situation.

Miller begins with a lengthy background on economic conditions of the Kursk countryside from emancipation to 1905. He details a mixture of land hunger and improving economic conditions from increased land cultivation and non-land economic opportunities. Interestingly, Miller finds that districts with mostly ex-serfs who worked as wage laborers on their former estates were more prosperous than other regions of Kursk, but it was these very districts that witnessed the most intense peasant rebellion in 1905. Miller then recounts Kursk’s peasant resistance in two chapters filled with stories ranging from petty trampling of crops by a few peasants to arson of an estate by whole villages.

Miller breaks down the patterns of peasant action in his final two chapters. He makes two significant conclusions. First, the most destructive incidents happened in 1905 when peasants hoped to realize their dreams of a black repartition, while 1906 was marked by

work stoppages and more limited social demands. This showed, Miller argues, a change in peasant strategies in the face of concentrated military force in the region. Second, rural rebellion was localized and specific. Peasants living in large villages and working in modernized large estates with absentee owners were most likely to rebel. They felt economic pressures from family divisions the strongest and they no longer had the personal, dependent relationship with their estate owner. Miller also makes the important point that police recorded incidents of unrest in only 10 percent of Kursk villages—90 percent of villages did not revolt (or at least were not caught!).

Miller relies on published statistical sources as well as police reports from the central archives. From these he is able to give a socioeconomic profile of Kursk villages and how administrative officials understood and tried to control the wave of peasant revolts. Miller does a wonderful job exploring and quantifying the various modes of peasant resistance, but peasants' voices are virtually silent. Barbara Alpern Engel and Lynne Viola have argued that peasant women led the charge in collective actions, but they do not appear in this account. Likewise, Miller does not explore the symbolic importance of timbering, arson, trespassing, and other acts of protest and what these actions tell us about peasants' political values. I also wonder if Miller's conclusions are shaped by the limits of studying the problematic term "unrest," a term used and defined solely by those in power. A broader source base including letters and petitions found in local archives, not used in this study, and a broader view of peasant political action would have added significance to this study. *Rural Unrest during the First Russian Revolution* wonderfully develops the arguments of Teodor Shanin on the peasant economy. Miller concludes that there was a local, not systemic, economic crisis in Kursk but peasants still revolted against the economic order with the dream of major land reform. National politics, the Duma, and organizations such as the Peasant Union flit in and out of the story, but Miller sees them as tangential to peasants' more localized goals. This goes against scholarship by Andrew Verner and Scott Seregny, among others, who have found that peasants in late Imperial Russia were interested in a broad range of national issues.

This is a very good provincial study of the 1905 Revolution in the countryside, even if it does not break much new ground. The complexity of Kursk's diverse experiences of revolution underscores the importance of regional and even local studies. Revolution in one area could be much different than its neighbor's, and Miller shows this well. This in itself is an important contribution to the scholarship.

**Aaron B. Retish, Wayne State University**

Bilenky, Serhiy. *Romantic Nationalism in Eastern Europe: Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian Political Imaginations*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. xx + 389 pp. \$65.00. ISBN 978-0-8047-7806-0.

In this stimulating study, Serhiy Bilenky explores the mapping and representation of national communities by Russians, Poles, and Ukrainians in the Russian Empire in the 1830s and 1840s. In this period, inspired by Romantic ideas of the nation, political thinkers, activists, literati, and scholars imagined new, distinct, and often overlapping Ukrainian, Polish, and Russian national communities on the ruins of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Nation-making, Bilenky demonstrates, was profoundly relational: his transnational approach

illuminates the dynamics of exchange between competing national projects and the way in which the geographic extent and the ethnic content of an imagined nationality varied depending on the social and political commitments of the author and the presence of particular “others” and their self-representations. Bilenky contends that modern Ukrainian nationality emerged from the encounter between Poles and Russians, forcing a reconstruction of both the historic Polish and the “all-Russian” nationalities. The Ukrainian issue thus revealed the discursive nature of the modern Russian and Polish identities emerging in this era.

Bilenky proceeds through a series of close readings of a wide and well-chosen selection of authors. Drawing on Benedict Anderson’s idea of “imagined community,” Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of “field” and “the struggle for representation,” and Rogers Brubaker’s notion of “nation-centered idioms,” he constructs a somewhat complex but ultimately useful framework for his analysis. First, he divides his authors from each national group into three ideological fields: conservatives, empire loyalists, and pro-governmentalists; liberals, centrists, and democrats; and radicals and leftists. He then reads their writings about “nation-ness” with an eye to teasing out the dominant idioms of nationality, the basis on which the nation is defined in each, be it ethnolinguistic, mental or spiritual, ethnic or geographic, institutional or political, or religious or social. In this way, Bilenky reminds us of the wide range of views in each national group’s discourse of the nation while seeking to extract a model of the Polish or Russian or Ukrainian national imagination. His careful categorization reveals interesting parallels in the thought of writers of different national groups and ideological inclinations. It also permits him to question certain earlier interpretations of how particular groups imagined the nation in this period. For instance, Bilenky takes on Andrzej Walicki’s assertion that the Polish democrats, especially of the Polish Democratic Society, rejected religious and ethnic criteria of Polishness and espoused a modern *political* nationalism. Although he agrees that the Society’s official program did avoid religious and ethnic definitions of Polishness, he argues that other programmatic materials reveal that just because those idioms were rejected did not mean that Polish nationality was imagined as multiethnic and multicultural. Rather, it envisioned a new linguistically and ethnically Polish civic culture that would assimilate other “folk” cultures.

Bilenky has performed a great service in systematizing East European romantic nationalist thought and providing a comparative framework for exploring it. Given the broad range of thinkers he examines, it seems churlish to ask for more. However, one does wonder, especially in the Ukrainian case where no separate Ukrainian public sphere existed, whether it might have been helpful to look at the *gubernskie vedomosti* that appeared in this period and were a venue for provincial educated society to describe and define local history, ethnography, and geography. Similarly, although the Russian Orthodox Church’s periodicals were certainly very underdeveloped in this period, it seems odd that Bilenky was so determinedly secular in his choice of material to analyze.

This should become essential reading for both historians and literary scholars of nineteenth-century Russia, Ukraine, and Poland, as well as researchers interested in Romantic nationalism and East European intellectual history more generally. Because it assumes a broad knowledge of the political and intellectual history of the region, however, it may be somewhat advanced for all but the most specialized and ambitious undergraduate students.

**Heather J. Coleman, University of Alberta**

Kantor, Iuliia, and Mariush Volos. *Treugol'nik Moskva – Varshava – Berlin: Ocherki istorii sovetsko-pol'sko-germanskikh otnoshenii v 1918–1939 gg.* St. Petersburg: Evropeiskii Dom, 2011. 219 pp. \$26.00. ISBN 978-5-8015-0282-3.

This account of interwar relations between Poland and the USSR, and between Germany and the USSR, is a joint effort by Julia Zakharovna Kantor, director of the A. I. Herzen Pedagogical University in St. Petersburg, and Mariusz Wołoś, director of the Pedagogical University in Kraków. Both authors have an impressive number of publications on Soviet-German relations (Kantor) and interwar Polish foreign policy (Wołoś). Their aim with this book is to describe the problems faced, and the measures taken, by Polish foreign ministers of the interwar era.

Kantor is excellent on the early Soviet leaders'—including Stalin's—eagerness to maintain good relations with Weimar Germany. This was needed in order to import armaments, while at the same time capitalizing on the hard economic times to foment a workers' revolt in Hamburg as a first step to establishing a Communist Germany. While she is right to see the Polish-Soviet War of 1919–20 as the catalyst for rapprochement between Moscow and Berlin, she incorrectly repeats conventional wisdom by attributing the Polish victory at Warsaw over the Red Army to Western help, especially French General Maxime Weygand. In fact, Germany and Czechoslovakia refused transit for French arms to Poland, and the Danzig dock workers struck against unloading French ships. The Poles prevailed because Polish intelligence had cracked the Soviet military's cypher and, therefore, Józef Piłsudski knew about the gap between Tukhachevsky's army group and Budenny's Konarmii. He used that knowledge to defeat the former. Budenny, whose party co-commander was Joseph Stalin, was later forced to abandon his siege of L'viv (Lwów). Kantor also errs in ascribing the Polish rejection of suggestions for Soviet military transit to Czechoslovakia in 1938 to Warsaw's aim of retaking Zaolzie, the western, industrialized part of former Austrian Silesia, then with a Polish majority population that had been awarded by the Western Powers to Czechoslovakia in July 1920. Kantor notes, correctly, that it was “*boleznenno*” (pathological) for the Soviet leadership to see the German-Polish Declaration of Non-Aggression, concluded for ten years on January 26, 1934, as “a juridical form of alliance between Germany and Poland” (p. 140). It is a pity, however, that she fails to mention Polish Foreign Minister Józef Beck's visit to Moscow in July of that year and the extension of the Soviet-Polish Treaty of Non-Aggression of 1932 for another ten years. Furthermore, French journalist Geneviève Tabouis, a harsh contemporary critic of Beck, is not a reliable source to quote on his policy toward the USSR (p. 141).

Wołoś makes up for Kantor's gaps and errors by giving a clear exposition of the Piłsudski-Beck policy of balancing between Germany and Russia and, hence, refusal to join French and other projects of collective security agreements directed against Germany. The “black legend” of a pro-German Józef Beck is, however, deeply rooted in the Russian historical mind, all the more so because it helps justify Stalin's decision to align with Hitler rather than France and Britain in late August 1939.

It seems unlikely that Wołoś's balanced account of Polish interwar policy will convince many Russian historians of interwar international relations (the dean of Russian historians of modern Poland, Gennadii Matveev, is certainly unenthusiastic). Nevertheless, any Russian-speaking student or scholar interested in reading excellent, brief discussions of German-Soviet relations in this period, based on both printed and archival sources, cannot do better than Kantor's chapters in this book.

Let us hope that, despite its problems, the “Treugol'nik” will give Russian historians a different perspective on interwar Polish foreign policy and Soviet-German relations, or at least inform them of studies available on both. The book has excellent bibliographies on both topics.

**Anna M. Cienciala, Prof.Em., University of Kansas**

Glantz, David M. *Barbarossa Derailed: The Battle for Smolensk 10 July–10 September 1941*. 2 vols. West Midlands: Helion & Company, 2010. ii + 655 pp. £35.00. ISBN 978-1-906033-72-9.

We all have seen the newsreels of the Nazi juggernaut smashing through the USSR's western defenses in the early summer of 1941. Experts in wartime propaganda, the Germans publicized footage of their bombers destroying Soviet airfields, their tank columns striking deep into seemingly undefended territory, and the capture of thousands of shell-shocked Soviet POWs. These powerful images helped to demoralize the Nazis' enemies and encourage the German home front. Nazi Germany under Hitler had blitzkrieged to victory in Western Europe and it appeared equally successful in the east.

Stopped at the outskirts of Moscow, the common trope explains the Nazi halt as a result of winter's approach and a desperate Soviet counterattack. While the cold weather and desperation certainly played a role, the actual reasons behind Hitler's failure to seize Moscow and defeat the Soviet Union occurred months earlier and are spelled out in *Barbarossa Derailed* by the premier Soviet war historian, David Glantz.

In these first two volumes (of a planned four-volume set), the author describes in extreme detail a series of brutal battles in and around Smolensk from July 10 to September 10, 1941. For a bit of perspective, consider that during just these two months of vicious fighting around Smolensk, the Soviets lost more men than the United States did in four years of war. Soviet losses beggar belief and, if suffered by a different country, such carnage would have almost certainly guaranteed defeat.

There has been much debate as to what accounted for the Soviet tenacity, but excellent leadership and skilled fighting are rarely mentioned. Having gained access to both German and Russian war archives, Glantz provides a day-by-day account of every battle and skirmish within this region during this period, and convincingly argues that despite these grave losses, the Soviet military fought long and hard (and sometimes with extreme skill) to derail the Nazi advance long before it reached the gates of Moscow. The Soviet military did not merely defend in depth, but as the author carefully describes, carried out a number of effective counterattacks around Smolensk to weaken the Nazi war machine.

Alongside a general analysis of these battles from both the German and Soviet headquarters, the author includes the actual field reporting from the Soviet commanders. In this regard, *Barbarossa Derailed* is not your standard history, and those without a military background may find the text (and associated maps) rough going. After a while, the battle reports, operation orders, and maps start to blend together, and depending upon where you stop reading, it is nearly impossible to tell which side has the upper hand. One gets the impression that the result of any battle often depends upon the efforts of each individual unit commander. Immersing the reader into the fog of war may be the author's objective, but this in-depth, detailed portrayal demands a lot from the reader, and may be better suited to an actual staff-ride across these battlefields.

Still, for the Western reader, such a thorough and scrupulous account of these battles is long overdue. By closely examining these early battles, the author shows how the weakened Soviet military leadership studied their early mistakes, regained their balance, and struck back with deadly fury. Though the Soviet nightmare was to last for another four long years, the painful lessons learned on the battlefields in and around Smolensk during the summer of 1941 were key to the ultimate Soviet victory.

**Ray Finch, Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, KS**

Wanner, Catherine, ed. *State Secularism and Lived Religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. xii + 346 pp. \$35.00 (paper). ISBN 978-0-19-993763-9.

How successful was the Soviet regime in undermining and destroying the religious beliefs of the Soviet population? According to the contributions to this volume—a collection of essays based on a conference at Pennsylvania State University in 2010—the answer is not very. Although enforced secularization had some successes, its impact was often less to precipitate the decline of religious belief in the USSR than inadvertently to divert religious commitment into new channels. Moreover, in the course of Soviet history, the state's attitude toward religion itself underwent subtle changes; notably, it often took the line of trying to manage religious conviction rather than eradicate it.

In addition to an introduction on the theme of secularization in the USSR by the editor, the book contains ten essays that cover Soviet antireligious campaigns in Ukraine in the 1920s (Gregory Freeze); Jewish interwar family life (Anna Shternshis); the Ukrainian Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky (John-Paul Himka); the postwar history of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra (Scott Kenworthy); pilgrimage in Soviet Russia (Stella Rock); sacramental confession in Soviet Russia and Ukraine (Nadieszda Kizenko); the memoirs of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (Olena Panych); Jehovah's Witnesses (Zoe Knox); religion in the postwar Mari Republic (Sonja Luehrmann); and religious revival in late Soviet Ukraine (Viktor Yelensky).

As the title of the volume indicates, the book focuses less on institutional history than spiritual practices. The laity receives particular attention. We learn, for example, that in the 1920s the strongest opposition to Soviet antireligious policies in Ukraine came from the laity. Similarly, pilgrimage practices—which did not disappear under Soviet rule—were often detached from liturgical practices and clerical regulation. Instead of losing their religion, people found more individualized ways of expressing their sense of the sacred. The closing of mosques in the Mari Republic led to people gathering in private apartments and graveyards. The practice of confession underwent significant changes. The attacks on the church that accompanied the First Five-Year Plan meant that the number of priests available to perform individualized confession was dramatically reduced, and this led to a growth in general confession. On the other hand, in the postwar decades certain priests (notably Nikolai Golubtsov, Dmitri Dudko, Vsevolod Shpiller and Alexander Men') became central to close-knit devotional groups with a confessional emphasis.

The creation of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Council for Religious Cult Affairs under Stalin signalled a major shift in state approaches to religion—away from persecution toward management—and this was only partly reversed by the renewal of repression under Khrushchev and Brezhnev. In practice, the result was

that the state was often forced into bargaining with believers. For example, the postwar functioning of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra gave the outside world a sense that there was a measure of religious freedom in the USSR, and the regime's need to maintain that image gave the monks a surprising degree of autonomy in the late Stalin period; some of the monks advocated some distinctively anti-Soviet ideas. Ironically, the regime sometimes found itself in a position of trying to distinguish legitimate religious practices from superstition.

Secularization did have successes. At least, the decline in Jewish religious weddings in the interwar era suggests this. However, this process was partly reversed in the postwar era when matchmakers and Jewish weddings made a comeback—probably in part because of the growing sense of ethnic identity among Jews that was fed by persecution in the USSR and elsewhere. Clearly, repression was often counterproductive. Indeed, it sometimes seems to have given religious groups added resilience. The history of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists and Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet period suggests that. Suffering helped to forge in these groups a stronger sense of identity and moral purpose. For some, religion was bound up with national or ethnic identity. To a degree that was the case for Metropolitan Sheptytsky—a fascinating figure, whose attempts to witness to his faith in the mid-1940s are described here with great depth. He was a man caught between a kind of religious humanism on the one hand and Ukrainian nationalism on the other. Ironically, the Soviet regime itself was impacted by secularization. As Yelensky notes, Soviet ideology itself was desacralized by the modernization process that it unleashed.

It is probably too early to come to definitive conclusions about the long-term impact of Soviet antireligious policies on religious institutions and practices in the former Soviet area. However, the stories told here are testimony to the enduring appeal of religion, even in very difficult circumstances. The quality of the volume, based as it is on very thorough and thoughtful research, helps to create a significantly more nuanced understanding of how religious belief evolved in this period. It is an outstanding book—a rich resource for researchers and teachers alike.

**Philip Boobbyer, University of Kent**

Chatterjee, Choi, and Beth Holmgren, eds. *Americans Experience Russia: Encountering the Enigma, 1917 to the Present*. Routledge Studies in Cultural History. New York: Routledge, 2013. xii + 232 pp. \$125.00. ISBN 978-0-415-89341-1.

This volume includes twelve essays and is a model example of how new approaches and methodologies can revitalize a subject as well covered as American fascination with Russia. Most of the contributors are historians, but the two editors—historian Choi Chatterjee and literary scholar Beth Holmgren—have chosen experts in both Russian and American history, and there is a clear focus on cutting-edge methodologies within cultural history and gender studies, such as an emphasis on personal experiences and emotions, which makes this volume a fascinating read.

The volume focuses on “the ways that Americans’ ‘Russian experience’ not only influenced the writing of seminal texts in Russian studies, but also generated the assumptions embedded in academic approaches to our field” (p. xi), and it is therefore very appropriate to reprint David Engerman’s influential essay on American scholars and late-imperial Russia

as it sets the stage for the ways Americans have imagined and experienced Russia and the Soviet Union ever since. Experiencing Russia was a major factor in creating an academic expertise on the country in the late nineteenth century, and Engerman's paper fits well with the final two essays, in which Marina Goldovskaya and John Freedman give their accounts of "Living across Cultures" and how their American-Soviet/Russian experiences have impacted their understanding of both countries.

All the papers, to a greater or a lesser extent, emphasize the experiences of individuals or groups, and utilize personal accounts, such as letters, diaries, or interviews. Using the lives of individuals to tell the bigger story of American fascination with Russia is an original way of casting light on issues that otherwise do not get much attention in traditional history writing. Lynn Mally's account of director and playwright Hallie Flanagan and Frank Costigliola's story of George F. Kennan's first encounter with Russia show how personal interests shaped personal experiences. Both were skeptical of communism but found aspects of Soviet socialism to be of potential value for American society. For both of them, and for Harrison Salisbury—the subject of Lisa Kirschenbaum's article—their Russian experience became intensely personal and they all romanticized certain aspects of life in Russia.

This Russian romance is also clear in the book's strong focus on gender. Ranging from Salisbury's feminization of the "real Russia" and Kennan's relationship with his wife and the "sexual playground at the embassy" (p. 55), to Ida Rosenthal's brassieres and the interviewing of Russian and Tatar village mothers by American historian David L. Ransel, gender issues are addressed by most of the authors in this volume. In her account of Ida Rosenthal, Emily Rosenberg highlights the materialistic consumer culture America promoted to the world as of the late 1950s and the importance of targeting women. Fashion, convenience, and consumerism became gendered during the Cold War, and even if Soviet women never got to wear Rosenthal's bras, they knew that the West provided better-quality products for women. The issue of gift-giving in the relationship between the American Moscow correspondents and the Soviet human rights activists in the 1970s also cast light on the "unattainable Western consumer world" (p. 144), and Barbara Walker describes well how these cultural encounters contributed to a flow of consumer goods into the Soviet Union and are important for understanding the impact of soft (feminine?) power during the Cold War.

Kate Brown's article on the American and Soviet plutonium cities, Richland and Ozersk, highlights the similarities of life in closed cities in the rival countries. Furthermore, in America "the harmful effects of radiation were gendered feminine" (p. 186), and, in a memorable way, Brown shows how living in a closed city impacted the lives of children, who took on the burden of preserving state secrets when allowed to travel outside of their closed city and were asked to lie about where they were coming from. The nuclear fear takes on a gendered face in its focus on the experiences of women and children who lived in and around these closed cities.

Both of the editors are renowned for their work on women and gender, and both of their essays are about the Russian-American love affair. Choi Chatterjee explores American popular fiction about Russia and shows how the "American desire for the Russian other" was shadowed by a need to erase the ideological differences and Americanize Russian women into acceptable, non-threatening wives and consumers (p. 100). Interestingly, Beth Holmgren shows how the pro-Soviet Hollywood war films deviated from this narrative and accepted the Soviet woman as patriotic and professional and did not attempt to convert her.



Given the history of Russian/Soviet-American relations, the subject is unlikely to be fully covered for quite some time, especially as American historians will continue to wonder about how their own personal and professional experiences with Russia contribute to their scholarship on the country. To summarize, *Americans Experience Russia* is exemplary in that it is coherent and consistent in its originality as well as its approach to both content and method. This book can therefore safely be recommended to anyone with an interest in Russian cultural history and the history of Russian-American relations.

**Rósa Magnúsdóttir, Aarhus University**

Saul, Norman E. *The Life and Times of Charles R. Crane, 1858–1939: American Businessman, Philanthropist, and a Founder of Russian Studies in America*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013. xvi + 317 pp. \$79.99. ISBN 978-0-7391-7745-7.

A peripatetic traveler, businessman, and philanthropist who deployed his wealth both to accumulate influence and to facilitate the spread of knowledge, Charles Richard Crane was a one-of-a-kind figure uniquely suited for the age when the United States was emerging as a world power. To historians of early twentieth-century Slavic Studies as well as U. S. foreign relations, particularly those concerned with Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East, Crane is familiar in a variety of contexts. To start with, he owned *Harper's Weekly* magazine, supported myriad progressive causes, and engaged in wide-ranging philanthropy, art collecting, and patronage, as well as pioneering promotion of Russian Studies. Crane also advised presidents, most notably William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson. He was at the Paris Peace Conference when the post-World War I order was being negotiated, and, as part of the King-Crane Commission, participated, albeit tangentially, in the decision-making to reshape the post-Ottoman Middle East. On two separate occasions, he nearly became an ambassador—to China (under Taft in 1909) and to Russia (under Wilson in 1914)—although both times he ultimately opted out of those posts. On a different occasion, he *bought* an embassy—a magnificent palace in Prague, where, at the inception of Czechoslovakia, his thirty-three-year-old son was serving as America's first ambassador and where Crane, who had brought Tomas Masaryk to lecture in Chicago in 1903 and remained Masaryk's close friend, was held in particularly high regard. Crane was similarly close to Pavel Miliukov, the Russian historian and politician. He cultivated ties with influential figures in Washington and around the world, and his far-flung contacts, particularly in places little known to most Americans (Yemen, to name one) enhanced his status as a man who could facilitate social, political, and cultural connections. Yet, as much as he is known as an amateur Arabist, an enthusiastic supporter of the February Revolution (at least while Miliukov was in the Provisional Government) and a sponsor of Russian Studies, he is also remembered as a man who reached out to, and admired, Adolf Hitler, with whom he had an audience in October 1933.

Norman E. Saul's thoroughly documented book attempts to bring together the dispersed strands of this restless man's life and passions. This is by no means an easy undertaking. An heir to a prosperous plumbing-parts business based in Chicago, Crane was a product of what today would be called experiential learning: he never attended college and spoke no foreign language with fluency, yet he became perhaps the most well-traveled American of his time. As one reads Saul's account, it is impossible not to be impressed by the sheer number of Crane's journeys as well as the variety of their itineraries. A few of these, most

notably the 1921 railcar trip from China to Czechoslovakia across the breadth of Soviet Russia, seem to defy all logic. Yet it becomes abundantly clear that Crane was not traveling for the sights: almost everywhere he went, he sought out valuable contacts—notable figures in politics and the arts. He did not keep these people to himself: he spent generously, and sometimes lavishly, to bring various artists and their works to the United States (for example, in 1901–2, Crane sponsored an exhibit for the Russian painter Vasilii Vereshchagin at Chicago’s Art Institute). He was also responsible for sponsoring several other artists and scholars and for rescuing the bells of Danilevskii Monastery from being melted down by the Soviets; Crane’s intervention facilitated the bells’ transfer to Harvard University, where they remained from 1930 until 2005.

Based on extensive correspondence and memoirs of Crane and his associates, Saul’s book does much to document Crane’s many adventures. We get good, at times fascinating, reports of his trips. Yet these reports do not add up to a fleshed-out biography. As the author acknowledges in the book’s preface, the picture is incomplete, and much about this man remains enigmatic. Saul writes cautiously and interjects lightly, presenting selections from the sources with little interpretation. These sources, however, leave gaps, and the readers are left with many unanswered questions. We get little insight into Crane’s relationships with the other members of his family. We are told about his many friendships, and his numerous meetings with cultural and political celebrities, but the substance of these encounters is often left shrouded. There is little to let us know which of the meetings were truly important and which were mere social calls. Crane’s apparent anti-Semitism is another puzzle: Saul hypothesizes that it may have germinated during the Russo-Japanese War, when Crane supported Russia and resented “the Wall Street Jewish bankers” who backed Japan (p. 86). He contrasts Crane’s view of these bankers to his support for the Jewish lawyer Louis Brandeis, whom he ardently promoted for elevation to the Supreme Court, and also notes that none of the publications owned by Crane were known for anti-Jewish views. Saul further hypothesizes that Crane’s disillusioning experience on the King-Crane Commission may have deepened his resentments. Still, little prepares us for Crane’s embrace of Hitler in 1933, when Crane advised the American ambassador in Berlin to “let Hitler have his way” (p. 241). Crane’s enthusiasm came in spite of the fact that many of his confidants, particularly Masaryk, were deeply suspicious of Hitler and his intentions. Citing the observations of the American ambassador to Berlin, Saul suggests that perhaps in the 1930s Crane’s reasoning was clouded by senility. Yet, as David Engerman demonstrates in *Modernization from the Other Shore*, Crane had a long history, dating back decades, of generalizing statements not only about Jews but also about Russians and other nationalities. Engaging this line of analysis, among others, may have allowed Saul to present a fuller portrait of Crane to his readers.

These observations notwithstanding, in grappling with Crane’s contradictions, Saul undertook a daunting task, and his editorial decision to tread lightly and give Crane the benefit of the doubt allows him to present a largely empathetic portrayal that will ultimately be appreciated by those who want to see Crane in his complexity. Saul’s book brings us several steps closer to understanding Crane and in the process offers a new perspective on the operations of early twentieth-century diplomacy and the origins of Russian Studies in the United States.

**Ilya Vinkovetsky, Simon Fraser University**

Miller, Matthew Lee. *The American YMCA and Russian Culture: The Preservation and Expansion of Orthodox Christianity, 1900–1940*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013. x + 283 pp. \$80.00. ISBN 978-0-7391-7756-3.

Dmitrii Likhachev affirmed in his *Reflections on Russia* (1991) that one should judge countries and cultures by their best, not their worst. This represents the sensibility of Matthew Lee Miller's meticulously researched and engrossing study of the relationship between the American YMCA and Russians both inside Russia and in European emigration. The complex ideological and faith-based journey of Western Protestantism meeting Russian Orthodoxy that Miller chronicles draws from published and archival sources to illuminate the heroic—and ultimately fruitful—efforts of the personages involved in this extraordinary historic encounter. The sheer scope of the humanitarian efforts of the YMCA in Europe and Russia during the first half of the twentieth century is impressive, as are the Y's efforts to sustain the Russian Student Christian Movement.

The collaborative work of the “Y men” and the Russians who for various catastrophic reasons found themselves in exile produced a body of Russian religio-philosophical writing that, as Miller convincingly argues, would never have been published without the sympathy and trust each side manifested toward the other. Such luminaries as Nikolai Berdyaev, Sergei Bulgakov, Georgii Fedotov, and Georges Florovsky taught at the St. Sergius Theological Academy in Paris (a dazzling accomplishment of the YMCA-Russian collaboration between 1925 and 1940); many of their books were published by the YMCA Press.

Miller's study consists of an introduction, ten chapters, an epilogue, appendix, bibliography, and index. Each chapter contains several sections, with its main themes carefully wrapped up at the end. Miller assembles an enormous amount of material into a coherent narrative, as each chapter traces the interactions of the Y men with a specific nationality or group during a designated period of activity. After describing the emergence and development of the YMCA between 1844 and 1900, the author presents the purpose statements of 1855 and 1931 to illustrate the movement's evolution “from an evangelical Protestant outreach movement to a liberal Christian social service organization” (p. 18).

Miller crafts a picture of two overarching attitudes of the leaders of the YMCA toward Russians and Russian Orthodoxy. The early period between 1900 and 1925 witnessed a lack of knowledge about Russia, with a disrespect for Russia's faith tradition exemplified in J. F. Hecker's assessment of Orthodoxy as having “little or nothing to do with the Bible and the basic dogma of the church” (p. 185). The intercultural encounter between Western Protestantism, with its “muscular Christianity” emphasizing “character formation” as it was connected with a “producer-oriented,” practical culture, and Russian Orthodoxy, which foregrounded the authority of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, mysticism, and humility, evolved by the 1920s from a position of distrust to one in which influential Y leader Paul B. Anderson steadfastly supported the Russian Orthodox and Y secretary G. G. Kullmann converted to Russian Orthodoxy. By the later period of 1925–40, a clear bond of respect and admiration had been forged between the two groups.

Two observations arise in the consideration of this book. Because of its focus on the activities of a single organization, the YMCA, readers may conclude that only Protestants were doing philanthropic work with Russians. This is not the case. Similar, though perhaps not so far-reaching, examples of faith-based aid existed during this period: One may recall the Brotherhood of Saint-Prince Vladimir, founded in 1890 in Berlin to help Orthodox Christians in need, preserve Orthodox shrines, and help orphans in Russia; and the Pontificio

Istituto Orientale, established in Rome in 1917 by Pope Benedict XV because of the plight of the Russian Orthodox displaced by the Bolshevik Revolution. In addition, Miller's book would have benefitted from better copyediting to remove the handful of typographical and grammatical errors in it (these, however, do not detract from the book's high quality).

Miller's book is recommended for individuals interested in twentieth-century Russian culture, for all Slavists, and for academic libraries.

**Valeria Z. Nollan, Rhodes College**

Landau, Julia Franziska. *Wir bauen den großen Kuzbass! Bergarbeiteralltag im Stalinismus 1921–1941*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012. 381 pp. €57.00. ISBN 978-3-515-10159-2

In the late 1980s, countrywide Soviet coal miners' strikes—affecting the mines in the Kuznetsk Basin in southwestern Siberia—became top news even outside Russia due to the alarming reports on the miners' miserable living and ghastly working conditions. Those reports, however, seemed mild in comparison to the situation in Kuzbass in the 1920s and 1930s, as documented by Julia Landau in her present book. Its very title highlights the contradiction between the propaganda slogan, "Let's build the great Kuzbass!"—issued in 1930 during the First Five-Year Plan—and the grim reality of daily life in the area.

Everyday Stalinism has long been a topic for social historians such as Sheila Fitzpatrick or Lynne Viola. What Landau adds to this body of work is detail and depth in a well-documented case study. She starts out with a short history of the Kuzbass region (chap. 1), the discovery of coal fields in the eighteenth and their development in the late nineteenth centuries by a joint-stock company which, in 1921, was transformed into the "Autonomous Industrial Colony 'Kuzbass'" and nationalized in 1928 with the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan. The remaining five chapters are spent on recruitment and composition of the work force (chap. 2), the emergence of a new social hierarchy (chap. 3), work underground (chap. 4), everyday life (chap. 5), and mine disasters and terror (chap. 6).

The wide range of untapped sources—NKVD documents held by the Bavarian State Library in Munich; numerous monographs and memoirs published in Russia since perestroika; interviews conducted by the Gestapo in the 1930s with workers returning to Germany from Kuzbass (held by the German Interior Ministry); and newly available documents from Soviet central and provincial archives (Novosibirsk and Kemerovo)—make her study particularly valuable. Landau also conducted oral history interviews in the region, and her detailed account of Kuzbass coal production with all its technical problems reveal her to be a true specialist in underground mining.

Despite the similarities in Stephen Kotkin's account of life in Magnitogorsk (1995) and Landau's of the Kuzbass mining region, she takes a firm stand against Kotkin's emphasis on ideology as the main driving force in building Soviet society. Instead, she draws on Bruno Latour's actor-network theory that places new weight on the role of technology, machinery and the material side of life as factors determining interpersonal relations. Such "material artifacts" comprised not only the provision of housing, protective clothing, equipment, or medical care but also the rationing of food and access to other necessities of everyday life. Landau convincingly shows how new social hierarchies and gender differences emerged and were cemented by the uneven distribution of goods among people from different national or social categories such as "free" workers and forced labor (for example, former

kulaks or members of deported nations that made up 40 percent of the work force) or people of different ethnic origins, foreigners, leading party members, officials of the OGPU and NKVD, and others.

The harsh realities of miners' lives and their families, marked by starvation and illness, unsanitary living conditions, or virtually nonexistent housing and lack of proper clothing, were taken to their extreme for the inhabitants of "special settlements." Their everyday experience could easily compare to life in a small Gulag, characterized by extremely high mortality rates, with children and women most affected. Clearly privileged among the work force were foreign specialists who would easily become the target of resentment by those deprived of a decent life.

The strength of Landau's study lies in its richness of detail and the convenient conversion of her findings into thirty-seven tables. A map of the region would have been helpful, however. Also, Landau's study is structured in a rather schematic way, each chapter starting with numerous questions and closing with a summary of the findings. While this enables the reader to quickly gain an overview of the main ideas, it makes reading somewhat arduous.

Yet, in addition to her strong emphasis on gender questions, Landau's work makes an important contribution to research on the Great Terror by tracing the mass operations carried out by regional authorities. For Landau it is the tensions in social relations resulting from the uneven spread of goods that, in the end, triggered or even legitimized the so-called purges during the years of terror. Her research provides a valuable, in-depth addition to the overall picture of everyday Stalinism and Soviet repression.

**Rosalinde Sartorti, Freie Universität Berlin**

Neireck, Miriam. *When Pigs Could Fly and Bears Could Dance: A History of the Soviet Circus*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2012. xx + 287 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 978-0-299-28764-1.

Using the death of Russia's most famous clown in 1997 as a jumping-off point, this engaging study contextualizes the outpouring of collective grief for Iurii Nikulin as the culmination of a century-long love affair between the Soviet people and the circus. One of the most popular forms of entertainment in the late Imperial period, the circus not only survived the transition to Soviet rule, but even thrived under the supervision and support of the new regime. Soviet citizens remained devoted followers of the circus throughout the upheavals of building socialism, fighting World War II, and coming to terms with de-Stalinization and the era of Stagnation. After Stalin's death, the circus emerged as one of the Soviet Union's most effective cultural ambassadors, travelling around the world to widespread acclaim. Miriam Neireck seeks to understand the source of this success, asking why Soviet and world audiences liked the circus so much. She argues that the popularity of the circus with audiences and the state derived from its multivalent appeal. As a space of magic and play, the circus provided relief and diversion from the often unpleasant realities of the real world. As an entertainment subject to different and often ambiguous ideological inflections, the circus proved especially able to respond to the changing and often contradictory demands of the state's official policy. Audiences could take what they wanted or needed from the spectacle before them. Ironically, Neireck concludes, the circus meant so much because it meant nothing—at least nothing to the exclusion of anything else.

In many respects the circus followed a trajectory common to other areas of cultural production. Initially stigmatized as the kind of bourgeois, commercial entertainment the Bolsheviks hoped to eliminate, it underwent ideological makeovers after the Revolution and at the end of the 1920s. Both of these were quickly abandoned in favor of more traditional performances now relabeled as uniquely “Soviet.” The most substantive and enduring shift in content came with World War II as the circus mobilized for war, depicting Germans as inhuman beasts, asserting the inevitability of their defeat, and providing comic relief that allayed fears and fortified morale. The war also witnessed a significant change in circus acts involving animals, with an emphasis on fierce beasts submitting to the will of courageous trainers replacing the long-standing portrayal of kind relationships between human and animal performers. Positive training methods returned to vogue after 1945. In the 1950s the circus promoted two stories, one focusing on international issues (advocating for peace while preparing for the next war) and the other on Soviet individualism. These interpretive arcs held without significant revision until the Soviet Union collapsed.

This is a thought-provoking book. The inherent contradiction Niereck finds in the circus’ cultural work both invites and precludes deeper analysis: The circus was popular because its “meaning” was ambiguous and malleable, yet it offered a constant in terms of entertainment and diversion. It satisfied the needs of audiences and the state because its meaning was “indeterminate, flexible,” and “polyvalent” (p. 216), while at the same time it consistently propagated political messages, ideological lessons, and legitimating myths. Niereck’s use of the conditional voice in the chapter conclusions acknowledges the inherently speculative nature of this analytical framework. Given the conceptualization of the circus as a liminal space of play, illusion, and ambiguity, as well as the importance of animals to the circus’ acts and symbolism, one might also consider the circus ring as a hybrid realm in which humans and animals work together and both exercise agency. This finely crafted study will be accessible to students and scholars in a range of fields.

**Amy Nelson, Virginia Tech**

Harris, Steven E. *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life after Stalin*. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013. xxii + 394 pp. \$60.00. ISBN 978-1-4214-0566-7.

Yuri Pimenov’s Socialist Realist painting “Wedding on Tomorrow Street” animates the cover of *Communism on Tomorrow Street* and highlights the complex and hopeful history behind the production of mass housing in the Soviet Union that Steven Harris brings to life in this fascinating work. Considering that the 140,900,000 individuals who acquired new housing between 1953 and 1970 represent a staggering 66 percent of the average Soviet population during those years (according to my calculations), Harris’s argument that “moving to the separate apartment was the way most ordinary people experienced and shaped Khrushchev’s Thaw” makes perfect sense (p. 1). Harris masterfully shows through extensive research and analysis that many different people and groups contributed to the creation of a “distinctly Soviet version of mass housing” (p. 5). He also gives voice to “ordinary people” who did extraordinary things in the quest to solve their own housing problem—from moving into units before they were completed, to squatting in units that were not theirs, or writing insistent letters of complaint and concern about defects in the process.

Harris's work is organized in three parts around the production, distribution, and consumption of mass housing. In the first part, "Making the Separate Apartment," Harris situates the mass-housing movement as an international phenomenon that, in Russia, started with the 1917 revolutionaries who promised people adequate, evenly distributed housing. In response, radical architects who thought that socialism required a new way of living designed "house communes" (*doma kommuny*) (p. 56). Stalin swept aside these ideas in the early 1930s and reaffirmed the separate apartment as a legitimate socialist housing form, but in practice only the intelligentsia and party elites lived in them. Ordinary people had to make do with barracks, dormitories, and communal apartments, with multiple families in separate rooms sharing the toilet and kitchen. As Harris explains, Khrushchev built on these earlier housing ideas, but put major state resources behind the promise to solve the housing question and, in contrast to previous Soviet regimes, did so without mobilizing mass violence to achieve his goal, thus fundamentally changing the relationship between the people and the state.

Harris innovatively attributes the excessively small size of the Khrushchev-era housing units not to save money, but to the disjunction between the production (design) of the housing and its distribution. Local housing departments influenced by party members and enterprise leaders controlled who received the housing and doled it out on the basis of square meters of living space per person—never on a per apartment basis. Architects who had come to accept the concept of separate apartments wanted to prevent the distributors from putting multiple families in a single apartment and so reduced the area of the living space (that included only living and sleeping rooms) per person to the bare minimum. However, the cost of housing was based on the relationship between the amount of living space and auxiliary spaces (toilets, baths, corridors, and kitchens), so auxiliary spaces were also reduced in area to maintain this cost ratio—leading to the complaints about the inadequacy of the living space and ultimately to the reconsideration of apartment layouts.

Part 2, "Distributing Housing, Reordering Society," covers Soviet attempts to distribute housing equitably while maintaining the privilege of better housing for the elites. Getting on the waiting list and finally getting off it into better housing seemed to obsess everyone in this period. Many of the people involved in the design, construction, and distribution of living space were also trying to solve their own housing problems. Harris shows that a system that Khrushchev had intended to depoliticize and make egalitarian, transparent, and objective was anything but that. Alternatives to the waiting list existed in the form of "people's construction," in which workers contributed labor to build their own housing; and "cooperatives," through which people with the means could fund housing projects and acquire their unit. Harris carefully presents the complex and interesting machinations of the various players and shows the persistence of class differences under socialism. Through the extensive use of quotes, Harris demonstrates that the power to control policy did not rest only in the top leadership in Moscow, but was also manipulated by many key enterprise leaders and the people who worked for them.

Part 3, "Living and Consuming the Communist Way of Life," shows the disjunction between what was conceived and promised compared to what was built and lived-in and the ways that ordinary people participated in this process. Early on, Khrushchev tried to equate solving the housing question with achieving a true "communist way of life" (p. 22), but, as Harris shows, both these ideas remained works in progress. People were invited to meet with architects and visit furniture exhibitions, but the housing did not meet their needs and products were not available for them to purchase. Beyond the construction defects that were ubiquitous, people often moved into buildings with unfinished neighborhoods at a

distance from good transportation infrastructure. Combined with enterprise-built housing that was not well coordinated with state housing, this contributed to the dissatisfaction that many felt with the actual housing after the elation of finally getting into a new independent apartment wore off.

The only fault I find is in the discussion of Aleksei Müürisepp (Miurisepp as Harris has it from the Russian transliteration) (p. 176). It is very subtle, but Harris's narration gives the impression that Müürisepp was in Estonia while serving in the Red Army in the 1920s, but as Harris knows, Estonia was an independent Republic at the time. Müürisepp was born in Estonia in 1902, but his family moved to Krasnoiarsk in Siberia in 1907–8. He only became party secretary in Estonia after World War II when the Soviet Union occupied the country. I would have let this go, except I think it is important to note that architects in the Baltic States had a different relationship to the Thaw exactly because of their distinct history. Harris has found much that is distinctively “Soviet” in the development of mass housing, and how this played out in the Baltic States would present an interesting counterpoint. The quality of the editing and writing and the many direct quotes from people in every sector make *Communism on Tomorrow Street* particularly engaging to read. It should prove worthwhile for anyone interested in the history of the Khrushchev era, everyday life in the Soviet Union, and the development of housing.

**Marie-Alice L'Heureux, University of Kansas**

Brown, Kate. *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. x + 406 pp. \$27.95. ISBN 978-0-19-985576-6.

Nearly all Americans know the name Chernobyl, but very few are aware that two other nuclear sites—Russia's Maiak facility and the Hanford nuclear plant in eastern Washington state—each released more than twice as much radiation into the environment as their more famous counterpart. This volume is a vivid and compelling comparative analysis of the “atomic cities” that were constructed to support the Maiak and Hanford facilities—Ozersk, Russia, and Richland, Washington. Based on extensive archival work and on interviews with dozens of people, *Plutopia* tells the story of these two communities, detailing a series of sometimes surprising similarities between the two cities while painting a detailed—and often chilling—portrait of an irresponsible culture of nuclear safety.

The title of Kate Brown's book refers to one of its central ideas: that the American and Soviet governments won the loyalty of Richland and Ozersk residents by giving them a life of “orderly prosperity” and privilege, “embed[ding] plutonium operators safely within nuclear families living in well-heeled, exclusive atomic cities” (p. 5). Workers at the Hanford and Maiak plutonium plants came from the working classes, but viewed themselves as middle-class and benefited from government efforts to promote strong schools, healthy families, and a tangible sense of community, despite the serious health risks of life in Richland and Ozersk. Brown highlights a number of telling similarities between the cities of Ozersk and Richland, including their location in remote regions, the division of their low-level and high-level workers into distinct communities (often divided by race or class), and the culture of secrecy that concealed a poor safety record in each location. (Some of these similarities resulted from Soviet efforts to copy the successes of the American nuclear program, while others were driven by the similar needs of the Soviet and American regimes.) *Plutopia*



includes eerie and disturbing details about the health impact of plutonium production, including both the effects of everyday exposure to radiation and the impact of less commonplace events, such as the 1957 accident at Maiak and the U.S. government's secret 1949 release of fission products in the so-called "green run." Taken as a whole, *Plutopia* is an excellent example of transnational history, showing its author's mastery of both Soviet and American sources.

*Plutopia* is composed of forty-three relatively brief chapters, a structure which enabled Brown to provide readers with a series of compelling vignettes on life in Ozersk and Richland; in its sections on Ozersk, for example, *Plutopia* covered themes as disparate as Cold War espionage, life in the postwar Gulag, the ravages of Soviet alcoholism, and the benefits of affluent consumerism for many of the city's residents. Given Brown's strengths as a writer, the result is a far-ranging and well-written volume with insights on topics seemingly unrelated to nuclear physics and the Soviet secrecy regime. The book's structure and style also have their downsides: the author's frequent use of the first person is occasionally distracting, and the brevity of the book's many chapters at times made it hard for Brown to delve into the book's themes in greater depth. (I would have liked to see a more detailed discussion of the role of gender, for example: women in both Ozersk and Richland were given opportunities that would often have been unavailable elsewhere while being subjected to hideous levels of radiation, and I would have liked to read more about how the female plutonium workers of Hanford and Maiak viewed their life stories.)

Brown is convincing in her portrait of a vision of "plutopia" that united many aspects of life in Ozersk and Richland, but her account could sometimes have done a more effective job of placing Ozersk's story in the broader context of Soviet history. In the book's later chapters, for example, Brown looks at the problem of corruption in Ozersk, noting that the city's isolation, culture of secrecy, and lack of a typical party organization made it difficult for officials to investigate embezzlement and graft. As scholars like James Heinzen and Cynthia Hooper have shown, however, corruption was on the rise throughout postwar Soviet society, making it unclear whether the trends she described were the result of a special "zone of immunity" for Ozersk or were part of a broader postwar phenomenon. *Plutopia* occasionally feels like it is straining to draw a parallel between Soviet and American history, at one point drawing attention to Soviet police officials' interest in the work of J. Edgar Hoover and noting similarities between Hoover's investigations and the Great Purges of 1937.

Nonetheless, these are minor flaws in an important monograph. The recent nuclear accident at Fukushima highlights the continuing importance of "plutopia" in many parts of the world today, and Brown's work will be of great interests to scholars of postwar Soviet and American life, to readers interested in nuclear safety and environmental history, and even to more general audiences.

**Edward D. Cohn, Grinnell College**

Reisch, Alfred A. *Hot Books in the Cold War: The CIA-Funded Secret Western Book Distribution Program behind the Iron Curtain*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2013. xviii + 549 pp. \$70.00. ISBN 978-615-5225-23-9.

During the Cold War, individuals, publishers, and governments tried to satisfy the hunger for objective information of the "captive peoples" by mailing or smuggling books and

magazines across the Iron Curtain; a form of “Marshall Plan for the mind.” Most did not realize at the time that they were part of a secretive CIA program started in the early 1950s aimed at undermining communism. The agency considered the program an important piece of covert propaganda, claiming that a single book “can significantly change the reader’s attitude and action to an extent unmatched by the impact of any other medium” (p. xiii). Formally operating under cover names such as “International Advisory Council” (IAC), the editors, led by Romanian-born George Minden, carefully examined censorship policies in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria and compiled lists of contacts, starting from random names culled from telephone books. Alfred Reisch, himself a longtime participant in the program and later head of the Hungarian Research and Evaluation Section of Radio Free Europe, provides country-specific statistics up to the early 1970s. Significant portions of documents remain classified by the CIA, for obscure reasons.

The IAC promised books free of charge to anyone who responded. Minden and his team offered “the best of the West”: Authors included Hannah Arendt, Isaiah Berlin, Albert Camus, Milovan Djilas, William Faulkner, Franz Kafka, Leszek Kolakowski, George Orwell, and Boris Pasternak. But the packages also included technical-scientific literature, art books, and dictionaries. More than five hundred publishers, universities, and volunteers offered their services and either donated books or served as cover mailing addresses. By 1957, books were sent from 24 centers in 14 countries. Reisch estimates that over a period of 35 years, some 10 million books were mailed and smuggled into the Soviet bloc. In the words of Minden, the goal was to “maintain intellectual contact ... to help independent thinking and to keep alive hope for an eventual return to the Western community” (p. 50).

Communist censors rejected books, or they were “lost” in the mail and resurfaced on the black market. In one case the postal employees opening a contraband parcel found the postcard and wrote to ask if they, too, might receive a copy of the book! (p. 132). Authorities in Prague denounced the mailings in 1963 as part of American “diversionary drives” (p. 215). In December 1976, KGB director Yuri Andropov reported on “negative behavior” among Soviet youth caused by “bourgeois” newspapers and books (p. xxii).

The study reveals a treasure trove of letters from grateful book recipients in Eastern Europe. The Hungarian poet József Tornyai called the books “heavenly manna for our bodies starved for thought” (p. 100). Smuggled books quickly became hot commodities, as one Pole explained: “Books we receive from our friends are never considered our exclusive property” (p. 341).

By a large measure, Poland proved to be the most liberal territory, with state libraries openly acknowledging the materials and asking for more. The most difficult arena was the Soviet Union: strict postal censorship forced the CIA to launch a separate scheme there under the cover name “Bedford Publishing.” In a rare instance of acknowledging CIA editorial control, Reisch mentions that in 1965 the agency felt too many books went to Poland and not enough to other satellite countries (p. 84). Reisch believes the program played a decisive role in the West’s ideological victory, with the CIA as the “invisible paymaster” (p. 299).

Mark Kramer’s excellent foreword puts the operation into perspective by asking poignant questions: Did the intended recipients read the books, did it change their views, and did smuggling books contribute to the collapse of communism? Correctly, Kramer anticipates critical responses as a number of scholars maintain that economic factors proved more crucial in the downfall of communism than ideological erosion. Furthermore, Reisch’s claims that Communist intelligence services could not penetrate the scheme seem a trifle

too optimistic considering the KGB track record of infiltrating Western agencies and businesses, especially during the *détente* years.

The study encourages further research into the intellectual contacts during the Cold War and should be read by librarians and scholars everywhere to remind us of the value of the written word.

**Dónal O’Sullivan, California State University Northridge**

Davis, Donald E., and Eugene P. Trani. *The Reporter Who Knew Too Much: Harrison Salisbury and the New York Times*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. viii + 283 pp. \$45.00. ISBN 978-1-4422-1949-6.

In their new book, Donald Davis and Eugene Trani undertake the difficult task of bringing to life one of the most prolific American journalists of the second half of the twentieth century. As the authors point out, it is not simply the volume of Harrison E. Salisbury’s work—twenty-nine books and thousands of dispatches—that warrants our attention. It was Salisbury’s unyielding adherence to journalistic principles of reporting factual information regardless of political or social consequences that set him apart from many others in his profession. The book is largely based on Salisbury’s personal archive of letters, articles, dispatches, and interviews, and is supplemented by some scholarly secondary works.

The book opens by describing Salisbury’s childhood in the snowy state of Minnesota. It was there, the authors argue, young Salisbury picked up an interest in Russia and China by listening to the stories of the Russian Jews living in his Minneapolis neighborhood and visiting Chinese shops filled with exotic trinkets. Then we follow Salisbury as a young reporter for the United Press, where after several uneventful years he finally made it to the national stage with his hit national story on the assassination of Huey Long.

The title of the book foreshadows the authors’ main thesis: that Salisbury’s insistence on reporting the truth, at least as he saw it, caused personal and professional frustration. This was the case with his Moscow dispatches, which were subjected to strict Soviet censorship and often landed him in political hot water. He was banned from the Soviet Union after his Pulitzer Prize-winning dispatches on the post-Stalin transition. The very same dispatches bought Salisbury the label of a “fellow traveler” by some in the United States. Moreover, as the authors suggest, it was Lyndon Johnson’s ire over Salisbury’s reporting on the ineffectiveness and the human cost of the North Vietnamese bombing campaign that cost the journalist his second Pulitzer in 1967.

According to Davis and Trani, Salisbury shifted his interest to China in the 1970s and 1980s, managing to get a visa to visit the country in 1972 after years of trying. Allowed to travel around the country and to access Chinese archives, Salisbury wrote a major work on the Long March. He eventually wrote more books about China and continued to be hopeful about the country’s future, but changed his outlook after Tiananmen Square.

The book uses a good mixture of sources from Salisbury’s personal archive. The authors expertly weave together archival materials, contemporary sources, and present-day hindsight, while adding a human touch with excerpts from Salisbury’s letters. Unfortunately, this approach is often limited by the length of the book, leaving the reader hungry for more detail and insight into fast paced events.

Too often, perhaps owing to size and source limitations, the book tends to lose its focus. Parts on Salisbury's childhood and early career include frequent references to more intimate events such as Salisbury's disastrous first marriage and several love affairs. The rest of the book, however, makes almost no mention of Salisbury's personal life. There is a lengthy section on Abe Rosenthal, who became executive editor of the *New York Times* in 1977. Besides some personal and professional conflict between the two men, it is unclear why this is so important to a book on Salisbury, especially to a non-specialist reader. Chapter 9 is an in-depth review of several of Salisbury's books, and while it contains some interesting insight into his research and writing notes, the chapter still reads more like a book review. In the end, these frequent style changes leave the reader wondering whether this is a work on Salisbury the man, Salisbury the journalist, Salisbury the critic, or a review of his major works. The length of the book simply does not allow for an effective combination of all these themes.

Overall, the book succeeds in driving home the authors' message that Salisbury's dedication to journalistic integrity made him one of the premier and respected journalists in the United States, if not the world. The authors further underscore this point through their analysis of Salisbury's personal heroes, who all stood, sometimes alone, for what they believed in.

**Konstantin Avramov, California State University-Sacramento**

Etkind, Alexander. *Warped Mourning: Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied*. Cultural Memory in the Present. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013. xviii + 300 pp. \$29.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-8047-7393-5.

Alexander Etkind's *Warped Mourning* studies the perceived cultural perversions that emerged in Soviet and "post-catastrophic" Russian culture as a consequence of the state's failure to acknowledge the ruinous violence that it inflicted on its population during the years of Stalinist Terror. Etkind begins with two chapters that draw on the theoretical vocabulary of Freudian analysis, in particular the notions of mourning, melancholia, and trauma, to develop ideas about the opposition between remembering, which relates to the past as the past, and repetition, a compulsive re-experiencing of past trauma that takes place if remembering is denied. Etkind argues convincingly, if with distracting verbosity at times, that this conceptual vocabulary can be used to understand the cultural reality of contemporary Russia: "On the stage of postcatastrophic memory, the dialectics of repetition and remembering produce warped imagery, which combines the analytic, self-conscious exploration of the past with its reverberations and transfiguration" (p. 19). The "uncanny," another Freudian notion that will underpin the book's central argument, is related to this process: "If the suffering is not remembered, it will be repeated. If the loss is not recognized, it threatens to return in strange though not entirely new forms, as the uncanny" (p. 16).

The subsequent chapters examine cases of what Etkind terms "mimetic mourning," that is "a recurrent response to loss that entails a symbolic reenactment of that loss" (p. 1). Chapter 3 examines stories about the misrecognition of Gulag returnees by their families and loved ones, which the author interprets as allegories for the Soviet Terror. Chapter 4 presents the "postcamp worldviews" of Soviet scholars, reading their studies of serfdom and state expansion as "parables of collectivization and the gulag" (p. 81). The retreat from "world culture" and preoccupation with the "intrinsic dignity of bare life" (p. 107),

exemplified through the works of the Russian artist Boris Sveshnikov, is the subject of chapter 5. Entering the territory of postmemory, chapter 6 considers the “camp criticism” of the post-1956 generation of Gulag internees, arguing that, for this creative cohort, the gulag became a sacred place, the achievement of which was at some abstract level desired by writers such as Yuli Daniel and Andrei Sinyavsky. Chapters 7 and 8 deal with cinema, the perceived shift away from the austere forms of mourning encapsulated by Grigory Kozintsev’s *Hamlet* in the first instance, and “the master plot of mimetic mourning” in post-Soviet cinema in the second. A somewhat off-beat chapter 9 advances, not entirely successfully, new categories for understanding cultural memory in the form of memory “hardware” and “software,” which are associated with publicly administered monuments and socially managed texts respectively. The final two chapters deal with the “uncanny” in post-Soviet Russian literature, the preponderance of vampires and monsters that Etkind explains as a return of the unquiet ghosts of the Soviet era, “the familiar and the forgotten, the restored and the unrecognized, the never-experienced and the well-masticated” (p. 220).

There is undoubtedly much that is new and exciting in this study of the impact of state violence on the form and content of art and scholarship in post-Stalin Russia, and Etkind is at his most convincing during the many excellent close analyses of understudied texts, films, and works of art that he mines for revealing details and shades of meaning. Yet, the success with which he brings these observations to bear on broader matters concerning memory practices and politics in contemporary Russia is questionable. Too frequently one feels that an eclectic selection of evidence is being presented with the intention of bolstering a highly subjective point of view, and, moreover, that the historical and contemporary reality of Soviet and post-Soviet Russia is being skewed to conform with the expectations of the author’s argument. It is inaccurate, for example, to interpret Khrushchev’s Secret Speech as motivated only by “his own guilty memory of the terror and his fear of the terror’s reenactment” (p. 34), just as it is facile to explain away the persistence of the Stalin cult in contemporary Russia (if indeed it does persist) through the former leader’s charisma, which, the author argues, is “ineffable, beyond human communication” (p. 211). Etkind’s at times heavy-handed efforts at meme-crafting (“postcatastrophic” as an alternative to the apparently defunct “post-Soviet,” “memory hardware/software” and “ghostware,” “world culture,” and “tortured life,” among others) can also distract from the generally well-formulated argument. In such well-trodden terrain as Soviet memory studies, anxiety about the originality of one’s discourse is perhaps understandable, yet in a book that contains so many original ideas and insights one occasionally wishes that the author had presented his material in a more transparent and coherent manner.

**Victoria Donovan, University of St. Andrews**

Klumbytė, Neringa, and Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, eds. *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism, 1964–1985*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013. vii + 251 pp. \$70.00. ISBN 978-0-7391-7583-5.

Many historians have characterized the regime under Leonid Brezhnev, sandwiched between the dynamic periods of Nikita Khrushchev’s “Thaw” and Mikhail Gorbachev’s “perestroika,” as the era of “stability and stagnation,” implying that nothing much happened during these two decades. Certainly, Brezhnev rejected the idealism and reformism of his predecessor and implemented conservative and conformist politics that sought to achieve material comfort

at home under the label of “real, existing socialism.” However, as editors Neringa Klumbytė and Gulnaz Sharafutdinova assert in their introduction, this view of late socialism misunderstands the nature of the Brezhnev era. They argue that the years 1964–85 should be seen as a period in which material values of prosperity, individual satisfaction, self-expression, and spiritual self-development were sometimes encouraged by the state, coexisting with stale Communist rhetoric, patriotic songs, and other institutional features of Soviet society. In short, behaviors and values associated with the post-Soviet Union originated not during perestroika but during the allegedly moribund Brezhnev years. Klumbytė and Sharafutdinova reject the idea that the mores of late socialism were antithetical to liberalism as other scholars such as János Kornai have claimed. Rather, following the work of Alexei Yurchak, they contend that late socialist society provided Soviet citizens with the space to develop multiple identities and social relationships.

The ensuing essays support this general argument. Several concentrate on the emergence of “middle class” values, essentially defined by consumption, ownership of things, professionalism, and a sense of independence. Kate Brown’s fascinating comparison of the closed atomic cities of Richland, WA, and Cheliabinsk-40 reveals that these two quintessential Cold War cities resembled each other more than their neighboring communities. In fact, Soviet authorities were concerned that “capitalist values” were being incubated in the model “socialist city” of Cheliabinsk-40, as its residents enjoyed a much higher quality of life in exchange for living in a closed city. Anna Paretskaya’s chapter also focuses on the development of a “Soviet middle class” as shown in the discourse in official newspapers. Workers were encouraged to think of themselves as professionals and specialists, while Soviet media celebrated consumers’ supposed increased opportunities to buy goods that reflected their individual tastes as a mode of self-expression. These discourses contributed to the undermining of a Communist asceticism and collectivist ethos.

The chapters concentrating on culture also emphasize the fluidity and flexibility of late socialist discourse and values in contrast to the supposed cultural rigidity under Brezhnev. Sergei Zhuk’s analysis of how Ukrainian symbols were employed in literature and music in Dnepropetrovsk, another closed city, indicates that depending on context, the same cultural artifact or historical figure could be seen as promoting Ukrainian separatism (bad from an official Soviet perspective) or as a particular form of Soviet-Ukrainian identity (good). Likewise, Klumbytė contends in her examination of the Lithuanian satirical magazine, *The Broom*, that readers could affirm their Soviet identity by laughing with the officially sanctioned jokes and cartoons while simultaneously reinterpreting the Soviet values that they believed the magazine was criticizing. Alternative medical practices, which were sometimes praised and sometimes condemned in the official press, offered another venue for self-development and expression, as Larissa Honey posits in her chapter. Soviet citizens formed informal “clubs” based on yoga, “clairvoyant healing,” and other practices enabling them to develop as individuals within a collectivist context. Robert Edelman’s chapter on the Spartak Moscow soccer team further demonstrates how fans used their identification with the club to establish an alternative existence separate from, but not opposed to, the Soviet state. This development was made possible by the Soviet state with its expansion of football leagues, the building of new stadiums, and increased television coverage of matches.

The last two essays focus on literature. Benjamin Sutcliffe argues that I. Grekova’s popular 1976 novella *The Hotel Manager* portrayed Soviet women in late socialism as capable of having it all: a fulfilling career *and* a satisfying personal and romantic life. While this ran counter to most Soviet women’s actual experiences, readers nevertheless employed Grekova’s fiction to help them fantasize about or identify with their own desires,

as well as to buy into the “cultural mythology” of the Brezhnev period. Soviet men, on the other hand, as indicated in Olga Livshin’s analysis of nonconformist author Yuz Aleshkovsky’s novels, found themselves in an unenviable position. The male protagonists in Aleshkovsky’s surreal, comic novels try to fulfill official goals to become Soviet masculine heroes but find themselves emasculated by the very nature of the “heroic” tasks they are performing.

In the volume’s Afterword, Dominic Boyer echoes the editors’ claim that late socialism and liberalism should be viewed as coexisting on a spectrum, arguing that a reexamination of late socialism in the twentieth century should be the springboard for the emergence of an unapologetic “neo-socialism” that recognizes the co-dependency of liberalism and socialism. This volume and other recent studies compel us to reexamine the meaning and nature of late socialism. Even if the Kremlin leadership thought the social foundation on which they stood was firm and stable, it was continually shifting under their feet.

**Kenneth Slepyan, Transylvania University**

Jones, Stephen. *Georgia: A Political History since Independence*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013. xxii + 376 pp. £35.00. ISBN 978-1-84511-338-4.

Since the Soviet collapse, Georgia has experienced civil war, suffered the *de facto* loss of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and watched its economy, once among the most dynamic in the Soviet Union, fall to pieces. Yet this same country has been championed in the West as a beacon of democratic reform and its leaders remain optimistic about their nation’s prospects for prosperity and confident in its rightful place in the European community. In his survey of Georgia’s recent history, Stephen Jones addresses these contradictions, describing post-Soviet Georgia as a place where democratization efforts coexist with illiberal political practices, modern values are infused with traditional habits, and surface changes conceal unresolved structural issues. The result, according to Jones, is a nation characterized by “a dual democracy, a dual economy, and a widening chasm between urban and rural, haves and have-nots, English speakers and non-English speakers, young and old” (p. 4).

Jones divides the book, as well as recent Georgian history, into two parts: an era of populist revolution and state collapse from 1985 to 1995, and a period of conciliation and state-building from 1995 to 2011. In so doing, he argues for the enduring imprint of the late Soviet period and minimizes the impact of the vaunted “Rose Revolution” in 2003. Part I is organized chronologically, and, although the book’s title indicates a focus on Georgia “since independence,” Jones’s detailed analysis of the nation’s political upheaval during perestroika and the rise of Georgian populism—first embodied by the mercurial Zviad Gamsakhurdia—makes for one of the most compelling sections of the book, particularly since the social and ethnic divisions that gave rise to the “Gamsakhurdia phenomenon” have only deepened since the leader’s death. Part II is organized thematically, with chapters dedicated to the state, the economy, nationalism, national security, and foreign policy. Each of these chapters is further subdivided into its logical components; the chapter on the economy, for example, offers sections on corruption, privatization, the labor market, labor migration, women in the economy, and health and education spending. In this section, the analysis is admirably thorough, if occasionally dry. Overall, the structure of Part II seems better suited to taking a detailed inventory of contemporary Georgia than to advancing a broader argument, something Jones admits in his conclusion, where he states that his goal is a “systemic characterization of the Georgian political system” (p. 269).

The author does succeed in making a strong case for continuity from the late Soviet period to the present, particularly in the realm of Georgian political culture, which he describes as a “theatrical world of tragedy and dark double-dealings” (p. 19). Such a description encompasses both Gamsakhurdia’s paranoid rhetoric and the secret videotaping of oppositionists in the Saakashvili era. It also seems an apt way to describe a political system where turnover has generally been achieved by mass protest movements and elite power-grabs, not democratic elections. Jones’s argument for the fundamental similarity of the presidencies of Eduard Shevardnadze and Mikheil Saakashvili seems less persuasive. Under Saakashvili, Georgians have seen noticeable changes in everyday life: petty corruption and street crime have diminished dramatically, roads have been repaved, new construction projects abound, and the educational system has been transformed, with, among other things, the election of principals and the introduction of parent-teacher organizations, something the author himself describes as a “revolutionary break with Soviet tradition” (p. 212). Yet Jones is right to point out that these changes are less profound the further one travels from Tbilisi. Also fair is his observation that Saakashvili’s party has generally neglected the countryside and too frequently replaced the old guard with its own exclusive patronage networks in regional government.

Jones is a seasoned and sensitive observer of Georgian politics, and throughout the volume he manages to strike a tone that is at once concerned and objective. Moving beyond the colorful personalities of Georgian politics to offer a deeper reading of political, social, and economic changes since the end of the Soviet Union, he has written a book that will be a valuable reference for anyone interested in the country or the contemporary Caucasus more generally. While the author might have been bolder in making a more comprehensive argument or offering a more innovative theoretical framework, it seems only fair to note that the history of contemporary Georgia is still being made. Jones’s book will be the starting point for any future author who takes on the subject.

**Erik R. Scott, University of Kansas**

SOCIAL SCIENCES, CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA, AND OTHER

Batalden, Stephen K. *Russian Bible Wars: Modern Scriptural Translation and Cultural Authority*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. viii + 389 pp. \$99.00. ISBN 978-1-107-03211-8.

This is a rich, exhaustive, and fascinating examination of the conflict over Russian translations of the scriptures in the early nineteenth century, pitting the Russian Bible Society, backed and supported by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and by Prince Aleksandr Golitsyn, against the Russian Orthodox Church. There was protracted conflict over Russian translation of the scriptures, involving numerous high-ranking church leaders such as St. Filaret of Moscow among them. Stephen Batalden discerned brilliantly in titling his study “Russian Bible Wars,” echoing our own late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries’ “culture wars.” There is a deep, surprising connection between the two, despite the profound cultural and historical differences. The ingredients of the impetus to make the Bible available in modern Russian in the early 1800s are surprisingly contemporary: the use of advanced printing technology and sophisticated marketing and distribution schemes; the engagement



of leading intellectuals within the Russian Orthodox Church; backing from one of the most open, educated, and cosmopolitan members of the imperial family; accusations of the influence of Freemasonry and the intrusion of foreign, that is, Western, heretical Protestant scholarship and theology; disputes about which source documents to use, whether the Hebrew Masoretic texts for the Old Testament or the Greek Septuagint translation; and, last of all, fear of the threat of intellectuals and foreigners to both the Russian Church and State!

Very quickly, this two-hundred-year-old story becomes extremely contemporary for us, not just in the American landscape of “culture wars” and the ongoing activities of the “religious right” and the “Tea Party,” but also with respect to the increasing unity of Church and State in Russia, powerfully expressed by the constant photos of Vladimir Putin and Patriarch Kyril but even more so by the new encompassing vision of the global gathering of Russians in the concept of *Russkii mir*. Very seldom does a rigorous scholarly investigation seethe with intrigue, mystery, astonishing turns, and unanticipated attacks, but Batalden’s masterful study has all of this and more. Seeing this early nineteenth century clash between people one might assume to be united in faith reveals one of the perplexing realities of the modern era: religious disputes seem more vicious and incapable of resolution the further we get from the ancient era of dogmatic debate and division. The better educated we become, the more advanced our technology—especially that of information retrieval and dissemination—the wider the gaps. That said, this explosive set of events over the translation of the scriptures and their distribution to the faithful was but the start of a century that would become full of conflict and calls for reform, not only political, economic, and social but especially ecclesial. Just as unexpected as the “Russian Bible Wars” would be the enormously important reform movement which led to the Moscow Council of 1917–18, which was as important as Vatican II, but whose reform proposals never were implemented because of the Revolution. (Hyacinthe Destivelle’s study of this will soon be published in translation.) Batalden’s efforts are to be praised here, a truly gripping description and insightful assessment of a most significant stream of events in modern Russian history.

**Michael Plekon, Baruch College of the City University of New York**

Belova, Eugenia, and Valery Lazarev. *Funding Loyalty: The Economics of the Communist Party*. The Yale-Hoover Series on Stalin, Stalinism, and the Cold War. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012. xii + 209 pp. \$35.00 (paper). ISBN 978-0-300-16436-7.

In this book, Eugenia Belova and Valery Lazarev propose to “follow the money,” assessing the role of the CPSU through reference to its financial records mainly from 1939 to 1965 but also including data for 1974, 1990, and 1991. Exploring these sources for the first time, the authors describe their project as illuminating a “parallel universe” with respect to previous literature (p. 9). Two of their most surprising findings are that, even in the centrally planned economy, party administrators attached great importance to money and accounting (expenditures and revenues were expected to balance or even to produce a surplus) and that, consequently, the party ended up operating “more as a business ... than any of the Soviet economic enterprises” (p. 2).

Pressure to become self-financing began in 1948, and by the 1960s the CPSU was accumulating an “emergency fund,” mainly by operating its publishing facilities as serious

and profitable commercial ventures. The authors argue that this preoccupation with business operations, combined with an economic modernization that gradually discounted the value of propaganda, ultimately caused the CPSU to become “detached” (p. 137) from the needs of the state and thereby contributed to the loyalty deficit that accompanied the final collapse of the Soviet system.

The original purpose of the party was certainly not to produce an accounting surplus. Adopting a perspective of rational choice, Belova and Lazarev discuss the party’s role in terms of a “political labor market” (p. 14), wherein the objective was to produce and fund loyalty by adjusting the incentives involved in an ‘implicit promotion contract’ (p. 75). The party recruited activists by offering a prospect of future promotion and other benefits that had to offset the current efforts and dues that members were required to contribute. Party bosses had to motivate members while at the same time postponing gratification of their expectations in order to protect the rents accruing to the bosses themselves as the current occupants of high offices.

The result was a system of “impossible structures” that necessitated a precarious system of “selective justice” (chaps. 6 and 7). Principal-agent problems, including the formation of “loyalty networks” for illegal transactions, required appropriate punishments, but even “honest managers” frequently found themselves in a grey zone where the greater good required violation of current rules. In these circumstances justice proved to be “negotiable” (p. 111) and “optimal justice” often required “forgiveness” (p. 111). “Free riding on state and party resources” had to be penalized without jeopardizing loyalty and creating a group of “antagonized outcasts” (pp. 109, 128).

The rational-choice perspective has heuristic value in explaining the manipulation of incentives and punishments to produce and fund loyalty. There is some question, however, as to how far this approach can account for the ultimate collapse of the Soviet system. For Belova and Lazarev, the party gradually ceased to play a productive economic role during the Khrushchev period (p. 137). Instead of functioning as the agent of a dictatorial government, it pursued its own business interests and increasingly became a self-sufficient—and self-interested—political “club” (p. 148). The “promotion contract” became redundant as technology replaced zeal and the marginal returns to propaganda and political activism diminished. “Eventually ... as the party grew more concerned with its own well-being than with regime stability, raising loyalty became a marginal task, inevitably destabilizing the regime” (p. 153).

While the collapse of the Soviet system had much to do with economic failure—and not merely with a deficit of political loyalty—it is also true that the two were connected. This book certainly helps to illuminate the complexity of the problem. The party did become dysfunctional in terms of overseeing a more advanced economy, and it is also true that Gorbachev responded by attempting to find alternative bases of support. The final irony was that the accumulated reserves of the CPSU helped to fund the “new Russians” who abandoned the party to pursue their private business interests in the post-Soviet period. *Funding Loyalty* addresses the contradictory imperatives inherent in the original design of the CPSU and how those contradictions might have contributed to the collapse of the system in 1991.

**Richard B. Day, University of Toronto**

Shorten, Richard. *Modernism and Totalitarianism: Rethinking the Intellectual Sources of Nazism and Stalinism, 1945–Present*. Modernism and .... New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. xviii + 321 pp. \$24.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-230-25207-3.

In this book, Richard Shorten identifies Nazism and Stalinism as the two “classical” totalitarian regimes. Rather than arguing that these two regimes trace their origins to the Enlightenment, Shorten contends that totalitarianism is a modern construct with all the hallmarks of modern thought, theory, and practice. In order to mount his case, Shorten structures this volume with an introduction and two parts: Part I: “Totalitarianism—What, When, How?” consists of two chapters—“The Problem of the Modern” and “The Problem of Intellectual Antecedents.” Part II, “Three Totalitarian Currents,” explores the three shared characteristics of Stalinism and Nazism: “Utopianism,” “Scientism,” and “Revolutionary Violence” (chaps. 3–5). A concise conclusion summarizes the essential features of Shorten’s argument and is followed by informative endnotes, a hefty bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and a useful index.

In the Introduction, Shorten acknowledges that he is not the first to connect modernism and totalitarianism. His goal, however, is to determine “exactly how totalitarianism *is* modern” (p. 1). To wit, Shorten makes three claims. First, the ideological, rather than the structural, dimension of totalitarianism must be foregrounded. Second, “the main ideological elements of totalitarianism derive from particular currents that run through modern thought” (p. 3). Third, he argues that anthropological revolution, realized in the creation of the “New Man,” provides the adhesive that allows totalitarianism to cohere as a “composite of intellectual elements” (p. 4).

The New Man finds common cause in the three strands that comprise totalitarianism: utopianism, scientism, and revolutionary violence. Hence, in chapter 1, Shorten explores the ideological trajectory of totalitarian modernism through close readings of Arthur Koestler’s *Arrival and Departure* and Jonathan Littell’s *The Kindly One*. Based on these assessments, Shorten contends that Nazism and Stalinism model genocidal, not structural, totalitarianism. This discussion concludes with a dismissal of political religion theory, the application of which fails to compensate for the interface of modernity and religion; secular approaches to this ideological question prove much more adequate to the task.

Chapter 2 highlights affinity and influence as central to understanding the totalitarian ideological trajectory and to trace the often zigzagging progress toward the realization of totalitarianism. He argues that affinities “perform only a very modest causal role” (p. 105), whereas influences—of which he posits five types—exert a stronger causal role. With the groundwork for the discussion laid in these first two chapters, subsequent chapters explore Nazism and Stalinism through their similar and divergent ideological traits.

While Nazism and Stalinism share the three “currents” of utopianism, scientism, and revolutionary violence, the realization of them within each system is distinct. For example, both systems shared a utopian vision of the societies they were creating, yet the kind of utopia differed. Whereas Nazism posited a racial utopia in which the New Man “would perfect himself—in a utopia of nation” (p. 134), Stalinism’s New Man would be realized within a collective, a class utopia built through the dictatorship of the proletariat. Likewise, the source of the rightist Nazi utopian vision moves from J. G. von Herder’s reaction to Enlightenment thought (in which nationalism was realized not as political, but cultural), through Fichte, and, finally, to Hitler. Similarly, Stalinism’s leftist utopian vision owes its

debt to a course traversed from Fourier (who reworked Rousseau's idea of a totalitarian utopia) through Marx and Lenin, ending with Stalin.

The current of "scientism" resides in both Nazism and Stalinism and "is best viewed as providing legitimacy to the terms of historical justification in totalitarianism" (p. 151). "Scientism" rests squarely on the work of Charles Darwin, whose theories of evolutionary progress and survival of the fittest were implemented in Nazism to justify the eradication of racial enemies (anyone not considered a member of the Aryan race), and in Stalinism to bolster the argument for class warfare and a strict determinism that arranged society according to a hierarchy of class.

Revolutionary violence likewise molded thought and practice in Nazism and Stalinism thanks largely to the idea that only violent revolution would produce the regeneration necessary to achieve a new society in general and a New Man in particular. As Shorten elides, "revolutionary violence led both to approach political action in terms of bloody conflict ... which not only had an instrumental purpose ... but a regenerative purpose as well: the New Man would emerge transformed" (p. 243). Granted, the Nazi New Man—the Aryan idol—represented a racial purification, while the Stalinist New Man emblemized the victory of class warfare. Although both systems followed different ideological trajectories, the bedrock on which they both built themselves derived from the notion that violence was indispensable for the construction of a new society.

This short review cannot do justice to the thoroughness and depth of Shorten's analysis. His systematic presentation of the ideological commonalities and differences of Nazism and Stalinism presents a convincing, cogent argument that is worth considering, even by those who support the structural model of totalitarianism. This volume should be required reading in any course that considers the history, nature, and practice of Nazism and Stalinism. Specialists, graduates, and undergraduates would all benefit from a close reading of this valuable text.

**Cynthia A. Ruder, University of Kentucky**

Bassin, Mark, and Catriona Kelly, eds. *Soviet and Post-Soviet Identities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. xiv + 370 pp. \$99.00. ISBN 978-1-107-01117-5.

The more than two decades that have passed since the fall of the Soviet Union have provided some emergent historical perspective on how Soviet identity functioned before 1991, and how Sovietness as a cultural and political category has endured and changed since that time. In this compelling collection of essays, editors Mark Bassin and Catriona Kelly bring together the work of eighteen scholars from around the globe to examine how social upheaval, economic transformation, and political shifts have shaped competing national, ethnic, and civic identities on former Soviet territories. The collection's major strengths—strong scholarship, rigorous inquiry, and an interdisciplinary approach—are evident in its explorations of state policy, mass media, education, cinema, literature, religion, museum collections, and social practices. Although it presents no unified narrative of how Soviet and post-Soviet identities have changed over time, the volume repeatedly invokes such notions of authenticity, legitimacy, ritual, and affect to illuminate the many facets of Soviet identity and its legacies in fascinating detail.

The collection's superb first chapter, an instant classic by Ronald Suny, sets the stage for the rest of the volume by explicating the role of affect in the tension between imperial and nationalizing forces in Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet history over the past 200 years. In examining the notion of "Soviet subjectivity" (p. 17), Suny argues that "Soviet citizens often experienced identification both with the ethnicity or nation to which they were officially ascribed and, in different ways, with the Soviet Union as motherland or fatherland" (pp. 22–23). This notion of duality is explored along different lines in the subsequent essay by Nancy Condee, who articulates a double-edged Russian national project that positions itself simultaneously as oppressed (by Western hegemonic forces) and as oppressor (of minority cultures). Citing Marina Tlostanova as the source of the oxymoronic designation of "imperial nationalism" (p. 39), Condee examines concrete manifestations of this phenomenon in the films of Aleksandr Sokurov, Aleksei Balabanov, and Nikita Mikhalkov. Suny's and Condee's chapters constitute the volume's theoretical framework, along with Bassin and Kelly's brief and potentially controversial introduction, which employs (perhaps with some irony) such anti-constructivist notions as "the inherent variability of national identification," "the essentially volatile and protean nature of nationalism," and "the particular fate of ethnic Russia" (pp. 6–7). Essentialist phrasing aside, the extensive footnotes to Bassin and Kelly's essay provide readers new to the field of nationalism and nationhood studies with a comprehensive list of seminal works in the field.

The remaining fifteen essays are organized under the headings of institutions, myths, spaces, language, and creeds of national identity. Since many of the essays also discuss the related categories of civic, ethnic, and religious identities, the individual chapters do not always fit neatly under their assigned category (such as chapter six by Victoria Arnold, which could easily have found a home under "creeds"). That said, this organizational aspect of the volume demonstrates just how interwoven many of these issues are. There are many gems among these essays, including Dmitry Baranov's examination of portrayals of ethnicities in the State Museum of Ethnography in Leningrad; Sergei Abashin's analysis of national movements in Central Asia; Elza-Bair Guchinova's study of the Kalmyk national revival; Kelly's historical overview of the relation of state authorities to the Russian Orthodox Church; and Alexander Panchenko's study of popular religious practices. Anna Kushkova's essay on narratives of deficit in Soviet Russia is worthy of note as the only chapter that attempts to define "Soviet mentality" in concrete terms, as "the 'perception that we are together, that we are doing something important' [...] as a syndrome of 'forced collective existence' [...] 'a manipulative mentality,' sensitivity to where power was located, 'a very hierarchical cast of mind,' 'respectfulness of authority in all its forms,' 'incredible adaptability, based on inventiveness and imagination' [...] and an 'underlying anxiety about deficits of material goods'" (p. 289).

An overall impression of the collection is that it took a while, and a good deal of cultural and political work to create a recognizable sense of Sovietness: a number of the essays point to the 1970s as a turning point when cultural practices, institutions, and communication technologies (especially radio and television) reflected a mature sense of Soviet identity, be it in the depiction of "the Soviet people" in ethnographic museums (Baranov, p. 82), in the "Solemn Presentation of the Soviet Passport" (Baiburin, p. 96), or in an education system that encompassed a love of Lenin, devotion to the Russian language, loyalty to the party, service to the state, a love of labor, civic discipline, and a heroic will to victory under the umbrella signifier of an "enormous love of the Homeland" (Bezrogov, p. 118).

*Soviet and Post-Soviet Identities* is a significant contribution to Slavic Studies and to the field of nationhood studies more generally. Many of the individual essays would make excellent readings for college and graduate courses, and for scholars and others interested in the persisting “post-” in post-Soviet states two decades after the fall.

**Andrea Lanoux, Connecticut College**

Mijnssen, Ivo. *The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia I: Back to Our Future! History, Modernity and Patriotism According to Nashi, 2005–2012*. Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society. Stuttgart: ibedem-Verlag, 2012. 202 pp. €34.90 (paper). ISBN 978-3-8382-0368-3.

Lassila, Jussi. *The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia II: The Search for Distinctive Conformism in the Political Communication of Nashi, 2005–2009*. Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society. Stuttgart: ibedem-Verlag, 2012. 226 pp. €34.90 (paper). ISBN 978-3-8382-0415-4.

In these two volumes Ivo Mijnssen and Jussi Lassilla present two thematically related analyses of the recent rise of Russian youth movements in general, and of the pro-Kremlin Nashi (“Ours”) organization in particular. Together, the two monographs comprise a striking and compelling portrait of Putin’s Russia, the place of youth in Russian politics, and the role of the Nashi movement in expressing a perceived growth of nationalist sentiment. Both volumes employ discourse analysis to examine and analyze the language of Putin and the youth organization through their speeches, publications, and propaganda. This methodology proves to be very effective, providing the reader with demonstrable linguistic and pragmatic evidence of the interplay of rhetoric between the Kremlin and Nashi.

Mijnssen’s volume focuses on the history and political development of the Nashi movement into a quasi-political party, a “vehicle for official youth politics” (p. 17). Tracing the formation of Nashi from the splintered and disenfranchised “informal” groups that proliferated after the collapse of the official Komsomol organization under Gorbachev, to the rise of a new Russian nationalism with the sixtieth anniversary of the Great Patriotic War in 2005, Mijnssen builds a compelling case in chapter 2 for the creation of a new vanguard of Russian youth. The examination of speeches delivered by Putin provides the evidence to construct the case for “tensions between Russia and its neighbors in post-Soviet space” (p. 46). Further employing discourse analysis, the connection between the Ukrainian “Orange Revolution” of 2004 and the subsequent formation of first *Idushchie vmeste* (“Walking Together”), and then the Nashi movement to prevent such an occurrence in Russia is particularly well-developed in chapter 3. Again, documentary evidence shows how notions of the existence of enemies, both foreign and domestic, become part and parcel of the group’s nascent mission. Chapter 4 then concerns itself with the marginally covered (in the US) but quite significant conflict in 2007 over the removal of the “Bronze Soldier,” a Soviet-era statue in Estonia—especially in the face of the European Union-Russia summit at the time, especially given Estonia’s recent membership into the EU.

Chapter 5 presents some of the most compelling evidence of the volume, given the salience of the subject—the Nashi youth camp at Lake Seliger—and Mijnssen’s report on that camp as a participant-observer in 2010. The history and development of this quasi-military boot camp is first discussed, and then evocatively presented with a thick-description portrait of the author’s first-hand experience at the installation. Using authentic documents

ranging from propaganda pamphlets to camp song lyrics, Mijnsen provides revealing insight to the Seliger camp and its affiliation with Nashi. The conclusion in chapter 5 reinforces the extent to which Nashi in general and Seliger in particular have supported and forwarded Putin's political agenda.

Mijnsen's volume also includes in appendices two fascinating documents: a brochure entitled "An Unusual Fascism," and an instruction manual, "Some Uncomfortable Questions to the Russian Regime." Unfortunately, these documents are neither accessible to readers who do not know Russian, nor are they adequately explicated and discussed in the body of the monograph. Given the volume's reliance on discourse analysis to build its argument, the lack of attention to the rich and copious material in the appendices is unfortunate.

Lassila's volume takes on a slightly more contracted period for analysis: 2005 to 2009, during which the Nashi organization attempted to construct a self-identity of representing an "ideal" Russian youth. Applying discourse and pragmatic analysis to thirty-eight online documents that appeared on Nashi's website during that period, as well as to seven publications of *Idushchie vmeste*, the study attempts to elucidate the movement's motives and agenda for Russia's social and political future. This analysis is supplemented by interview data from three organizers of the movement. Together, these documents provide the ballast for Lassila's provocative and insightful portrait of Russian youth during Putin's second term and the beginning of the Medvedev regime.

In chapters 2 and 3, Lassila presents the history of the formation of the Nashi movement, describing the development of the participation of Russian youth in politics following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and especially on the formation of quasi-political parties during the Putin regime. Chapter 4 provides close reading of Nashi online documents, including ideological manifestos and recruitment statements, and builds the case for a "tension between didactics and stimulation within the movement" (pp. 26, 86). Chapter 5 adds interview data to the presentation, which gives a much more nuanced, personal "face" of the organization and complements the online data effectively. Lassila contends that the visible online presence of Nashi is nothing short of a continuation of earlier Soviet attempts to create a propaganda machine, and employs principles of intertextuality to examine these contemporary documents in light of their historical predecessors.

In chapter 7, Lassila again employs intertextual principles to analyze the creation of "Nashi's ritual-like strategy" (p. 116) employed in the organization's 2007 publicity-laden bicycle marathon, "The Road to Freedom," from Nizhny Novgorod to Moscow. As in Mijnsen's volume, the "Bronze Soldier" affair in Estonia is the subject of Lassila's chapter 8. Here, however, the emphasis is shifted to the failed discourse of Nashi as it attempts to negotiate between social consciousness and the increasing apolitical attitudes of much of post-Soviet youth. Finally, chapter 9 offers a discussion of the study, reasserting the limitations of an organization such as Nashi to leverage a successful agenda in "the restricted space of political discourse" (p. 202).

The two monographs synergistically complement each other in their thorough coverage of the language, symbols, and discourse of one of Russia's most significant political movements of the twentieth century. Overall, they are carefully researched and utilize discourse analysis to full value throughout. What is missing from the presentation and analysis in both studies is adequate coverage of the opposition youth movements, especially that of indefatigable and charismatic youth leader Ilya Yashin, *Solidarnost'*. Given that both studies rely on discourse analysis, the lack of substantial dialogue with other contemporary Russian youth organizations is palpable. The volumes also, unfortunately, suffer from a couple of technical shortcomings. Most notably, the lack of a discursive

index—neither of subjects nor of names—limits both volumes in their utility as a reference work on the subject of Russian youth movements. Lassila lacks any index at all, and Mijnsen includes only a scant one-and-a-half-page index that gives only general headings, such as “Putin,” followed by dozens of page numbers, with no delineation of subject matter to assist the reader. Both volumes would also benefit from more careful proofreading throughout, especially of Russian transcription in the bibliography: (for example, in *Vol. 1*: \*molodesh' [p. 192], \*zhelēznyi [pages 15 and 197], \*bol'she and \*razocharovivaius [p. 197]; in *Vol. 2*: \*inter'viu [p. 216], \*vlast [p. 220], \*Oranzhevoy [p. 223]). Still, in spite of these drawbacks, both volumes succeed admirably in providing insightful portraits of the language, politics, and agenda of Russia's youth movements during the Putin years.

**Thomas J. Garza, University of Texas at Austin**

Chebankova, Elena. *Civil Society in Putin's Russia*. BASEES/Routledge Series on Russian and European Studies. New York: Routledge, 2013. xxii + 218 pp. \$155.00. ISBN 978-0-415-65687-0.

This book makes a valuable contribution to our knowledge of civil society in contemporary Russia. The author shows that she is familiar with theoretical writings about civil society and scholarly works on society in post-Soviet Russia.

One of Elena Chebankova's main theses is that there are cycles of private and public activity in complex societies. During a private cycle, members of society concentrate “almost totally on personal improvements and private welfare goals,” engaging in “the pursuit of individual happiness, a better life for oneself and one's family,” and similar efforts (p. 25). In a public cycle, many people are preoccupied with issues in the larger public sphere and take part in activities that they see as promoting the public interest. Chebankova argues that Russia had entered a private cycle of activity when Vladimir Putin became president in 2000, since the public had become disappointed and disillusioned with the results of changes that had taken place in the 1990s (pp. 30–34). She does not direct attention to the effects on citizens' attitudes of the legacy of the Soviet system, even though most experts on civil society in Russia regard that legacy as an important influence on the culture of that country. Chebankova contends that a public cycle began to emerge in Russia by 2006, as more people found themselves in comfortable economic circumstances and became more concerned about “the state of morality and culture, the lack of justice, and the lack of political rights” (p. 34). She sees the public cycle continuing at present.

The author discusses different types of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Russia, and observes that the insufficiency of financial resources is the main source of constraints on the activity of such organizations in Russia (p. 147). She asserts that independent grassroots movements are multiplying rapidly and “are prepared to face the state in defence of their interests” (p. 7). She notes that most of the actions of such movements have the character of “single-case local activity,” which is focused narrowly on local issues (p. 146). Yet she argues, in accordance with the general optimism of her outlook, that a trend toward building wider-based networks aiming at broader changes in policies is underway in Russia (p. 146). The strength of that trend may be debated vigorously. Although Chebankova details the efforts of the Putin regime to restrict the growth of an independent civil society, she concludes on a note of cautious optimism about the development of associational life in Russia.



This book discusses many other significant questions that a brief review cannot mention. Chebankova's work should be recommended for all those who study civil society in Russia. In this reviewer's judgment, she is overly optimistic about the degree to which most Russians have become less distrustful of the public sphere and less reluctant to take part in actions on behalf of common goals. Yet whether one agrees or disagrees with her major arguments, any reader will find the book to be well informed and filled with important insights.

One criticism should be directed to the publisher. The proofreading of this book left much to be desired. Errors of grammar and punctuation are numerous in it, unfortunately. Still, such minor flaws could not greatly detract from this reviewer's enjoyment of such a richly informative and simulating work.

**Alfred B. Evans, Jr., California State University, Fresno**