BOOK REVIEWS

Literature and Fine Arts

Jackson, Robert Louis. *Close Encounters: Essays On Russian Literature*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013. xxiv + 373 pp. $85.00. ISBN 978-1-936235-56-8.

Every retrospective collection of essays has an architecture that reveals the "framing" or musculature of its author. Sometimes a single overarching idea carries the structural load. In other cases, weight is distributed to the periphery, to other famous names and critics, so that the essayist becomes something like a clearing-house (and the work of art a pretext) for philosophical debate on distant topics. Although important interlocutors do figure in to the volume under review—Martin Heidegger in a footnote, Paul Ricoeur on primitive dread for two pages, Mikhail Bakhtin in an entire chapter—Jackson's luminous selection of his own critical writings over the past half-century is based overwhelmingly on close reading, immediate contexts, and direct quotation. Get all three right, he seems to suggest, and the literary critic can leap to the artist's integral worldview in an instant.

Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Chekhov we would expect. But some will be surprised by essays on the poetry of Tyutchev, Severyanin, Vyacheslav Ivanov, and Goethe. Jackson's themes can seem overly large when considered in the abstract. Freedom, responsibility, fate, beauty, reality, the pain and moral instruction of saying farewell: what in the world, one might ask, is excluded from those realms? But the miracle is that Jackson never sits for long in the abstract. Every metaphysical "encounter" he sets up is in this sense "close": the reader can see its body and face. Jackson often lines up his work with the ligatures concealed. Take the opening two essays, on Pushkin's Don Juan (who *is* he, rake or poet?) followed by Turgenev's short story "Knock ... knock ... knock" (what is its riddle?). At first, Turgenev seems to win his second slot in the book largely because Jackson loves this story and is miffed that Dostoevsky and Akhmatova both treated it with disdain (p. 43). Only after the analysis is over do we realize that these two disparate works are intended to juxtapose fate as active and self-assertive (Pushkin's understanding: the end might be given, but the poet is responsible for arriving at it by an honorable path), and fate as suffered by Turgenev's heroes: passive, fearful, hidden in fog. Themes and worldviews build on one another in this way throughout *Close Encounters*. In this review, one core concept is sampled from each of the book's four sections.

At the center of the first section, "Fate, Freedom and Responsibility," are four essays on Tolstoy. The first discusses the duel between Pierre and Dolokhov from *War and Peace*; the last, the motif of horror (*uzhas*) in *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. In between are two on Anna, Vronsky, and their initial encounter on or around trains. Jackson is good at isolating a single word, like *perebrat'* (to sort or shuffle something, p. 98) or *proizvol* (free choice, self-will, or arbitrariness, p. 103), that focuses a subject's psychic state. With the desperate dying judge, Jackson breaks *uzhas* down into syllables and even into threatening phonemes (pp. 124–26). His purpose as close reader, or close listener, is to communicate the texture (aural, tactile) of a liminal scene—and, like Tolstoy, he tracks the *energy* of images long before they have taken on definitive moral valence. A fine example is his reading of Anna's nightmare on the train, both dreadful and joyous. At some level Anna understands its "images of death." She grapples with them even as she falls into sin, that is, even as "figuratively speaking, she dies; her death, however, is also rebirth, but in a fallen state" (p. 105). In the alternating terror and levity of this transformation, there is no hint that the "reborn" fallen Anna is either demonic or broken as a human being. Perhaps she has even more resources at her disposal than before. For if a part of her has been lost, other parts are more acutely responsive. This is one way to read Jackson's comment, which opens his essay on "The Death of Ivan Ilyich," that "Tolstoy had a very keen sense of the distinction between melodrama and drama" (p. 107). To be broken at a liminal moment is melodramatic. To become in certain ways stronger, more sensitized and joyful after *failing* a test, even as the choice will prove an awful one, is a Tolstoyan drama.

The second section, “Two Kinds of Beauty,” begins with an excerpt from Jackson’s path-breaking 1966 book on Dostoevsky’s philosophy of art. It has lost none of its vitality or paradox. The “two kinds” recall the energy of the fallen and reborn Anna Karenina, minus Tolstoy’s exquisite manipulation of guilt. We feel most alive, Dostoevsky believes, when we struggle toward the ideal of beauty amidst ugliness and disharmony (p. 157). Should we actually attain the ideal, however, our lives will “slow up”; we feel anguished and dull. But chronically failing to progress tempts us to turn toward unhealthy images of beauty—Pushkin’s Cleopatra, for example, for whom “life is choked because of the absence of a goal.” Fatally, such beauty “demands everything from the present” and the immediate (p. 159). Jackson sees two aspects of Dostoevsky’s aesthetics as key. First is the fusion of moral and aesthetic categories; by definition, the Good is the Beautiful. Second is the deceptive “counter-ideal” of aesthetically attractive evil, expressed in sensuality (p. 160). Its temptations can be resisted only by sustaining the proper tension in movement toward the ideal. We must neither arrive at it wholly, nor lose heart when we fail to advance. This balance is difficult to attain in life—a chaotic mix of freedom and fate that demands from us finished deeds—but beauty can transfigure us powerfully and responsibly while it is *passing through art*. And this, says Dostoevsky, every artist knows (p. 157).

Jackson begins with the dichotomy of *obraz* versus *bezobrazie* (image/icon versus imagelessness/ugliness) that organizes so many of his insights into Dostoevsky. This spatial pair does the same hard work for him that the double-voiced or polyphonic word does for the more logos-centric Bakhtin. Five essays follow in this section: two on Fyodor Karamazov (a textbook case of *bezobrazie*), two on liminal Dostoevskian visions (one the fantastic world of a twelve-year-old girl, the other the gentle smile of a peasant), and finally a legacy case, Solzhenitsyn’s iconic Matryona. A topic sentence for this cluster might be Jackson’s conclusion that the “cardinal sin in Dostoevsky’s novelistic universe is inertia” (p. 169). Not evil—which is everywhere and ineradicable—but stasis, the absence of movement toward an ideal. Inertness is what separates Nikolai Stavrogin (truly, consistently dead) from the inconsistent and always arousable Dmitry Karamazov (pp. 168–70). A horror of inertia draws Dostoevsky (and Jackson) repeatedly to the mobile, expressive face. Jackson gives us two exhaustive discussions: a deep look into Fyodor Pavlovich’s repulsive physiognomy (a challenge to all who would love precisely their closest neighbor), and the “triple vision” required to recuperate, over decades, the loving benedictions of the peasant Marey. “The need for beauty ... is a need for moral transfiguration” Jackson writes from inside this aesthetics (p. 161). We have some chance of satisfying both needs only because, as Dostoevsky noted in 1881, a person throughout his life “does not so much live as composes himself, self-composes himself” (*sochiniaet sebia, samosochiniaetsia*) (p. 223). The idea of properly paced or composed motion sets us up for the third section, “Critical Perspectives.”

The critics are Maxim Gorky, Mikhail Bakhtin, Vyacheslav Ivanov, and, in the lead essay, Dostoevsky himself. The topic is “reality.” If earlier Jackson had assured us that Tolstoy knew the difference between melodrama and drama, here we learn of Dostoevsky’s insistence that melodrama is not reality (p. 244). The melodrama in question is a “realist” painting of convicts that Dostoevsky, in 1862, found offensive to truth and to art because of its photographic verisimilitude. Jackson would unpack this offense. Dostoevsky as critic navigated the ideologically freighted shoals of idealism and the fantastic. Art is realistic not photographically or statistically—not when it copies life, or gathers data on life—but when it serves as a conduit leading to an “elemental, still unresolved idea” (p. 255). If its substance seems unreal, untypical, fantastic, this is because the only linkages recognized as “real” by the spectator are tediously horizontal ones, trapped in an inertly material present tense. The topic sentence for this section is thus more an axis than a theme: “Realism in Dostoevsky’s novelistic universe, as in Dante’s *Commedia*, is vertical” (p. 252). If allowed to leap up and address a nascent idea, the wildest, most exceptional event (or crime) can become a “prime conductor of reality” (p. 253). In the two next essays—among the book’s best—this axial movement is applied to Gorky’s polemic with Dostoevsky and to Bakhtin’s explication of him.

Gorky protested the staging of Dostoevsky’s novels. He feared that theatrical gesture, deprived of the mediation of a narrator, would reduce these powerfully symbolic fictional characters to mere

"nervous convulsions" (p. 263)—and that such dramatic images would infect. Russia, already a violent, dark, passive, narcissistic-masochistic place, did not need any more such models. Jackson reconstructs Gorky's painful attempt, before and after the Revolution, to squeeze Dostoevskian *bezobrazie* out of himself drop by drop, in the interests of spiritual health and "social pedagogy." The torment of this complex cultural magistrate was never resolved horizontally, by looking straight in the eye at *what was*; instead, he leapt out and over-documented reality. It is telling, however, that Jackson's closing lament (p. 276) is not that Gorky, in his final years as Stalinist spokesman and beneficiary, might have misconstrued the "bankrupt rational humanism" of Soviet reality, but that Gorky "failed to comprehend the profoundly affirmative and active character of Dostoevsky's religious humanism" (p. 276). To fail to grasp life along its obscure, day-to-day axis was regrettable, although understandable. But for a writer of Gorky's gifts to fail to credit an artist like Dostoevsky with a redemptive vision was unforgivable. Only Donald Fanger has provided so richly nuanced a portrait of Gorky in so concise a compass.

The second half of *Critical Perspectives* discusses Bakhtin, Dostoevsky, Vyacheslav Ivanov, and God. A vertical leap organizes reality here as well. The fourth essay is a close reading of Ivanov's late poem "Nudus salta! The Purpose of Art" (1944), which Jackson takes to be a reconsideration of the poet's beloved Dionysian principle ("Dance naked!") in light of Dostoevsky and Pushkin. In that company—not to mention in that year, the war's last—the frenzied god seems even a little tedious. More revisionist still is Jackson's fine essay on Bakhtin and Dostoevsky's declaration of Christian faith. It is remarkable that it first appeared in 1993. Thanks to reminiscences of Bakhtin's disciple Sergei Bocharov, we now know that Bakhtin privately regretted that he did not, or could not, address "the most important thing" in his book on the novelist, namely, Dostoevsky's relationship to God. Working like a patient jeweler with the gleaming bits that Bakhtin did manage to publish, Jackson teases out this subtext.

Jackson's point is that Bakhtin's celebrated "formal poetics" of Dostoevsky, for all its horizontal focus on "free people standing alongside their creator" (p. 281), in fact depends on an authoritative, vertical or religious dimension. He calls this the "higher unity" of the polyphonic novel—and for those with eyes to see, it is not that cunningly concealed. This higher reality is always a visualization (*vídenie*) and always proactive and form-shaping (p. 285). It often resists expression in words. Because it constantly moves and strives, even to fix it in a spatial definition is difficult. But to grasp this higher unity, Jackson argues, is to grasp "how Dostoevsky got along with God" (p. 277). He intervened in his characters' lives as a freedom-loving God would intervene, to help in *self*-revelation. And although the novelist's declaration of faith might have Christ at the center, a "sense of faith" was more important than a doctrinal truth. Thus the priority Dostoevsky gives to the concept of an "orientation" over a "conviction." Convictions are monologic. To sense an ideal, however, means to risk leaning toward it; it is not a guarantee but a "tension toward God" (p. 288). Only faith "sensed" in this way can survive the mass of contrary evidence for evil that surrounds us on the horizontal plane, and provide sufficient energy to propel the confused or suffering consciousness upward. Dostoevsky does not abandon his readers, nor does he save them. He offers them his authorial hierarchy of "privileged, though not uncontested" orientations (p. 295), which is his higher unity.

The four essays that make up the final section, "Poetry of Parting," stand somewhat to the side of the theses richly adumbrated in the earlier clusters. The first two are exegeses of poems by Fyodor Tyutchev and Igor Severyanin. The last two are sleuthing exercises constructed in the penumbral zone of *Eugene Onegin*. Each has another great literary master in the wings. In one, Jackson pursues multiple leads for Pushkin's veiled reference to the Decembrists in his final stanza, attributed to the poet Saadi ("Inykh uzh net, a te daleche"), coming to rest over traces of Zhukovsky's 1817 version of Goethe's "Zueignung" (1797, publ. 1808 with Part I of *Faust*). In the other, Jackson speculates why Nabokov, who created his own Russian translation of Goethe's "Dedication" in 1923, was so ambivalent about that great German poet and so stubborn in his insistence that Pushkin could not have appreciated his genius. Poems of parting, we are led to believe, conceal as much as they transmit, for the artwork has massive emotional work to accomplish when the loss is great.

Close Encounters has been handsomely turned out by Academic Studies Press, with a stunning sketch by Leslie Jackson, “Come, let us build ourselves a city,” gracing the cover. This reviewer at least would have liked to have the Russian quotes in Cyrillic, not hobbled by transliteration—but otherwise, the formatting is expert; there are so few typos (perhaps half a dozen in all) that finding one is almost pleasurable, like needles in a haystack. Will this collection become the Essential or Portable Robert Louis Jackson? Probably not; Jackson has more to write. Fascinating, for example, would be the integration of his vision of Dostoevsky with the “dark Bakhtin” of 1943–44, who for a while lost faith in the word, the image, the calling of the writer (in all he had come to see largely traces of violence)—and who planned to supplement his study of Rabelaisian carnival with a new project on “the making-serious of the world” (*oser'eznenie mira*); Bakhtin’s mid-way markers were to be *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, his end-point *The Brothers Karamazov*. Also, the reader senses in the final two essays that Jackson is on the edge of big new interests: in Goethe, Zhukovsky, Nabokov. This is exactly the sense one wants from essays that stretch over half a century, on some of the greatest writers in the world.

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Salden, Peter. *Russische Literatur in Polen (1864–1904)*. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2013. 226 pp. €32.90. ISBN 978-3-412-21022-9.

The partitioning of Poland at the end of the eighteenth century gave birth to various revolts, which were undertaken to restore the nation’s sovereignty. The crushing of the January 1863 uprising in the Polish territories under Russian control put an end to these hopes. The defeat resulted in a reinforced politics of russification, heightening the tensions between the two nations.

In his study on the reception of Russian literature in Poland between 1864 and 1904 (the latter date marking a turning point set by the Russian revolution the following year), Peter Salden analyzes the consequences this historical and political situation had on the cultural relations between Russia and Poland. Salden gives an instructive and detailed illustration of how the distribution, reception, and evaluation of Russian literature in the Polish territories under Russian control became part of politics as well as a matter of ideological and patriotic considerations. The author’s research focuses on both aspects of the topic: he poses the question as to whether, and by what means, the Russian administration used Russian literature as part of its politics of assimilation, and he inquires how Russian literature was received by the Poles.

Salden unfolds the “Russian politics of literature” in Poland by analyzing the influence of Russian literature on important public institutions (schools, book shops, libraries, newspapers, and theater) and by looking into the mechanisms of censorship (p. 23). In order to get a subtle view on the reception of Russian literature in Polish society the author examines the stances on Russian literature in different political and literary milieus: He traces the strategies of boycotting Russian culture within the political camps of the Polish socialists as well as the Polish national democrats, and he shows the other position, that of a political reconciliation with Russia, which was to be found among the editorial staff and the authors of the Polish journal *Kraj*. The attitude of Polish positivist writers toward Russian literature is contrasted by that of the young Polish modernists, making their appearance at the dawn of the nineteenth century. At the end of his monograph, Salden exemplifies both aspects—the Russian politics of literature and the complexity of its reception in Polish society—in two case studies: the Polish reception of Tolstoy’s writings and the festivities accompanying Pushkin’s 100th anniversary.

According to Salden, the topic of Russian-Polish literary relations between 1864 and 1904 has received ample attention in Slavic comparative studies during the Twentieth century. Salden’s study aims at differentiating the prevailing views on the topic by analyzing it against the background of its historical and cultural context and by uncovering its so far neglected complexity. The author therefore documents and evaluates numerous sources which had not yet undergone detailed analyses.

Quoting extensively from contemporary memoirs, letters, newspapers, and bureaucratic instructions, the study illustrates how cultural politics and the resistance to it worked, struggled, and sometimes stumbled or contradicted itself. With his critical evaluation of existing research on Russian literature in Poland, Salden shows not only that the reception of Russian literature in Poland was subject to political interests, but also that the studies on this topic themselves had in some cases become a product of their historical and political situation.

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Rosenshield, Gary. *Challenging the Bard: Dostoevsky and Pushkin, a Study of Literary Relationship*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013. x + 318 pp. $34.95. (paper). ISBN 978-0-299-29354-3.

As indicated in its subtitle, *Challenging the Bard* aims to explore the "literary relationship" between Dostoevsky and Pushkin rather than the "influence" of the latter on the former. Rosenshield's introduction favorably engages the theory of Harold Bloom, but specifies that Dostoevsky, instead of feeling intimidated by Pushkin's achievement, worked through him in order to develop his own distinct literary project. Dostoevsky felt "less anxiety of influence and more the boon of successorship" (p. 20).

Dostoevsky's most famous statement on Pushkin came in his speech of June 1880, but Rosenshield asserts that Dostoevsky's most substantial response to his predecessor occurred much earlier in his career. In the later novels, "Pushkin is less confronted than venerated" (p. 214). Thus Rosenshield's chapters deal successively with *Poor Folk*, *The Double*, *Mister Prokharchin*, and *The Gambler*; two chapters are then devoted to *Crime and Punishment*, which Rosenshield views as the culmination of Dostoevsky's engagement with Pushkin. The book's final chapter offers brief comments on Dostoevsky's later novels. Rosenshield brings Dostoevsky's texts into dialogue with Pushkin's "The Stationmaster," *The Bronze Horseman*, *The Covetous Knight*, and "The Queen of Spades."

Rosenshield's readings bear out his claim that the pairing of Dostoevsky and Pushkin will illuminate the work of both authors. One recurring theme in his book is the portrayal of the low-ranking civil servant. In Dostoevsky's *Poor Folk*, Rosenshield writes, the lowly Makar Devushkin is allowed to speak for himself, in contrast to Pushkin's stationmaster. Rosenshield fleshes out this argument with an analysis of the ambivalent, multilayered narrator in Pushkin's story, and also interprets Dostoevsky's sentimentalism as part of a "higher realism." In the chapters on *Crime and Punishment*, Rosenshield presents Marmeladov as a further development of the civil-servant figure, who now receives greater psychological complexity and becomes the carrier of a serious idea about divine compassion. Another recurring theme is the image of Petersburg and Peter the Great, which Rosenshield, in one of the strongest chapters of the book, treats via a comparison of *The Double* and *The Bronze Horseman*. In Rosenshield's reading, Pushkin's long poem offers a grand image of Petersburg while also showing how the imperial project crushes one individual. *The Double*, on the other hand, "deflates the image, legacy and vision of Peter" by presenting the odious bureaucracy as the most prominent aspect of the great tsar's legacy (p. 73). Similarly, Evgenii's rebellion at the end of *The Bronze Horseman* acquires a Romantic scope that is lacking in the petty, servile, and twisted sort of rebellion rooted in Goliadkin's split consciousness. Rosenshield finds this "democratizing" move in other texts of Dostoevsky's as well: *Mister Prokharchin* "radically deromanticizes the Pushkinian miser" depicted in *The Covetous Knight* by replacing the dramatic magnitude of the Pushkinian character with the pitiful social standing, meager savings, and limited vision of the Dostoevskian figure (p. 93). Yet—in another move that Rosenshield sees as typically Dostoevskian—this diminished figure is made the carrier of a universal idea about the isolation that arises when we fail to feel compassion for others. Other sections of Rosenshield's book link Raskolnikov's drive for power to Pushkin's covetous knight, contrast risk-taking in Raskolnikov and Pushkin's Germann,

or analyze the links between gambling and erotic passion in *The Gambler* versus *The Queen of Spades*.

Rosenshield may not convince all readers that Pushkin's role in Dostoevsky's creative work is always as central as claimed, or that the role of Gogol can be dismissed as easily as the book's early chapters suggest. The later chapters of the book show that Dostoevsky and Pushkin share many thematic concerns, but readers might question why Germann or the covetous knight are the indispensable predecessors for Raskolnikov, rather than, for example, Turgenev's Bazarov. Nevertheless, Rosenshield's comparative method produces great insights into the distinct achievements of the two juxtaposed writers. Readers interested in both Pushkin and Dostoevsky can find a wealth of stimulating commentary in *Challenging the Bard*.

Sarah Ruth Lorenz, University of California at Berkeley

Connolly, Julian W. *Dostoevsky's* The Brothers Karamazov. Academic's Reader's Guide Series. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013. viii + 164 pp. $19.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-4477-3531-5.

In this book, Julian W. Connolly wears lightly his considerable knowledge of Dostoevsky, Russian cultural history, and scholarship about Dostoevsky. His commitment to accessibility is commendable and important in a critical era when some critics seem to seek the reverse: to elaborate the simple in the guise of opaque, pseudo-scientific terminology. Thus, general readers can learn easily and without window-dressing about the political, social, and religious debates swirling in and around Dostoevsky's final novel. Specialists, meanwhile, can take particular advantage of the carefully wrought, though brief, critical survey that forms the penultimate chapter of the book, along with an interesting final chapter on adaptations and influences of Dostoevsky's novel.

Connolly's book is part of Bloomsbury Academic's Reader's Guide Series. As such, the book follows a format, but a carefully conceived one that works to good effect. The book consists of five chapters, "Context," "Language, Form and Style," "Reading *The Brothers Karamazov*," "Critical Reception, Composition and Publishing History," and "Adaptation, Interpretation, and Influence." There is also a useful guide to further reading divided into ten sub-categories, and an index. The longest chapter, "Reading," forms nearly half the book and contains a list of five study questions. The book is thus both a reading guide for the first-time reader, and, at the same time, a handy mini-reference volume that will prove valuable to teachers and scholars. It is impressive that Connolly has genuinely managed within a short work to draw upon and engage with a significant range of critical material, including the fine emerging work of more junior scholars, such as Anne Hruska and Anna Berman.

Connolly skillfully employs recent biographical and bibliographical materials in rendering his short biography of Dostoevsky in "Context," although he does not make mention of the enduring effect that reading aloud by Dostoevsky's mother had upon him as child. Moreover, it seems strange to describe the Dostoevsky household as "warm." Starting with this chapter, there are, certain highly problematized moments in Dostoevsky's biography and fiction that Connolly has decided to pass over, such as: the possible meanings for Dostoevsky's virtual silence about his father's death, or questions about who "the author" really is in the opening preface to the novel, or the ramifications for the meaning of "The Grand Inquisitor" in the fact that it is often excerpted. All these and other questions are mentioned by Connolly but not explored.

Nevertheless, despite the briskness with which it treats certain contested matters, this fine study contains original insights about Dostoevsky's uses of quotation, about the linkages which bind the novel together (surely as complicated and successful as that "labyrinth of linkages" which Tolstoy boasted of in the construction of Anna Karenina), and in particular about the religious dilemmas and inquiries present in the novel. Connolly's reading of the scene when Ivan's devil appears is excellent. He convincingly demonstrates the devil's strong resemblance to Ivan's father. "It is highly ironic (and humiliating) that Ivan's devil takes the form of the figure who had aroused

in Ivan such loathing and embarrassment. The devil himself acknowledges that his appearance is one of the reasons why Ivan is so displeased with him" (p. 96).

The section on "Critical Reception" highlights Dostoevsky's intention, during serialization, to have each of the books of his novel work as a finished whole, rather than to operate within the more standard practice of serialization, which emphasized dangling plots and cliffhangers. The broad survey of critical reactions to the novel is finely, yet succinctly observed. Also included is Dostoevsky's fascinating explication to a confused reader about Smerdyakov's role in the novel. Connolly has frequent, compelling observations on Smerdyakov sprinkled throughout. Finally, it is notable that so many adaptations for stage and screen have found it necessary to eliminate the Snegiryovs, Liza, and the boys. I would have welcomed Connolly's speculations about that and other matters, but this might be the subject of a future work. In the meantime, Connolly's book stands as an important guide to Dostoevsky's final novel.

Robin Feuer Miller, Brandeis University

Avramenko, Richard, and Lee Trepanier, eds. *Dostoevsky's Political Thought*. Plymouth, Lexington Books, 2013. vi + 254 pp. $70.00. ISBN 978-0-7391-73376-3.

This collection explores a series of contentions that Dostoevsky expounded primarily in his novels beginning with *Crime and Punishment* and concluding with *The Brothers Karamazov*. These include the assertion that human nature, with its capacity for good and evil, is God-given. True morality meanwhile, is impossible without belief in God and the immortality of the soul, and such morality requires absolute freedom of the individual to choose between good and evil and resides in self-sacrifice and compassion, understood as "suffering with" (Dostoevsky calls it active love). Morever, morality is not abstract but experiential and proximate, and it rests on a sense of community and connection to the national soil. The Roman Catholic Church historically substituted authority for free moral choice; liberalism and its offspring, socialism, with their materialism, rationalism, individualism, utilitarian calculations, and grand humanitarian projects aimed at universal happiness, distort human nature, distance people from community, and national culture, deduce moral principles from abstract maxims, and so embrace an approximate, not proximate, morality. And finally the efforts of liberals and socialists to correct the errors of creation—that is, to replace God—end in strife among individuals, who, cowed by the consequent chaos, embrace the tyranny of the strong in totalitarian societies. Dostoevsky sees the sole alternative to this scenario in Russian Orthodox Christianity as exemplified in the Russian peasant, especially in the Russian peasant woman (not in the official Russian church), who embody a principle of beauty and community that has the potential to save the world from the "crisis of modernity."

Eight of the eleven essays in the collection set out Dostoevsky's idea in great detail and with much overlap. The last three serial essays deal with problems of writing. The best of the latter shows the rhetorical devices by Dostoevsky used to set up the "nihilist" Ivan to fail in the debate with Zosima and the ultimate conventionality of Zosima's response to Ivan's challenge. A second draws an interesting comparison between *Notes from Underground* and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, and a third uses J.M. Coetzee's account of Dostoevsky's writing of *The Devils* in *Master of Petersburg* to examine the act of writing and the responsibilities of the writer. The contributors, who are primarily political scientists, believe that political philosophy has a role in throwing light on Dostoevsky's idea and generating fresh insights into it among theologians, literary specialists, and other philosophers. The scholarly but accessible essays succeed in the task of systematically elaborating Dostoevsky's idea for readers who have neither the time nor training to cull it from the novels themselves.

With one exception the contributors appear to accept Dostoevsky's proposition uncritically. A few of the essayists suggest that Dostoevsky's idea speaks to modern problems. Perhaps, but before it can, it needs far closer scrutiny. Are the premises of his idea sound? One contributor contends

with Dostoevsky that liberalism and socialism are similar in their universalistic goals. Fathers and sons is a neat literary device, but in the real world liberalism did not beget socialism; they developed side by side and stemmed from different roots. The former emerged from the empiricist tradition of Francis Bacon, the latter from religious social movements of the seventeenth century and before, with their chiliastic impulses that revolutionary socialism imbibed. Established liberal states successfully resisted the totalitarian disease, contrary to Dostoevsky's prophecy. Capitalism preceded liberalism; Smith's economic liberalism was written to combat the abuses of mercantilist capitalism, abuses closer to those of today's corporations, driven as they are by the tyranny of shareholders, than anything Smith imagined. Belief in God's existence has increasingly, since 1859, become a harder sell. Unlike revolutionary socialism, however, liberalism is neutral on questions of faith and defends the right to believe. Dostoevsky's dismissal of civil society as a place where people "save their hides," that is, pursue their self-interest is, at best, one-sided. Within its many communities, self-sacrifice and compassion are commonplace. As one of the contributors rightly observes, Dostoevsky's idea is at base apolitical. If free moral choice is touched by authority of any kind it is no longer free. Ironically, for all that it enables those things that Dostoevsky deplored, liberal civil society is the sole arena, in the developed world at least, where "active love" as Dostoevsky understood it can function. Can it prevail? Dostoevsky would not think so in light of his view of human nature. But his idea, as this collection shows, opens up avenues for a wider discussion of large questions.

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Carnicke, Sharon Marie. *Checking out Chekhov: A Guide to the Plays for Actors, Directors, and Readers*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013. 238 pp. $60.00. ISBN 978-1-936235-91-9.

A strong background in Russian language and culture, combined with professional theater experience as an actress and director, prepared Sharon Carnicke not only to translate Chekhov's plays for performance but also to illuminate the mysteries of his works for theater artists preparing to stage the plays. Certainly it is actors and directors who have the most to gain from this "guide to the plays," which also serves as an intelligent introductory study for general readers. Carnicke covers the basics—transliteration, how Russian names are used, capsule biography, late nineteenth-century theatrical genres—while offering enough fresh insight into Chekhov's world and his work to hold the interest of those already familiar with the plays.

Chapter 1, "Chekhov on His Own Terms," draws on a range of biographical studies in Russian and English, standard and very recent, to extract telling details as a basis for analyzing facets of Chekhov's personality, such as his unusual need for privacy even during times of serious illness, his loyalty to the father who made his childhood so miserable by the severe beatings inflicted on Chekhov and his siblings, the evolution of his sense of humor, and the balance of medicine and literature as they informed his world view.

Because Chekhov first gained renown as a writer of short stories, Carnicke focuses on his literary background in chapter 2 and explores "how his methods in fiction can illuminate his innovations in drama" (p. 67). Several anecdotes about discovering new meanings in the plays point up Chekhov's apparent transference of techniques of medical diagnosis to the delineation of character. Close examinations of two of Chekhov's stories—"Misery" (1886) and "The Student" (1894)—demonstrate his selectivity in providing details to nudge the reader's awareness. Into this, Carnicke weaves analogous techniques and situations from the plays.

Chapter 3, "The Devil in the Details of Chekhov's Plays," is the heart of the book. Carnicke begins by probing Chekhov's elusively distinctive dramatic style with its elements of realism, impressionism, decadence, and, notably, Maeterlinck-influenced symbolism. Then she identifies twelve categories of details that give so much texture to Chekhov's dramaturgy. Among these are apparent non-sequiturs in conversation and behavior, clothing, food and drink, and soundscapes. Each type of detail is illustrated with examples from the plays, all of which should prove invaluable

to directors striving to convey Russian cultural authenticity. In the section on apparent irrelevancies, for example, Dr. Astrov's ecological map and Vanya's useless map of Africa offer clues to staging possibilities, and the emotional significance of the handling of such props is underscored by a photograph from the 1899 Moscow Art Theater production.

Chapters 4 and 5 backtrack to some extent, as they broaden the scope of the study to describe the popular theater forms of the day, French-style *vaudevilles* and melodrama, both of which influenced Chekhov and stand in contrast to his dramatic innovations. A blow-by-blow recounting of the plot of a featherweight vaudeville by Eugène Scribe reads like a heavy-handed digression but it pays off in the analysis of Chekhov's one-act, *The Proposal*. Similarly, melodrama's centrality in late nineteenth-century Russian theater inevitably affected Chekhov's dramaturgy even as he scorned its exaggerations. Taking examples from several of his plays, Carnicke shows how he used "melodrama to undermine melodrama" (p. 161).

The Seagull gets close attention in the final chapter, which covers "Chekhov's Plays as Blueprints for Performance." Drawing on Stanislavsky's directorial notebooks, Carnicke traces his discoveries in the text during the rehearsal process and describes the Moscow Art Theater's realization of the play.

Checking out Chekhov is enhanced with fourteen illustrations, ample footnotes on the text pages, an annotated bibliography, a general index, and a separate index of character names categorized by the play in which each appears. As a matter of interest, the two characters with by far the most page numbers after their names are Ranevskaya from *The Cherry Orchard* and Treplev from *The Seagull.*

Felicia Hardison Londré, University of Missouri-Kansas City

Bellow, Juliet. *Modernism on Stage: The Ballets Russes and the Parisian Avant-Garde*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. xviii + 280 pp. $119.95. ISBN 978-1-4094-0911-3.

Productions of the Ballets Russes have long been recognized as examples of the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total work of art. Visual artists such as Bakst, Benois, and Roerich designed original costumes and sets to complement the troupe's experimental dance choreography and specially commissioned modernist musical compositions. It was therefore with skepticism that I approached Juliet Bellow's study, which explores the dynamics among the artistic media and their practitioners during the years 1909–29. However, the striking depth of her analysis and the consequent freshness of her insights quickly assuaged my doubts about her book's original scholarly contribution and left me wishing that I had benefited from her research before I completed my recent book on another early twentieth-century phenomenon that put various art forms into dialogue, the modernist masquerade ball.

Bellow advances our understanding of the Ballets Russes in three key ways. First and most fundamental for an audience of Russianists, she approaches the troupe and its innovations from the perspective of French culture. By switching the national cultural context to that of France, Bellow's investigation adds a refreshing perspective on both national and international artistic movements relevant to the aesthetics of the Ballets Russes. As an art historian, her extensive knowledge of the aesthetic trends represented by figures of the Parisian avant-garde puts the Ballets Russes' productions in dialogue with particular moments of the artists' creative development. Each chapter examines the troupe's collaboration with complex and esteemed figures, such as Pablo Picasso, Sonia Delaunay, Henri Matisse, and Giorgio de Chirico.

The book's dominant interest in the practices and aesthetic philosophies of the contributing visual artists de-centers the standard reading of the troupe's productions as the result of a single creative visionary, Serge Diaghilev. Bellow interprets the stagings of *Parade*, *Cléopâtre*, *Le Chant du rossignol*, and *Le Bal*, as well as their public reception, in the context of contemporary works of art and fashion created by Picasso, Delaunay, Matisse, and de Chirico, respectively. She rigorously

compares form and theme, thereby showing how the productions exemplify or diverge from the artists' oeuvres.

Many of the book's most interesting and original discussions explore the sources of certain types of dance movements in the ballets. In addition to acknowledging classical ballet and the modern dance of Isadora Duncan, Bellow points to other kinesthetic influences, such as the jerkiness of hysterical and epileptic bodies that translated into the primitivism of *Le Sacre du printemps*. She identifies a "modern crisis of embodiment" (p. 99) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (aggravated in part by soldiers wounded in World War I and their prostheses), and explicates the consequences for the artistic representations and perception of the human figure on the Ballets Russes stage. Bellow also examines the influence of cinema and fashion, issues of gender, and modes of spectatorship on the Ballets' styling of the body.

Bellow identifies her study as a scholarly *Gesamtkunstwerk* because of its interdisciplinarity, which is admirable in its breadth and fruitful in producing interpretive insights. Eloquently written, richly illustrated, and printed on glossy paper, the book is an artistic delight in itself. The chapters, however, are unequal in terms of length and vibrancy (chapter 1 is a whopping sixty-four pages, and chapter 4 on *Le Chant du rossignol* feels more dutiful than inspired), which creates an uneven reading experience. Nonetheless, scholars of dance, art history, fashion, theater, and cultural studies in general will welcome this book for its ambitious interrogation of avant-garde aesthetics as manifested on the Parisian stage of the Ballets Russes.

Colleen McQuillen, University of Illinois at Chicago

Oppo, Andrea, ed. *Shapes of Apocalypse: Arts and Philosophy in Slavic Thought*. Myths and Taboos in Russian Culture. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013. 285 pp. $85.00. ISBN 978-1-61811-174-6.

Andrea Oppo's intent in this volume "was to investigate the philosophical, literary and aesthetic idea of apocalypse within some key examples in the arts and thought of the 'Slavic world' during the 19th and early 20th centuries." This book demonstrates, in fact, "the extent of variation between the different *shapes* in which apocalypse has worked in Slavic culture: as an idea, as a narrative text, as an artistic experience" (p. 9). Oppo, therefore, divided the volume into three sections: philosophy, literature, and other arts (art, music, theater, and film).

The volume should be of interest to specialists of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Russian literature and the arts, the Eastern Orthodox Church, or Slavic spirituality in general. While there is great variation among the authors of the ten essays, they all address their genres from a religious or spiritual point of view. As a result, the reader will find some unexpected "reads" of familiar works in the literary and arts sections and an interesting variety of opinions regarding Eastern Orthodoxy and apocalypse in the philosophy section.

In an introduction to the philosophy section, for example, Oppo begins with the differences between Western and Russian thought on apocalypse as defined by Nikolai Berdjaev in his *The Russian Idea: The Fundamental Problems of Russian Thought of the 19th Century and the Early 20th Century.* The Slavic apocalypse "does not really concern the 'final meaning,' the truth of the world, but is a supreme creative act that comes to the subject and awakens what Berdjaev, referring to Augustine's *Confessions*, calls *Deus intimior meo*, 'God is more intimate to me than I am to myself'" (p. 32).

The literary section begins with a provocative essay by Vladimir Glyantz, a literary essayist, writer, and poet, titled "The Sacrament of End; The Theme of Apocalypse in Three Works by Gogol. Glyantz provides religious connections that might be missed in various versions of "The Portrait," "The Nose," and "The Inspector General"; for example, when Kovalev confronts his nose in church, Gogol gives the date March 25, a date of apocalyptic significance for Russian Orthodoxy. According to Glyantz, March 25, 1492, was the date of a "failed" apocalypse in Russia.

The next essay, by William J. Leatherbarrow, Professor Emeritus of Russian at the University of Sheffield (UK), "Apocalyptic Imagery in Dostoevskij's *The Idiot* and *The Devils*," is a religious reading of the texts which he considered to be the most apocalyptic of Dostoevsky's works. In his discussion of *The Idiot*, he notes that Myshkin is more cautious than Lebedev, who sees "nothing but damnation as a consequence of mankind's spiritual poverty; 'We are in the time of the third horse, the black one, and of the rider with the balance in his hand, for everything in our age is weighed in the balance ... and there will follow the pale horse and he whose name is Death, and after him comes Hell'" (p. 127).

In the third and final section, theater, music and poetry, architecture (Lenin's tomb) and film (Andrei Tarkovsky's *The Sacrifice*) all are read for their apocalyptical images and themes. Two of the more interesting essays were Polina Dimova's "The Apocalyptic dispersion of Light into Poetry and Music; Aleksandr Skrjabin in the Russian Religious Imagination," and Oppo's "Theater at the Limit; Jerzy Grotowski's "Apocalypsis cum Figuris." Oppo's essay is about Grotowski's theater without a text, while Dimova's is actually about Scriabin's and Viacheslav Ivanov's collaboration on Scriabin's Mysterium and The Preparatory Act (the preparation piece for *Mysterium*).

Sarah Predock Burke, Trinity University

Anemone, Anthony, and Peter Scotto, trans. and eds. *"I am a Phenomenon Quite out of the Ordinary": The Notebooks, Diaries, and Letters of Daniil Kharms*. Cultural Revolutions: Russia in the Twentieth Century. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013. 586 pp. $69.00. ISBN 978-1-936235-96-4.

Anthony Anemone and Peter Scotto, in their book, have "selected, translated, and edited" material almost all of which, until now, has been available only to Russian speakers. It is good that on the title page, they write, "Selected, Translated and Edited by Anthony Anemone and Peter Scotto," because without that qualification and their later explanation, the subtitle, "The Notebooks, Diaries and Letters," would lead readers to assume that the book contains all the notebooks, diaries, and letters. Anemone and Scotto acknowledge their gratitude to the scholars Jean-Philippe Jaccard and Valery Sazhin for their publication of the complete version of the notebooks in Russian (Kharms's *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 5, bks. 1 and 2, 2002).

Anemone and Scotto's commentary, glossary, and chronology of Kharms's life are useful guides for the non-Russian reader. In their section, "About this translation," they explain that they intend for their translation to be a "creative biography in documents" modeled on Veresaev's *Pushkin v zhizni* (p. 43). Their goal, they say, is biographical—to introduce Kharms's life to the English-speaking reader who does not know Russian. In addition to the selected materials by Kharms, Anemone and Scotto include several reviews, in the Soviet press, of Oberiu performances; a reproduction of the order for Kharms's final arrest in 1941; selected Kharms drawings from the notebooks; and photographs of the writer, including the chilling photo in the NKVD files, taken after his 1941 arrest.

Anemone and Scotto do an outstanding job in conveying the texture of Kharms's writing. One example of the playful tone that Kharms sometimes uses is their transformation of a one-line poem's title and first word, "Pis'mo k agurtsam [*sic*]/ Apostol" (*PSS* 5:1:390): "*Epistle* to the Cucumbers/ *Apostle*" (p. 270) (my italics p.270; emphasis added). Jaccard and Sazhin keep Kharms's frequent spelling errors. Anemone and Scotto use correct spelling. Kharms writes the words, in English, of "Jankee Doodle" (*PSS* 5:1:331–32). Anemone and Scotto write "Yankee Doodle" (p. 232).

The notebooks, diaries, and letters presented in "*I am a Phenomenon*" show the breadth of Kharms's interests, in literature, music, art, philosophy, psychology, mathematics, religion—and water. He mentions Hamsun, Goethe, Gogol, Chekhov, Sherwood Anderson, Lao Tse, Bergson, Proust, Molière, Dos Passos, and so forth. He quotes a section of Blake's "Songs of Innocence." He says that he is reading, in Russian, Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem*. We read about his and

Marshak's staying up until 3:00 A.M., "in raptures," reading Dante (p. 401). He lists works by William James, Aristotle (*On the Soul*), Tomashevksy, Eikhenbaum, and Tynianov.

We read about Kharms's love of Mozart's "Requiem," about his preference of Bach's "Passion According to St. Matthew" to "Passion According to St. John." We read comments about Schubert, Borodin, Beethoven, Wagner, and Shostakovich. We read about his distaste for Braque, Joyce, Pasternak, and Palekh craftsmen. Certain sections of the book can be seen as a creative workshop for Kharms's literary works. Through the comments about and lists of books, concerts, and so on, we get a glimpse of contexts into which readers can place their knowledge of his literary works.

More than that, the book documents Kharms's hopes, doubts, frustrations, and physical and psychic pains about work and life. At times, it feels as if one is intruding upon the privacy of his bedroom, as, for instance, when he describes, in stark detail, his sexual proclivities and preferences. We read about the often tortured relationships with his first wife, Esther, his second wife, Marina, and other women. We observe the agony of the Stalin period, as reflected in his life. We read his prayers to God for help, or to end his life. We read the desperate words that speak of starvation because of not being able to be published. We read about the profound effects—mental and physical disease—caused by his exile.

Given the fact that the book is geared toward the non-Russian speaker, it would have been helpful to provide a brief description of Socialist Realism. In addition, the translators write, "Shaliapin" (p. 435), a legitimate spelling of the singer's name. The non-Russian speaker would probably be more familiar with the more common spelling, "Chaliapin." "Complement to Lermontov" (p. 70) should be "compliment," and, of course, it is "Lewis" Carroll, not "Louis" (p. 495). Lapses like these are minor.

Anemone and Scotto have done an excellent job. They state, "we believe that we have remained true to the spirit of the notebooks" (p. 43). Absolutely!

Ellen Chances, Princeton University

Fedorova, Milla. *Yankees in Petrograd, Bolsheviks in New York*: *America and Americans in Russian Literary Perception*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013. xii + 299 pp. $49.00. ISBN 978-0-87580-470-5.

This volume concludes with a remark of Joseph Brodsky about himself and other émigrés of his generation who crossed the Russian-American divide. Because they so valued the American ideal of individualism, Brodsky once said in an interview, "when some of us found ourselves here, we had the sensation that we had come home: we turned out to be more American than the locals" (p. 225). This vision of the fluidity of identity is not one shared by the writers central to Milla Fedorova's thoughtful book. Her focus is on travelogues written by Russian writers who visited the United States ("Bolsheviks in New York") between the late nineteenth century and the 1930s; secondarily, she examines Russian literary depictions of fictional American visitors to the Soviet Union ("Yankees in Petrograd") in the 1920s and 1930s. The caricatures evoked in the title are not to be taken literally, Fedorova explains, but as clichés that she seeks to deconstruct.

In successive chapters of Part I, Fedorova takes us chronologically through the writings of Korolenko and Gorky, Esenin and Mayakovsky, and Pilniak and Ilf and Petrov. Each set of writers, she argues, is exemplary of a stage in the development of "the myth of America as the Other World" (p. 4). She contextualizes them intelligently, noting (for example) their resemblance in some respects to medieval Russian pilgrimages to the lands of sinners and highlighting the role played by America in Russia's effort to redefine its identity after 1917. In the new Soviet myth that travelogue writers participated in developing, she writes, "Russia replaces America as the final happy refuge for all working people" (p. 56). While acknowledging the ideological constraints that shaped this simple formula, Fedorova herself resists oversimplification and is quick to note paradoxes. She is particularly astute in dealing with the complexity of valorizing such American attributes as technological

advancement, seen variously by Russian writers as a tool of capitalist oppression and as a source of inspiration.

Technology is one of many features of the Russian depiction of America analyzed in greater depth in Part II, "Recurrent Subtexts and Motifs in American Travelogues." Here Fedorova makes the case that these travelogues should be seen as constituting a single narrative—"the American text of Russian literature" (p. 101)—and focuses on that narrative's building blocks. The key subtexts she identifies are Gogol's *Dead* Souls and Dante's *Divine Comedy*, whose mark is evident in all of the travelogues, which "feature a traveler who moves through a space that is represented by the author as the land of the dead" (p. 102). Fedorova takes in turn some of the key places, behaviors, and types (in a valuable section on "The Racial Other") depicted by the Russian travelers. She analyzes ways in which these writers observe the rules of the road implicit in the travelogues of compatriots who preceded them, to the degree that even if their itineraries do not include such standard stops as, the Statute of Liberty, they acknowledge the omission. Fedorova's treatment of the Ford factory is of particular interest. In explaining the rhetorical strategies used by writers to portray a magnate and a method regarded by the Soviet government with ambivalence, she draws on a wide frame of reference.

Part of the story Fedorova seeks to tell about how Russian writers engaged in defining the American Other lies in what she terms "reverse American travelogues," works produced about imagined Americans in Soviet space. In the final part of her book she focuses on three very different works spanning the decade from 1923 to 1933: Marietta Shaginian's novel *Mess Mend, or Yankees in Petrograd*; Lev Kuleshov's film *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks*; and Samuil Marshak's poem "Mister Twister." Fedorova finds that most of these works reverse the pattern found in travelogues in which "a Russian hero travels to America in order to discover a New World and finds himself in Hell" (p. 194). The fictional Americans in Shaginian's novel and Kuleshov's film anticipate a Soviet Hell, but experience a transformation that makes them view this New World as paradisical. Fedorova's most interesting analysis is of Marshak's poem, which has a different trajectory: the protagonist expects a pleasure trip but experiences the Soviet Union as hellish. Thus, Fedorova argues, Marshak "allows his reader to catch some glimpses of the hellish nature of his own country and even to suspect that the Soviet Union might not be a family but a prison of nations" (p. 217). To invert a myth of a negative Other, she suggests, is to risk being tainted by a generic resemblance to it.

The questions that Fedorova raises about how observers of foreign cultures define the Other (and thus, by implication, themselves) are no less important in our day than a century ago. Russians, like the rest of us, continue to care about delineating what is particular to their tribe and what must be designated alien. Fedorova's Conclusion points to post-Stalinist and post-Soviet possibilities of overcoming that binary opposition, suggesting (as did Brodsky) that one can see the Russian journey to America not as a Dantean descent, but as an Odyssean return. Her book will be a useful resource for those seeking to understand the Russian mythology of America in the twentieth century and to follow its future trajectory.

Carol J. Avins, Rutgers University

Laursen, Eric. *Toxic Voices: The Villain from Early Soviet Literature to Socialist Realism*. Studies in Russian Literature and Theory. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2013. xiv + 170 pp. $45.00. ISBN 978-0-8101-2865-1.

Eric Laursen believes that most critics of pre-1934 Soviet fiction overlook the villains of the piece. In *Toxic Voices* he argues that literary villains—those ostensible agents of recidivism, hesitation, and corruption—actually helped to inculcate Soviet aesthetics and warn readers against inappropriate attitudes. Clearly, fictional villains caricature a range of cultural stereotypes, as Eric Naiman and others have previously shown in the Soviet context. Laursen, however, suggests that the experience

of sympathizing and—however briefly—identifying with these often conflicted, and ultimately defeated characters, helped Russian readers to purge their own inner malefactor. As he claims, "the history of literature in the early Soviet period constitutes a fierce battle to gain control of its villains, to cleanse its texts and its readers of their toxins" (p. 33). Moreover, early Soviet villains were clothed in—and thus smuggled into literary parlance—the shreds of now-disreputable genres, chiefly satire and the fantastic. (Laursen relates the reader's suspended sympathy with the villain to Todorov's classic concept of "fantastic hesitation" over the supernatural.) Yet, as Laursen admits, these early pre-Socialist Realist plots never provided complete closure via the utter rejection of the villain. Even Mayakovsky's *Bedbug* offered audiences the option of sympathy for the irredeemable throwback Prisypkin. As the first Soviet decade advanced, satire was progressively extirpated—or, rather, diverted "from exposure to transformation" (p. 45). As its easiest targets, villains helped keep satire alive until even their "toxic voices" were finally subsumed into the collective chorus on the assembly line of the mid-1930s production novel.

Disappointingly for some, this book is not a typology of Soviet villains: Laursen stops short of taxonomizing all the wicked scientists, corrupt oligarchs, foreign capitalists, overfed officers, and (post-World War II) hypocritical bureaucrats evolved from the Gothic and Pinkertonian modes to infiltrate most genres of Russian fiction. Nor does he examine the Romantic prehistory or post-Soviet afterlife of villainy. Instead, *Toxic Voices* investigates eight texts, ranging from the canonical Zamyatin's *We*, and Bulgakov's *Heart of a Dog* to those with more specialist appeal—such as Lev Kassil's little-known autobiographical novel *Shvambraniia*, Kataev's *Time Forward*, and, arguably, Gladkov's *Cement*. (The two cement classics get their own chapter here.) Chapter 1, which unwraps the polemical tension between two early Soviet dystopias, *We* and Bogdanov's *Red Star*, also develops Laursen's idea that mankind exists on a continuum linking two extremes of villainy, the "beast" and the "alien." Chapter 2, strikingly titled "He Does Not Love Us When We Are Dirty" (cited from a letter by Russian schoolchildren to Lenin, about their teacher), transposes the ruling Soviet trope of physical cleanliness to the linguistic sphere. In an original and convincing approach to *Heart of a Dog* (no mean achievement), Laursen contends that although the dog-man Sharik/Sharikov is chaotic, filthy, and promiscuous, the primary contamination he causes is linguistic. His foul-mouthedness pollutes the cultured, ordered household of Professor Preobrazhensky with a pestilence of curses that almost silences the scientist. Laursen uses *Heart of a Dog* and *Bedbug*, both too radically satirical for their time, to put the important point that while satire is a "revolutionary device, a diagnostic tool. ... Socialist realism, on the other hand, is founded on the idea of cure" (p. 54). This is why knaves and rapscallions of the ilk of Sharikov, Prisypkin, *Envy*'s Kavalerov, and *Cement*'s Badin simply vanish from mature Socialist Realist plot: villainy is superfluous to utopia, triggering the trend for authorial self-censorship tracked in chapter 4 (with Gladkov and Kataev as models).

Yet as Stalin was well aware, a man can write, and write, and be a villain. Laursen briefly visits the important concept of the author-as-evildoer, who petitions for redemption via more or less autobiographical narrative, in the third chapter's discussion of *Shvambraniia* and Olesha's *Envy*. Much more could be said on this topic, particularly on how categories of villainy fluctuated over the Soviet era. *Toxic Voices* is ultimately more concerned with language, specifically the "hygienic impulse" behind textual cleansing, than character (p. 36). The most successful sections are those which directly analyse the purgative, and pollutive, properties of narration. Rather than a Baedeker of baddies, Laursen has written a pertinent addition to our critical understanding of Soviet literature. Moreover, his acute and original rereadings of classic texts will inspire both students and scholars.

Muireann Maguire, Cambridge University

Loseff, Lev. *Joseph Brodsky: A Literary Life*. Translated by Jane Anne Miller. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011. xiv + 333 pp. $22.00. ISBN 978-0-300-14119-1.

This is a delightful text due largely to the fact that Lev Loseff (1937–2009) as Brodsky's friend and a poet himself can give an insider's view of Brodsky's poetic development out of pre-glasnost Leningrad. He notes that it is less a biography than "an attempt at recreating the 'noise of the time, as Mandelstam called it, that is the heterogeneous cultural background of the poet's life and work" (p. xi). One is even prepared to forgive the unashamedly hagiographic portrayal of Brodsky—"a one in a million genetic makeup creates a person of unusual creative potential, willpower and charisma"—because of the astute critical eye he casts over the Russian poetry scene and Brodsky's evolving poetics both before and after his forced emigration to the United States in 1972 (pp. ix–x).

The text moves fairly rapidly through key events in his life: his wartime childhood with an enlisted absent father, evacuation early during the Siege, and the subsequent, standard postwar poverty. Loseff's description of Transfiguration Square points to all the literary and political associations of Brodsky's immediate environment. The dominant theme is Brodsky's inability to conform, leading to school disaffection and many years as a job "hopper" (including work on remote geological expeditions). Brodsky himself was following his own clear poetic apprenticeship: wide reading, learning about life and people, as he explained to an old school friend: "What I'm doing now is searching. Exploring new ideas, new images, and mainly new forms" (p. 29). Loseff notes that Brodsky "was the only major Russian poet of the twentieth century to begin his working life as an unskilled laborer" (p. 29). By the early sixties his unconventional behavior led him to be under close KGB surveillance concluding with him being put on trial for "parasitism" in 1964. This brief excerpt from the trial makes clear the judge's view of Brodsky's defence: "Judge: 'Did you try to attend a school where they train [poets] ... where they teach ...?' Brodsky: 'I don't think it comes from education.' Judge: 'From what then?' Brodsky: 'I think it's ... (*at a loss*) from God'" (p. 81). Following the guilty verdict we see Brodsky exiled to Norenskaia for two years.

Brodsky also had major relationship problems at this time. Marina Basmanova, whom he met in 1962, was the central love of his life, but their relationship was always stormy and finally ended after the birth of a son in 1968. At the height of the trial her involvement with his former friend the poet Dmitriy Bobyshev caused him further extreme distress. Eventually in 1972 he was forced to leave the country, as the Soviets had become embarrassed at the international stir caused by his trial. His time in the West was a complete success story "garnering virtually every prize a writer could," culminating in the Nobel Prize in 1987 (p. 211). The tragedy for Brodsky was that the arrival of glasnost came too late for him to be united with his parents who died before he could return (and all requests for them to visit him had been refused). Brodsky's own final years included a hectic transatlantic work schedule, five years of happy marriage, including the birth of a daughter, but this combined with a serious heart condition leading to ill health and his death in 1996.

Some of the most enjoyable parts of the book are where Loseff describes his own impressions of Brodsky's personality. Though one accepts there may be bias here, many of the actions of Brodsky give credence to such an analysis. He notes that "as a child he was enormously thin-skinned and easily hurt," but as an adult he developed "moral steadfastness, and his enormous capacity for work ... in Brodsky, willpower won out over biological determinism" (p. 11). He also points to a particular encounter between Brodsky and the émigré Nina Berberova, who told him how negatively she felt toward Russians she met on her return. She didn't take kindly to Brodsky's mild admonishment. Here, Loseff notes, "he could be irritable, he could be sharp. But he never hated anyone" (p. 167).

Most importantly, the text is very thorough in tracking Brodsky's key influences, both that of other writers he met as well as his personal reading. Loseff notes how he learned from his numerous highly educated friends: "Brodsky was known for his ability to 'interrogate' his expert friends on whatever subject interested him at the time" (p. 19). From his rejection of school and throughout his life he immersed himself in a vast reading agenda, and indeed, once he was teaching in America he would open with the comment: "Here's how you need to spend your life for the next two years," and then would proceed to hand out an enormous list of classical, religious, and philosophical texts

along with over forty poets (p. 189). Loseff notes in particular how important the English poets were to Brodsky, Auden in particular. Chapter 7 is a particularly insightful survey of Brodsky's mature worldview. What it leaves us with is a sense that he is a ball of contradictions but for a clear purpose: "Brodsky's poem 'A Talk in the Sorbonne' deals with the meaninglessness of any philosophy outside individual life experience. For Brodsky as for Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, and Camus, reality, life as such, supersedes all logic, and it demands, requires a passionate and poetic approach" (pp. 163–64).

Loseff also recounts individual poets who were particularly important to Brodsky. Brodsky had a number of spats with leaders of the various Leningrad poetry groups of the late fifties, but he notes the important influence of Boris Slutsky (1919–86). However, his meeting with Evgeniy Rein was significant, particularly as it led to his seminal relationship with Akhmatova. She was important to Brodsky not for the specific influence on his poetry but more for a state of mind, and the lines from her poem "Sweetbriar" were to remain with him as a kind of mantra throughout his life: "You don't know what you've been forgiven" (p. 58).

This text has justifiably been published to great acclaim in Russia and it is very much to the translator Jane Ann Miller's credit. She has made this text available to an English-speaking audience; a text to be highly reccommended.

Belinda Cooke, Inverness, Highlands

History

Josephson, Paul, et al. *An Environmental History of Russia*. Studies in Environment and History. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. vii + 340 pp. $28.99 (paper). ISBN 978-0-521-68972-4.

First, a word about the title: this book offers an environmental history of the Soviet Union, rather than Russia. The authors (Paul Josephson, assisted by Nicolai Dronin, Aleh Cherp, Ruben Mnatsakanian, Dmitry Efremenko and Vladislav Larin), state this explicitly in the introduction, and the organization of the book, with a chapter each for Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and Gorbachev, reflects that aim. In addition, they marshal evidence from non-Russian territories such as Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, and the Central Asian republics to buttress their position when helpful. A brief introductory discussion about tsarist Russia is included in the first chapter, and a short summary of developments in post-Soviet environmental politics forms part of the conclusion, but both of these sections are employed to frame a Soviet narrative. Aside from scattered observations that Soviet environmental problems have analogues in most other countries, the authors most often advance the argument that a constellation of Soviet political characteristics (the emphasis on rapid industrial development, the tendencies toward gigantism and bureaucratism, and the inability of the governmental apparatus to police itself effectively) produced a uniquely degraded landscape.

Readers familiar with Marshall Goldman's *The Spoils of Progress* (1975), Boris Komarov's *The Destruction of Nature in the Soviet Union* (1980), or Murray Feshbach and Alfred Friendly's *Ecocide in the USSR* (1993) will recognize this argument, as well as perhaps the sources employed to support it. The authors generally rely on articles from Soviet newspapers and popular journals, sources that Goldman, Komarov, and Feshbach employed, as opposed to recent monographs pertaining specifically to Soviet environmental history or newly available archival sources. The authors make extensive use of one relatively untapped source base, the Radio Liberty Research Institute, although the documents of the institute, an arm of the Radio Free Europe Information Service and funded by the U.S. Congress, do not appear to offer dramatically new insights about the internal dynamics of Soviet environmental decision-making.

The literature related to Soviet environmental history is only now adding the fine-grained, nuanced studies of specific questions required to inform a synthetic narrative of the kind attempted

here, and as a result, the authors cannot help but make assertions that lack adequate support. To provide three examples, the authors claim that Stalin's collectivization effort incurred significant environmental costs (p. 48), that Stalin had a hostile attitude toward nature preserves (p. 144), and that conservation became more widely practiced in the Khrushchev era (p. 155). Each of these assertions would make excellent research questions; one could ask, for instance, why the system of nature preserves expanded significantly throughout Stalin's rule—until the dramatic reduction of 1951—if Stalin personally disliked them. At times, the authors recognize the absence of reliable information. In a section about the gulag and the environment, they acknowledge that "no one has written systematically about the environmental costs of the gulag system of labor," and a quote used to conclude the discussion suggests that there is "no evidence during the 1930s that those in the NKVD gulag administration ... were any more or less contemptuous of the local and wider environmental impact of their operations than civilian authorities" (pp. 102–4). Likewise, when discussing pollution in the Stalin period, they acknowledge that "there are no data available to assess the level of environmental pollution in Soviet cities," although reference is made to Soviet efforts to measure and control pollution in the 1920s, so as to demonstrate that the problem existed (p. 89).

The book's strongest section examines the Brezhnev era, a period that Goldman, Komarov, and Feshbach were less well positioned to evaluate. When discussing the 1960s and 1970s, the authors present a more nuanced picture, balancing intentions, constraints, successes, failures, and the international dimension. Interested scholars should focus here.

Stephen Brain, Mississippi State University

Mogilner, Marina. *Homo Imperii: A History of Physical Anthropology in Russia*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. xvi + 486 pp. $75.00. ISBN 978-0-8032-3978-4.

A history of science is paradoxical and full of unexpected byproducts and deadlocks. Scholars only recently have realized that science is not only hardware, but also a cultural, production and, as Marina Mogilner has demonstrated, an imperial production, at least in its early days. Hence, the social history of science is already at a stage that has resulted in dozens of illuminating books in the West. But the field is underdeveloped in Russia, where many still treat science as a "sacred cow." That is why we should be grateful to Mogilner, who not only applied a highly sophisticated cultural approach to the history of Russian physical anthropology, but also was so brave as to initiate a very sensitive discussion in Russia. She provides us with a panorama of physical anthropology in Russia, from creation of the first academic chair through the first anthropological exhibitions, to later imperial population politics and criminal anthropology debates. The book covers a number of topics—the institutionalization of anthropology, Russian anthropology between imperial and colonial science, liberal and nationalist anthropologies, "scientific racism," anthropology and Russian multiculturalism, the "Jewish question" and race science, military anthropology, and many others.

While introducing Russian physical anthropology to empire and nationalism studies, Mogilner extends the boundaries of Russian studies and shows an evident conflict between Western-oriented anthropology, which aimed to modernize Russia, and imperial power, which was obsessed with an idea of "stability" that sounds very timely today. She also points to tensions between liberal anthropologists and nationalists who used the same data in opposite ways and for opposite goals. A comparative analysis of Anuchin's and Sikorsky's discussions of Pushkin is especially telling.

Significantly Russian liberal anthropology rejected social Darwinism, while nationalists aspired to convert ethnic differences into racial ones. Evidently, Russian liberal anthropologists rejected blending somatic and ethnic categories, and they certainly would not have approved of the "ethnic anthropology" that flourished in the Soviet Union. Liberal warnings about "the potential dangers of Russian conservative nationalism" (p. 147) also sound very timely. Yet liberal anthropology was not without its own problems, and, as Mogilner notes, "Moscow liberal anthropology was a science

of modern imperialism that, curiously enough, rejected colonialism and experimented with integrationist scientific and (by extension) political and social models" (p. 11).

Certain traditions of liberal anthropology were assimilated in the Soviet Union with its positivist and highly rigorous science. At the same time, "new reflections on the cultural and political foundations of racial thinking" did not affect Soviet physical anthropology (p. 14). This does not mean that these issues were ignored by Soviet academics beyond physical anthropology. In the very early 1930s, certain Soviet scholars treated "races" as conventional categories, although this was not approved by mainstream Marxist-Leninist thinking. Nonetheless, the Soviets developed an anti-racist paradigm in anthropology much earlier than the West, a fact Mogilner has overlooked. Moreover I would argue that, paradoxically, there was racism without "race science," as well as a "race science" without racism, in the USSR. This is why contemporary Russian physical anthropology resists "new reflections" which might surprise outsiders.

Although Mogilner differentiates between "modern" anthropology and "old" populist ethnography, one should not regard the two as confrontational. Suffice it to say that, in contrast to editors' introduction, the leading Russian anthropologist, Dmitrii Anuchin, promoted prehistoric studies based on integrated archaeological, ethnographical and anthropological knowledge, an approach that Soviet scholars later adopted and is now known as the "Anuchin Triad." And, as Mogilner demonstrates, proponents of anthropology in St. Petersburg and Kiev called for close cooperation with archaeology and ethnology, a goal approved by the Ministry of Public Education and developed further by the Soviet scholars (p. 78).

Russian anthropology, at least partly (in its St. Petersburg branch as opposed to Moscow liberals), did not differ from its Western counterpart in one other respect: it had a political mission—"to determine the scale of *inorodtsy* participation in civic life and their legal rights" (p. 80). Yet, by contrast to Mogilner, in Imperial Russia, Russianness was officially defined by conversion to Russian Orthodoxy rather than by ethnicity. Thus, non-Orthodox people were considered *inorodtsy*, and therefore were a "natural" object of colonial-type anthropological research. Hence, as Mogilner reveals, certain Russian populists paradoxically participated in colonial ethnography and collaborated with right-wing anthropologists. Yet, she correctly notes, Russian physical anthropology did not restrict itself to this field, and Russian groups were as legitimate an object of study for liberal anthropologists as *inorodtsy* were. Academic racism, it seems, was confined mainly to racial psychiatry.

Not only was Russia a nonclassical empire, but its anthropology, notwithstanding its controversial trends, also was a nonclassical. To put it differently, Mogilner's seminal contribution reminds us that the "normalization" of Russia is not an easy task.

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Malinova-Tziafeta, Ol'ga. *Iz goroda na dachu: Sotsiokul'turnye faktory osvoeniia dachnogo prostranstva vokrug Peterburga (1860–1914)*. St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Evropeiskii universitet v Sankt-Peterburge, 2013. 335 pp. R250.00 (paper). ISBN 978-5-94380-137-2.

This monograph stands out from other studies on the Russian dacha that have been published over the past half-decade or so: it pays relatively little attention to life and leisure at the dacha. Instead, the author devotes her primary attention to the unfavorable aspects of urban life, the socioeconomic and cultural-psychological consequences of urbanization, that prompt urban residents to leave the city, if for only a short while, and that have to a large extent helped to shape the specific contours of the "dacha space" that lies beyond St. Petersburg. Ol'ga Malinova-Tziafeta has utilized a broad array of sources, both official (from four separate archives) and personal (from private archives and

collections), as well as other contemporary sources. The latter sources, as well as guidebooks, her analysis of which by itself is of particular interest, add extra color and vitality to the exposition. The author's excellent command of her subject's historiographic context is evident throughout.

The first chapter is devoted to an examination of the evolution of the word "dacha," and its derivatives and synonyms, from the eighteenth century onward. Despite the author's scrupulous work with the primary and secondary sources, however, the chapter seems rather alien to the work at hand, and her attempt to "genealogically" link the dacha of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries as a legal entity to the pre-Reform Era sociocultural phenomenon of the same name seems a bit forced. Nonetheless, the author methodically singles out the differing phenomena that are the life and culture of the old rural gentry (to which a host of academic works have been devoted) and the life and culture surrounding the dacha. This is not to say that the culture of the pre-Reform rural, landed gentry did not, in N. N. Khrenov's phrase, get "translated and circulated" to a different social stratum (or, in Louise McReynolds's words, followed the path "from elitism to commerce"). Many of its characteristics were indeed "circulated" into dacha culture.

The three remaining chapters of the book deal with city-dwellers'—and society's—efforts to survive, if not fully resolve, three fundamental problems of urban life (or to at least minimize their effects, including by heading out at least temporarily to the dacha). The first of these problems was urban congestion and the resulting, serious issue of sewerage and the removal of urban filth. The author shows how the efforts of modern medicine, which had directly linked this issue to disease and epidemics, influenced public opinion and the individual city-dweller's mentality, and how they found expression not only in projects to clean up urban centers but also in new urban "hygienic" myths and the corresponding custom of leaving the city for the dacha. The second problem was associated with the psychological consequences of St. Petersburg's rapid urbanization—the growth of actual and imaginary nervous diseases and their accompanying fears, which were openly discussed by professionals and the general public, and which were keenly exploited for commercial gain. The author demonstrates that "taking rest at the dacha" was made out to be, and heavily propagandized as, a panacea for nervous disorders. And, finally, the third problem arose from city-dwellers' very need to open up and develop "dacha space." Specifically, those who owned or enjoyed dachas used and developed railroads and a variety of infrastructure designed to suit their needs. One of the most interesting stories here involves the author showing how the inhabitants of the areas where dachas were being built—members of the middle and lower classes, including peasants—took active part in defending their own interests (and their own value as consumers) against the railroads pushing into "dacha and near-dacha space," for the first time clashing with administrative authorities and articulating their own rights and demands.

I should like to point out that it is hardly proper to posit, as Peterburgtsy of the time did, that "dacha space" was simply a kind of peculiar panacea, a safe haven from urban problems. After all, dacha society *was* urban society—it "carried the city away with it," so to speak, "on its own feet." People who went out to the dacha sought to recreate not only the usual comforts of urban life but also their societal connections and methods of social intercourse (and distancing), which included their Societies, Assemblies, and every other urban entity that helped them filter their social and sociopolitical lives. The author could have profitably articulated more precisely the role of the dacha as a pseudo-panacea for the ills of the large city, and as one of the methods by which urban culture was expanded into the rural periphery, thereby altering the lived reality of peasants in the dacha zones (pp. 218, 233–36, *passim*). But on the whole Malinova-Tziafeta's book fills a gap in the literature. It is a successful and extremely interesting piece of research, elegantly written, and rich in the sort of material that paints a broad picture for us of the reasons behind the creation of St. Petersburg's "dacha suburbs."

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Miller, David B. *Saint Sergius of Radonezh, His Trinity Monastery, and the Formation of the Russian Identity*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010. x + 348 pp. $35.00. ISBN 978-0-87580-432-3.

David Miller's achievement delivers the importance of the life, cult, and community legacy of Russia's most important saint, Sergius of Radonezh (d. 1392), founder of the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery. Miller presents Sergius's cult and his monastery as a defining factor in the rise of Muscovite Russia. Miller's detailed discussion employs extensive archival and published primary sources, including hagiography, economic records, land deeds, state and ecclesiastical charters, and liturgical books up to 1605. The author effectively examines Sergius's cult as the product of mutually "transforming" activity between Russian Orthodox believers and their social, political, and cultural context.

An important work of integration, the volume melds together the spiritual, social, economic, and political life of a monastic community, and does the same for Muscovy's lay community. The volume represents an important step that historians of Russia have recently made, as previous scholars tended to compartmentalize the various elements of monastic life. A. A. Zimin and L. I. Ivina wrote of monasteries as primarily economic entities, and Pierre Gonneau focused on the economic and political ties of the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery to the elite. Ludolf Müller's commentary on the hagiographical texts was quite useful, but narrowly focused. Miller has tied the threads together to understand how the cult of Sergius supported the growth of Trinity, and analyzed its role in strengthening not just Russian elite identity, but also Russian Orthodox identity among all who venerated the saint.

Miller argues that Muscovy's development was "defined" by association with the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery and illustrates the central role that royal patronage played in promoting Sergius's cult to produce a unifying, pan-Russian Orthodox focus. As part of the story of lay patronage, the author produces evidence for the monastery's well-known economic power, arguing that its economic success was a unifying factor in the growth of Muscovy. Noting that even though the nature of the administrative sources overrepresents the number of monks from the land-owning elite, Miller believes the increasing number of humbly-born "applicants" in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries indicates that the economic prosperity of Muscovy allowed more non-elite to give gifts for tonsure, resulting in a "democratizing" effect on the brotherhood.

Miller begins with a careful study of the hagiography, comparing the *zhitiia* of Sergius with other texts to discuss the historicity and timing of events in Sergius's life. Sergius's sainthood emerged in the fifteenth century, thanks to the actions of others: Epifanii (Premudrii, d. early fifteenth century) and Pakhomii (Serb/Logofet, d. after 1484) created a hagiographical tradition associating Sergius and his monastery with the God-Bearer (*Bogoroditsa*) and the triumph of Dmitrii Donskoi; the abbot Nikon transferred the saint's remains to a stone church; Sergei Rublev's Old Testament Trinity icon became associated with the monastery and, therefore, Sergius; and written miracle stories linked donations to intercession.

Although the miracles suggest Trinity's brotherhood influenced donors, Miller demonstrated that donors tried to influence Trinity, using as evidence the struggles of Vasilii I and Vasilii II with their kinsmen for the grand princely throne, all of whom desired the partisanship of monks who participated in Sergius's power. Grand princes selected and even deposed abbots, yet supported the cloister. Miller contends, analyzing donations and religious images, that belief in the saint's protection created a state cult rooted in Sergius's perceived patronage of the grand princely family. Miller further argues that in the fifteenth century the Muscovite royal family took control of the cult by inserting into later chronicles, such as the Nikonian Chronicle and the Illuminated Codex, passages linking Sergius to the success of the state. Simultaneously, the grand princes tried to control the cloister by limiting its immunity charters. The evidence is convincing, but not unique, as similar patterns occurred at other monastic houses such as Kirillov and Solovki.

In chapters 4 through 7, Miller provides impressive primary source detail to make the case for close bonds between the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery and the landowning elite, as well as the cloister's position as a preferred intercessor among the non-elite ranks of society. His discussions

linked social status, commemorative prayer, land donations, commemorative feast rituals, tonsure, and burial. His chapter on relations with Muscovite women argues that the monastery was a vehicle by which women were able to act outside traditional spheres. Miller's data broadens Isolde Thyrêt's work on royal women, demonstrating that women of many ranks controlled property and donated to Trinity on their own initiative, with different giving patterns from men. An extended conclusion discusses the ongoing importance of St. Sergius and his Trinity Monastery as symbols of Russia throughout the Romanov dynasty and to today.

There is little to fault in Miller's thorough research, although the detail does occasionally make it a "slow read." Nonetheless, the wealth of fascinating and specific evidence creates a solid piece of research and a treasure trove of cross-references for scholars investigating saints' cults, monasticism, and their relations to Muscovite society and politics.

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Jones, Robert E. *Bread upon the Waters: The St.Petersburg Grain Trade and the Russian Economy*, *1703–1811*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013. 298 pp. $45.00. ISBN 978-0-8229-4428-7.

This book provides a superb overview of eighteenth-century agriculture and trade in Russia and should be essential reading for those interested in the empire's economic history. It has the rigor of a dissertation that has been reworked over many years, challenged by competing interpretations, and revised with archival material. It will be too detailed, I fear, for those outside of Russian studies; to read with ease, you must know your *kul'* from your *pud*, and *obrok* from *boyarshchina*.

Drawing on research—produced at various periods by court historians, Hegelian statists, and Stalin-era scholars—Robert Jones contends that the imperial government played a decisive role in creating a "normal" capitalist economy. The state shepherded the peasants out of their traditionalist, isolated communes into an empire-wide market. The Romanovs, according to Jones, shrewdly oversaw the colonization of new territory. In particular, St. Petersburg was fashioned into a mighty metropolis, thereby stoking domestic demand which in turn unleashed myriad synergies throughout the Slavic lands. Peter's "window to Europe," while never becoming a center for the export of grain, absorbed hefty quantities of rye, while the capital's well-to-do administrators began procuring wheat. Reminiscent of historian Dominic Leiven, this work upholds imperial policies. Jones justifies tariffs, price ceilings, forced labor, and conquest. Once a minority stance, his triumphalism may seem disproportionate in the context of Putin's media, awash in the opinions of Nikita Mikhailkov and Vladimir Medinsky.

Regardless of ideological preferences, Jones's contribution is indisputable. He is especially adept at explaining how statesmen, in particular Jakob Sievers, brought the tsars' dreams to fruition. Jones offers a valuable synopsis of the empire's disjunct, regional economies, highlighting the seemingly insurmountable hurdles involved in transporting grain from the fruitful black earth regions to the recently arisen, yet barren, capital. He renders a meticulous account of rivers, canals, and pre-railroad technology. The strategic significance of St. Petersburg and Odessa are usefully contrasted. Although Russia is "rich in resources," city prices were unusually exorbitant because of vast distances and poor transportation. One reason vodka became so prevalent, suggests Jones, was that it was much cheaper to ship than grain. A careful reader will notice numerous parallels with Russia's current economic conundrums, notably the natural gas and coal businesses.

Jones revisits the literature concerning the manorial transition from barter to money. His study, daring to challenge even Boris Mironov, concludes with an insightful discussion of a once pivotal issue, the effect of rising bread prices on national development. His examination is, nonetheless, a history of the Russian economy and not an analytic economic history; there are no rent-seekers, transaction costs, or Acemoglu. For some, this will be a feature, not a bug.

Jones reviews the arguments of Russian devotees of Adam Smith and their stabs at introducing elements of liberalism to the grain trade. His research does not, in my view, sufficiently explore why these attempts remained superficial. Typically even such command-style systems as today's North Korea rely on free enterprise elements. A more careful reading of sources would show that contemporaries, such as the economist Henri Storch, critiqued, in their own baroque manner, the serf system.

Jones ignores the views of informed populists (Vorontsov, Korsakov) and Marxists (Mikhail Tugan-Baranovsky) who found that Russia's path, owing to a dearth of genuine cities, was fundamentally dissimilar to Europe's. The artificialness of St. Petersburg—not until Alexander I did private construction match governmental—seems to reinforce their assessment. Perhaps the inclusion of Ukrainian and Polish perspectives could have further tempered the Niall Ferguson-like imperial hubris.

In my own view, the facts presented in this well-researched, well-written text contradict its conclusions. Jones, in reality, illuminates how the Romanovs hardwired top-down, state-centered institutions into the cultural system, engendering a non-market, non-democratic society. As illustrated, somewhat anachronistically, on the book's cover, Repin's *Barge Haulers* (1870) depicts how a profuse supply of slave labor left slight incentive to invest in technology. The state's Herculean endeavor to erect and feed St. Petersburg, comparable to the revamping of modern Sochi, actually corroborates the "abnormalness" thesis of Richard Pipes.

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Barry, Quintin. *War in the East: A Military History of the Russo-Turkish War 1877–78*. London: Helion and Company, 2012. 576 pp. £45.00. ISBN 978-1-907677-11-3.

This book should be a real pleasure for anyone who appreciates old-school military history. The signed and numbered hardback edition that was made available for review is a beautiful product. It contains no fewer than thirty color illustrations, along with literally hundreds of other drawings and maps. The work also contains an impressive collection of supporting documents. Appearing after the study's conclusion are twenty appendixes listing the divisions, commanders, and troop numbers participating in the various battles described in the study, as well as a glossary. Drawn almost entirely from published sources in English, *War in the East* constitutes a compendium of information on the 1877–78 conflict, collected for the first time in one place.

War in the East is highly detailed and informative. Most of the book's forty chapters focus upon a particular event or individual and are often infused with lively descriptions and well thought-out discussions of military strategy. Barry's analysis of the key battles from the 1877–78 war takes the reader through the specific factors leading to a particular battle's result and also highlights the importance of these events in the context of the war more generally. Many of the characters in *War in the East* are described with some detail, so that the reader develops more than a passing familiarity with individuals like Hobart Pasha, the son of the Earl of Buckingham and commander of the Ottoman navy (pp. 97–99), or Mikhail Ivanovich Dragomirov, the brilliant tactician who masterminded the crossing of the Danube (p. 125).

At the same time, however, the focus of this book is very narrow. In its approach to discussing the war, *War in the East* could easily have been written half a century ago, all the way down to its anachronistic manner, still popular among some Russianists, who refer to the Ottoman Empire as "Turkey" and the Ottoman capital as "Constantinople." The scholarship that *War in the East* draws upon and engages is similarly old, including only a handful of works produced since the 1980s. While Quintin Barry's book will no doubt interest those readers looking for information on troop numbers, the strategies employed in warfare, and specific battle results, bigger questions regarding

what the war meant for the region, its inhabitants, or even the development of modern warfare remain unexplored.

It is possible to look at military history in ways that engage such broader questions. Orlando Figes's *Crimea: The Last Crusade* (2010) and Michael Reynolds' *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires* (2011) use military conflict between the Ottoman and Russian states to discuss changes taking place in the region regarding, among other matters, the conduct of war and diplomacy, attitudes toward hygiene and medical treatment, and the conditions surrounding the populations straddling the imperial frontier. While *War in the East* is clearly not intended to emulate these works in this respect, Barry's nearly exclusive focus upon the battles themselves limits this book's potential audience.

Nevertheless, for those who cherish this kind of tightly focused military history, *War in the East* is not likely to disappoint. While the scope of the book is narrow, it remains a must-read for anyone interested in the specifically military aspects of the campaign of 1877–78.

James H. Meyer, Montana State University

Zhuravleva, V. I. *Ponimanie Rossii v SShA: Obrazy i mify, 1881–1914*. Moscow: Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi gumanitarnyi universitet, 2012. 1,141 pp. R1,407.00. ISBN 978-5-7281-1366-9.

Victoria Zhuravleva's new work is an extraordinarily detailed account of relations between two nations at a critical juncture of both countries' histories. The United States had survived its Civil War and was now becoming a leading industrial nation as the new century approached. For Russia, the recent assassination of the architect of the Great Reforms, Alexander II, sparked a tumultuous era in Russian history as the new century began. Relations had been generally friendly over the previous century, starting with official diplomatic recognition in the first decade, followed by trade agreements, and culminating with the sale of Alaska in 1867. Increasing tensions, an explosion of new images, and the development of new myths by and about each country marked the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Zhuravleva, an associate professor at Moscow State University for the Humanities, examines in fine detail the emerging image of Russia in the United States during this critical period.

The author divides her study into three large sections. Part one examines the last two decades of the nineteenth century, when relations between the two countries were still relatively friendly. The American agenda to address the poor treatment of Russian Jews and promote modernization worldwide influenced its relations with Russia. This section emphasizes the missionary spirit in America not only to help Russia modernize, but also to help Russia through some of its crises, like the famine of the early 1890s. The end of the century saw a significant increase in the number of Americans venturing to Russia. Many of them produced travel narratives that shaped not only their own views of Russia, but also the general view of ordinary Americans who never traveled to Russia. Zhuravleva correctly identifies that Russia and the United States at this time had a startling number of similarities. Yet, it was the identification Russia as the "other" that helped the United States establish a place for itself in the world that included a concept of itself as the global defender of democracy.

Part two of this work looks at a narrow period in the first decade of the twentieth century when Russia experienced its pogroms, the Russo-Japanese War, and the Revolution of 1905. Zhuravleva concludes that these three challenging events crafted many images in the minds of most Americans. Some Americans still believed in a romantic idea of Russia, and that it would eventually emerge into some sort of mirror image of the United States. Other Americans, though, took the position that Russia was a society in a fixed state of absolutism that would never be altered. The third part of this work focuses on the years just before World War I. Initially, there was a decline in American interest in Russia during this period, but the war brought a new interest in Russia that again produced rather

simple and somewhat idealistic images of a Russian state in crisis. Through the war and to the Russian Revolution, many Americans held out a hope that Russia would be transformed into something much like the United States.

In the end, this work is an outstanding contribution to the field of Russian-American relations. Zhuravleva's masterful use of Russian and American sources is truly impressive. All scholars in this field should take the time to read this work. In addition, this work deserves to be translated and published in English so it can reach a broader audience.

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Dunaeva, A. Iu. *Reformy politsii v Rossii nachala XX veka i Vladimir Fedorovich Dzhunkovskii*. Moscow: Ob"edinennaia redaktsiia MVD Rossii, 2012. 319 pp. $35.00. ISBN 978-5-812-90102-8.

A. Iu. Dunaeva's work demonstrates that Russians are looking to their imperial past for guidance about how to undertake a massively complex but urgently needed reform of an established and ossified bureaucracy—the police. At the center of Dunaeva's book stands Vladimir Fedorovich Dzhunkovskii, adjutant of Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, governor-general of Moscow (1905–12), and first deputy interior minister in charge of the Okhrana (1913–15). He undertook the far-reaching police reforms at the center of this study with the aim of extending Stolypin's vision of a Rechtsstaat to the Ministry of the Interior. The guiding principles were "the protection and respect of the individual rights of the person and citizen" and "the revalidation (*pereattestatsiia*) of the personnel." Dzhunkovskii's "respect for the officer's uniform and commitment to the honest execution of his duties make him worthy of becoming a model for today," Dunaeva writes (p. 7). Dzhunkovskii operated with Stolypin's negative definition of civil rights not as the sum total of what men could do, but with an emphasis on these rights' "clear definition and protection from infringement" (p. 105). Dzhunkovskii's attitude was that "an administrator's main responsibility should not be to gain popularity, but to gain trust," which meant acting on the principle that "the authorities serve the population," not the other way around (p. 106).

Dzhunkovskii brought to the office of deputy minister his extensive experience as governor-general of Moscow. His first aim was to raise the wages for ordinary policemen, who earned so little that they had to find "alternate sources of income," which meant bribes (p. 119). This was the root cause of corruption throughout Russian history and remains so to this day. Moreover, the pay was so far below the living wage that the police attracted cadres unfit for any other work. Helping the police would therefore restore the trust of the population. Another problem was the absence of "a unified and clear set of legal rules" within Russia's police system, with its overlapping functions and responsibilities (p. 134). The political police, the Corps of Gendarmes, was an institution apart and was mostly responsible for earning the police its reputation for arbitrariness.

Dzhunkovskii's attempts to reform this system ran into strong opposition from the bureaucracy. An army man, he was an outsider within the police establishment and his military methods alienated many subordinates. The order to place the political police under civilian control undermined its effectiveness, Dzhunkovskii's opponents argued, while the abolition of informants within the army and navy blinded the state to soldiers' attitudes toward the government at the worst possible time—during the Great War. Dzhunkovskii reduced the police budget—never a popular measure—in order to clean house, raise the wages of the professionals, and make them more efficient. Ultimately, it was Dzhunkovskii's opposition to Rasputin that precipitated his dismissal, after which he joined the army on the western front. He was a liberal and a conservative both, Dunaeva argues.

After the Bolsheviks came to power, Dzhunkovskii was arrested on several occasions, but also consulted the OGPU and NKVD on Tsarist surveillance methods, the implementation of a passport system, and providing security for the head of state. None of this saved him from being executed for counterrevolutionary activity in February 1938 at the age of seventy-two.

This is a solid study based on brand-new documents from six archives and interviews with family members. The book contains ninety-two photographs and reproductions that offer a fascinating window on the late Tsarist period. The only serious shortfall is the absence of an index.

Anton Fedyashin, American University, Washington, DC

Kovalev, M. B. *Russkie istoriki-emigranty v Prage (1920–1940 gg.)*. Saratov: Saratovskii gosudarstvennyi tekhnicheskii universitet, 2012. 404 pp. ISBN 978-5-7433-2540-5.

The complex phenomenon of "Russia Abroad" has many issues that have yet to be explored, but M. B. Kovalev's innovative monograph, with its important focus on the anthropological dimension, is an important addition to the historiography. Kovalev begins by identifying a range of problems that have contributed to the "simplification of the phenomenon of Russia Abroad phenomenon," a key element of which is his definition of "scientific everyday life" (pp. 7, 8), along with various proposals for future research of related topics that would prove useful for specialists. An object of Kovalev's research is "a local academic center of Russian history that had been established in Prague in the early 1920s and existed until the Second World War" (p. 10).

After surveying the historiography Kovalev identifies a basic problem: the phenomenon of "Russia Abroad" is being obscured by a plethora of research written "in traditional positivistic mode" (many numbers, names, dates) because of the nature of the sources being used. The exception to this rule, he avers, is Demydova's *Metamorphosis in Exile: The Literary Everyday Life of Russia Abroad* (2003), the sole work devoted to the émigré intellectual community (p. 24). Kovalev's work is the first to explore the "everyday dimension of émigré science" in a larger context, with a focus on the historians in particular (p. 26).

The book's three chapters focus on Russian researchers and their Czech cultural surrounding; the organizational context of History and the institutionalization of research; and the metamorphosis of historical memory. The first section of chapter 1 tells about political and humanitarian foundations of "Russian Action," which encompassed refugees from across the Russian Empire. Another section provides fascinating information about how Russian émigrés not only in Prague but also in Berlin and Paris viewed the city of Prague: literary scholars, Kovalev asserts, viewed the city as a province, while researchers saw it as a capital city (p. 75). Anyone from the former Soviet Union will be able to appreciate Kovalev's descriptions of the émigrés' experiences with housing: dormitories (pp. 75–76), Prague's suburbs (p. 77), apartment-building construction (pp. 78–81), and the intrigues surrounding attempts to secure flats in those apartments buildings (pp. 81–83). Kovalev also describes the difficulties involved in mastering a new language—Czech—which he stresses was an important aspect of professional communication (pp. 84–95). Age was an obstacle, of course, as was the émigrés' ability to publish in Russian, French, or German. There was also the subtle worry that using a foreign language was a betrayal of Russia (pp. 87–93). The result, which many émigrés anticipated, was a sense of isolation from the surrounding society. Such isolation, and another barrier to the ability of Russian historians to engage with their Czech colleagues, was compounded to some extent by the reticence of Czech research institutions to compete directly with famous Russian academics, along with a touch of Czech "extreme nationalism" (p. 102). Moreover, the Humanities market was simply oversaturated, and the Czech government simply could not offer enough jobs (p. 103). As a result, neither side managed to utilize the existing potential. Finally (and what Kovalev sees as one of the main problems), Russian émigrés simply could not fully adapt: physically they were in the Republic of Czechoslovakia, but mentally they remained in Russia, and this mindset extended to their previous (but now extinct) social status, which resulted in many émigrés continuing to act out, as if they were on stage, their old sociocultural roles (pp. 115–16).

Chapter 2 is devoted to the organizational context in which émigré Russian historians conducted their everyday professional lives. Kovalev analyzes a variety of institutions where historians worked, offering numerous details about working conditions, the nature of work undertaken (and the results),

the identity of the most active researchers, the origins of their financial support, the everyday conflicts and hidden obstacles they faced (and how they were overcome), and their ambitions.

The author analyses the Russian Academic Group's procedures for defending dissertations and awarding degrees but fails to provide sufficient detail, particularly regarding what, if any, benefits were derived from obtaining such a degree and whether Czech authorities recognized it. In an interesting brief foray into the fate of the collections of the Russian Foreign Historical Archives, Kovalev wonders about who was responsible for their transfer to the Soviet Union: Czech Communists or the Soviets. But Patricia Grimsted already has proved that Soviet authorities initiated this: they were aware of émigré archives and libraries, primarily in Prague, and had tasked a search brigade to locate not only cultural treasures that the Nazis had stolen from the USSR but also documents that had been created or accumulated by émigrés from the territory of the former Russian Empire, and to return them to the Soviet Union.

The author also explores some interesting methodological approaches toward studying the interaction of scholarship and ideology, as well as how Western and émigré scholars approached the notion of collective memory and identity (pp. 237–44). He concludes that historical memory influenced the research approach of scholars and that émigrés stressed an ideological approach to History in part because of their desire to preserve, and ultimately return, their understanding of History to a new Russia (p. 235).

In a fascinating subsection on "Historical Holidays as an Instruments of Keeping Memory about Past" (pp. 258–75), Kovalev examines the scale, forms, and content of various "ceremonies of memory" and concludes that literature in particular acted as a nucleus around which the diaspora could unite, turning Pushkin, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky into veritable icons. He also notes how émigré historians approached the main periods of Russian historical development (the formation of the Muscovite state, the Russian Empire, and the revolutionary movement), arguing that the tragic events they had experienced forced them to escape to the "ideal past" of Old Rus' and the Muscovite state (p. 275): "for [émigrés], reflections about Russia's past became a part of everyday scholarly life" (p. 325). Although Kovalev concludes by arguing that the scholarly activities of émigré historians was influenced by both internal and external factors, he does not identify the external influences

Kovalev has based his book on in-depth research in Russian and Czech archives, and his extensive bibliography includes secondary works written in Russian, Czech, French, German, and English, although, as noted above, there is a puzzling failure to incorporate Grimsted's crucial research. Regrettably, the book contains only a rather modest index of names, when inclusion of geographic places-names and subject headings would have been very helpful for readers.

In general, though, this book constitutes a prime example of thorough research in the sphere of intellectual and social history incorporating contemporary methodological approaches for writing historical narrative. It is an excellent source for learning about those individuals and institutions who participated in the preservation of the Russian emigration's historical memory. And it serves as a model for others who might write similar books about the everyday personal and professional lives of Ukrainian émigrés in interwar Czechoslovakia.

Tetyana Boryak, Kyiv

Eremeeva, A. N. *Kul'turnaia zhizn' Kubani v XX veke*. Krasnodar: Platonov I., 2013. 160 pp. ISBN 978-5-904316-16-7.

For the sake of disclosure, the present reviewer is himself a native of Krasnodar; this fact can be admitted with certain pride. Perhaps even more than the majority of Russia's internal peripheries, this folksy southern conurbation is richly renowned for the artistic and scholarly personalities who had left it to storm the world centers, such as the opera diva Anna Netrebko, rather than staying in the warm provincial backwater that Vladimir Mayakovsky had coyly dubbed "doggy's capital." (In 2007 the metaphor of "*sobachkina stolitsa*" was cast in bronze and proudly displayed at the city's

main street called Krasnaia). Yet Krasnodar has had its own cultural life along with such prominent defenders of folkloric patriotism as Victor Likhonosov, the author of the epic novel lovingly titled *Our Small Paris*. It is this history that Anna Eremeeva set out to document with affection as well as impressive effort and style.

Krasnodar (Ekaterinodar before 1920) became a town only in 1867, after the Russian conquest of the North Caucasus. A visiting American observed perceptively, if also paradoxically: "No, this is surely not Europe; it's Texas, a typical frontier town." Indeed, the railroad, electricity, and trams had arrived here before high culture. The first surge of creative energies appeared in the Kuban Cossack capital at the turn of twentieth century, as part of the universal boom of print capitalism (including the trade-mark feuilletonism of the epoch) and commercial theater entrepreneurship. To her credit, Eremeeva does not neglect the development of these less noble genres even if her main focus traditionally remains on the high culture. Here, the young Ekaterinodar benefited from the special advantage of southern geography: its proximity to the resorts emerging on the Black sea coast helped the seasonal migrations of celebrity intellectuals and performers from big capitals. During the Russian Civil War, Ekaterinodar, for almost two years, was the home base of Gen. Anton Denikin's White Army and one of the best-fed locales in the generally starving country. This locale gathered a splendid motley crowd of refugees, from the arch-reactionary Vladimir Purishkevich to Vsevolod Meyerhold (briefly imprisoned by the Whites as a Bolshevik but released on the intercession of the composer Mikhail Gnessin, Maximilian Voloshin, and other luminaries). Curiously, the future doyen of Soviet children's poetry, Samuil Marshak, also started his career in Ekaterinodar, where he, along with several other future Stalin laureates, earned a living by contributing anti-Bolshevik satires to the propaganda department of the Whites. Eremeeva rather light-heartedly mentions these political episodes, while assiduously avoiding all politics. Such a detached position might be understandable in a scholar working the ever-shifting political landscapes of today's Russia, yet it surely impoverishes her historical narrative.

The result is that this cultural history of a Russian province remains essentially a catalogue of names with only brief annotations regarding their intellectual interests and careers. We learn about the informal poetic circle *Shestigolosie* formed shortly after 1945 by a half-dozen students and at least one faculty member at the Krasnodar Pedagogical Institute. This student initiative, resonating with the general atmosphere of postwar Soviet Russia, was aborted by authorities. At least nobody was arrested, though we do not learn any details. In another contemporaneous instance, Eremeeva mentions the lobbying efforts to establish in Krasnodar a regional branch of Soviet Academy of Sciences. This project was also aborted, though we are left guessing why. Was it budget priorities, or was it some sort of bureaucratic politics? One way or another, Krasnodar missed its historical chance to emerge as intellectual center in the expansive postwar decades.

A good third of the book is dedicated to the figures lionized locally in the Soviet official discourse of Brezhnev's period. Curiously, these are not creative intellectuals but rather Olympic athletes, agricultural scientists, and cosmonauts with local connections. The Socialist Realist painters and poets of distinctly local prominence get their share of accolades, too In the meantime, Eremeeva barely mentions the Kuban Cossack Chorus, which gained a genuinely worldwide fame under the deft guidance of Victor Zakharchenko in the 1980s. It is a pity that the book bypasses Zakharchenko's improbably big achievements along with his wonderfully convoluted politics of Russo/Ukrainian/Cossack identity.

No less puzzlingly, our chronicler mentions in merely a single short paragraph the rather astonishing fact that in the early 1990s Krasnodar could attract the chief choreographer of the Bolshoi Theater Yuri Grigorovich, the Big Band of the famous jazzman Georgi Garanyan, and a score of professors of music and dance from the top institutions of the former USSR (p. 156). Was this group decamping of luminaries caused by the political and economic chaos, rather like the ephemeral cultural efflorescence of the Civil War years? Did it leave much imprint locally? Eremeeva gives us no answer; now, this must be local politics.

This monograph is relatively short and, as I said, lightly written, which is both an advantage and a drawback. Much remains to be done in order to understand Krasnodar's place in the whole

system of Soviet-era culture. Perhaps too much attention is given to the top strata of locally prominent citizens, to the detriment of the much broader provincial intelligentsia: the readers, theater-goers, and especially the teachers who had, after all, provided early training to all those future success stories developing beyond Krasnodar. Anna Eremeeva, however, provides us with a good starting point.

Georgi Derluguian, New York University at Abu Dhabi

Lyandres, Semion. *Fall of Tsarism: Untold Stories of February 1917 Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. xxiv + 322 pp. $65.00. ISBN 978-0-19-923575-9

Revolutions become historical events only in hindsight. They require governments, politicians, institutions, citizens, and, yes, historians to mark their significance. The process of turning an event into history can take years. But not Russia's February Revolution. The historian M. A. Polievktov, the hero in Semion Lyandres's *Fall of Tsarism*, quickly understood its historical resonance. As soon as Petrograd exploded in revolt, Polievktov and his wife Rusudana Nikoladze made it their task to preserve documents of the old regime. On February 27, 1917, they rushed to the burning Petrograd District Court to save whatever papers they could. Then on March 2, Polievktov wrote a letter to P. N. Miliukov urging the new Provisional Government to immediately safeguard imperial records. The Provisional Government made early strides at securing documents, especially those from the archives of the dreaded Okhrana. But Polievktov continued independently with the help of family. By late April the Provisional Government gave him official sanction to create the Society for the Study of the Revolution to preserve the memory of the February Revolution. Unfortunately, Polievktov's efforts remained virtually unknown for over seventy years. No longer, thanks to the Lyandres's detective work.

The *Fall of Tsarism* is not about the Polievktov or his Society per se, but the invaluable oral histories he recorded in spring 1917 with B. A. Engel'gardt, A. A. Chikolini, P. V. Gerasimov, M. V. Rodzianko, L. S. Tugan-Baranovskii, N. V. Nekrasov, N. S. Chkheidze, M. I. Skobelev, A. F. Kerenskii, and M. I. Tereshchenko. Lyandres reproduces all ten in full. Varying in length and substance, these are incredible testimonies. Each interviewee details his impressions and experiences leading up to and during the February Revolution, Nicholas II's abdication, the intense efforts to piece together a new government and the Petrograd Soviet, and the genesis of Order Number One. As Lyandres repeatedly notes, the value of these interviews is in their timing. Conducted months before the Bolsheviks took power, the interviewees are more or less frank about the challenges they faced, and for those who went on to write memoirs, with virtually no defensive posturing. More importantly for the majority of the interviewees, these transcripts are their only testimonies on those heady days, making them invaluable to the history of the revolution.

Lyandres contextualizes the interviews with an essay on Polievktov's life and work and an interpretive essay treating the interviews' common themes. But how Lyandres acquired these interviews demonstrates the historian's true craft as a detective. Armed with a few footnotes referencing Polievktov's Society and little evidence as the whereabouts of its documents, Lyandres embarked on an over decade-long sleuth tracking them down. The search involved thousands of miles and many, many months along with trips to Russia and Georgia, proxies and personal contacts, and even a Georgian archivist only known to Lyandres as "Rezo." It was through a friend that Lyandres was finally able to secure a meeting with Polievktov's daughter-in-law and heir, Zinaida Polievktova-Nikoladze, who literally had the original interview transcripts in her home. It is an amazing story in and of itself that Lyandres tells, along with Polievktov's life and work, with flair.

There is nothing worth quibbling with in this fine volume. It inspires more hope than reservations. One wish is that Oxford publishes a paperback edition, as these interviews would prove vital to a class on the Russian Revolution. Or better yet, provide them online through Oxford's institutional

ebook subscription so instructors could pick and choose which interviews to use in the classroom. Let's not allow Polievktov's untold stories and Lyandres's sleuthing to recede back into obscurity.

Sean Guillory, University of Pittsburgh

Boer, Roland. *Lenin, Religion, and Theology: New Approaches to Religion and Power*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. xii + 347 pp. $40.00. ISBN 978-1-137-32390-3.

One might think a book about Lenin's view of religion would be short. The man didn't seem to have a religious bone in his body. Lenin once likened belief to "spiritual booze" (p. 14). But in this fine study Roland Boer shows that Lenin's encounter with religious ideas was surprisingly complicated. He points out that "Lenin's texts are full to overflowing with biblical characters, parables, stories, and sayings, let alone his own parables" (p. 53). While Lenin's "implacable opposition to official religion" cannot be gainsaid, Boer argues that "an intriguing tension manifests itself in Lenin's explicit writings on religion" and that his best work reflects "a far more complex and even dialectical approach to religion" (pp. 2, 9, 10).

Working systematically through the mountain of writings authored by Lenin, Boer's aim was "to read Lenin with a theological ear" (p. 207). He not only paid attention to the handful of texts devoted explicitly to the subject of religion but also catalogued every one of the surprisingly large number of Biblical references in Lenin's writings and traced meticulously Lenin's use of religiously charged terms like "miracle" (*chudo*). Boer's scholarship is impressive, yet the book avoids pedantry. The writing is lively, and the sections in which Boer fashions collages of Lenin's turns of phrase are even hilarious (pp. xi, 45–48). The book succeeds in making Lenin's thought fresh. It also provides a useful discussion of the God-building project of Anatoly Lunacharksky and in its final chapter makes the provocative case that the veneration of Lenin after his death and the embalming of his mortal remains may have been inspired by his own repeatedly expressed ambivalence about the body and its decomposition.

According to Boer, Lenin's view of religion was complex and even contradictory. In some texts the Bolshevik leader was hostile to, dismissive of, and obtuse about religious faith. Boer shows how unsatisfactory a reply Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* was to Lunacharsky's sophisticated argument about the emancipatory impulse within Christian belief in *Religion and Socialism* (pp. 99–100). But in other texts, Boer argues, Lenin came to recognize "a revolutionary potential within religion" (p. 20). It was more than just spiritual booze. At certain moments Lenin seemed to come around to Lunacharsky's view, that "a religion like Christianity is politically ambivalent, able to support oppressive power with ease and yet provide resources for overthrowing that power" (p. 133). In the end, though, Boer concedes that "the moments when he glimpsed the possibilities of the religious Left were fewer than those when he attacked religion" (p. 210). Lenin was not able to sustain a consistently dialectical view of faith. Boer thinks that is a pity, for enlisting on behalf of the revolution "the power of the religious Left would perhaps have made matters a little easier, on both ideological and practical levels" (p. 210).

This book offers a sympathetic account of Lenin's thought and career. Some might think it is too adulatory. The worst thing Boer has to say about Lenin is that sometimes his thinking was insufficiently dialectical. The author does concede that Lenin was not as respectful of freedom of conscience as he ought to have been (pp. 3, 60). But anyone who has read the chapter on the violent persecution of religion in Richard Pipes's *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* will think Boer's criticism is rather understated. Pipes argues that the attack on religion in 1922 was engineered by Lenin himself, but Boer passes over the episode in silence and so misses a chance to explore the dialectical connection between theory and practice in Lenin's treatment of organized religion.

Readers who have more doubts about what Lenin wrought than the author of this book will be on guard against some of its judgments. But they will also gain a greater appreciation for the

complexity of Lenin's thought and will be impressed that such an interesting book could be written about the religious thinking of one of history's most notorious atheists.

Robert Mayer, Loyola University Chicago

Koenker, Diane P. *Club Red: Vacation Travel and the Soviet Dream*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013. xiv + 307 pp. $39.95. ISBN 978-0-8014-5153-9.

Diane Koenker presents a fascinating picture of the off-hours of workers in the proletarian state. Spa vacations, rest homes, adventure tourism, and package tours all merit inclusion in this ambitious history of Soviet tourism, from the creation of a system of tourist homes starting in 1919 to the late Soviet period. Koenker's focus is the two-week vacation promised to Soviet citizens in the 1922 labor code, and she uses the examination of leisure to address broader questions of state priorities, the meanings and beneficiaries of revolution, the unique or typical experiences of Soviet citizens as compared to others, and the ways in which even group consumption of leisure could aid in the construction of individual identities.

Koenker begins with the paradoxes of leisure in the Soviet system: the worry that leisure was consumptive rather than productive, the anxieties that non-productive leisure created for both citizens and the state, and the apprehensions of state authorities for the freedoms that vacation, and especially adventure tourism, inspired. She follows these topics over the course of the Soviet system, spending three chapters in the pre-war period, one in the postwar Stalin era, and three more in the post-Stalin years.

A major issue throughout these periods is the workers' access to vacations. Though conceived as important to the needs of laborers, the voucher (*putevka)* system ensured that many more high functionaries and educated Soviet citizens got to Sochi than line-workers, or especially collective farm workers. These imbalances, noted by authorities throughout the Soviet period, indicate continued worry over the use of a vacation. Medical authorities played an important role in defining correct rest throughout the period, but Koenker also details change over time in what type of vacation was considered worthwhile: restful or vigorous, languid or adventurous, and therapeutic or unstructured. Consumption was not the only force at work defining proper vacationing. Vacationers also made choices, confronting questions of individual or collective experiences and deciding whether they wanted their two weeks to be free of family and open to sexual liaisons or to be with family and therefore closed to both collective, or illicit, experiences. A small but impressive group chose to prove their mettle through authentic, proletarian tourism. The memoir of Gleb Travin, a man who cycled the Soviet Union in the 1930s, proves especially engaging. Travin's experience illustrates not just the ways in which travel could express rugged individualism, but also the way tourism enabled citizens to experience the periphery and allowed cultural emissaries of the center to penetrate to the edges of empire.

Koenker grounds her analysis of identity, consumption, and leisure in the theoretical works of anthropologist Mary Douglass and historians Anne Gorsuch and Susan E. Reid especially, but more on the demographic background to medical changes in regimen, diet, and focus of vacations could have provided an interesting point of analysis. The spas were conceived of as therapeutic for a population decimated by typhus and bedeviled by tuberculosis, but, as those maladies were brought under control, it is not clear if the spa regimen and vacation system changed as a consequence.

Koenker combines institutional, social, cultural, identity, and gender history in a superb tale of tourism in the Soviet Union that will be useful to scholars in any of those fields. Additionally, *Club Red* seems especially well suited to classes on the postwar Soviet experience or comparative courses on the post-1945 world, and chapters would productive and enjoyable discussion material in undergraduate classes.

Tricia Starks, University of Arkansas

DeHaan, Heather D. *Stalinist City Planning: Professionals, Performance, and Power.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013. xiv + 255 pp. $70.00. ISBN 978-1-4426-4534-9.

Were the wars in architecture and urban planning during the 1920s–30s over differences in artistic and esthetic principles, as Catherine Cooke would have had us believe, or were they essentially disguised struggles over power? Heather DeHaan in her well-researched study of city planning in Nizhnii Novgorod during the 1930s lands clearly on the side of power conflict. Taking us out of Moscow and its logocentric political universe into the provinces, she argues that Stalinist "planning" never existed. As in most areas of the economy, there was no planning beyond a paper (un)reality.

In explaining the social forces that determined the reality as opposed to the theory of urban planning in Nizhnii Novgorod, DeHaan first, and repeatedly, lays waste to Stephen Kotkin's claim that Soviets lived in some "discourse-bound civilization" imposed by a "hegemonic Party apparatus" (p. 12). Rather, DeHaan argues that Soviet society was not "linguistic" but real; a reality shaped by history and culture and facts on the ground, and above all by issues of power. Paralleling the pseudo-artistic "debates" among competing architectural groups in Moscow, debates that were in fact struggles over power and control, DeHaan traces the pseudo-scientific debates urban planners used to hide their struggles for power. The overwhelming reality of Soviet urban planning, at least in Nizhnii Novgorod, was the desire on the part of planners to please the political elites. This meant a readiness to sacrifice scientific integrity, economic realism, and professional pragmatism in order to protect their status as Soviet experts.

In this quest for status and power, DeHaan focuses on the conflicting dimensions of Soviet socialism—the technocratic and the populist—and reveals how the tension between the two, plagued the Soviet Union throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Planners initially sought to refashion human society through the use of science, reason, and analytical order, thereby laying claim to power and challenging the political authority of the party "which did not govern primarily through technological system, but through the direct conquest of hearts and minds" (p. 60). But when the "science" of planning seeking to accommodate local political and economic needs threatened political risk for deviating from the all-Union iconographic design based on Moscow's newly sacralized form, planners first sought to protect themselves by "[walling] themselves in the Soviet equivalent of the ivory tower, from where they issued endless calls for research and debate—not in order to advance the building of socialism, but in order to shelter themselves from the messy 'absolute' of urban life" (p. 65). When stonewalling to avoid controversial choices ceased to be a viable tool for protection of status, planners, led by Nikolai Solofnenko, DeHaan's Judas, turned to conformist political display, offering up "not visionary planning, rooted in scientific perception, but iconographic design meant to portray the sacralized space of the future" (p. 107) with this "Faustian pact, they ceded power as scientists but gained power as purveyors of the Stalin cult, presenting their plans as the image of Stalin's care and popular desire" (p. 169).

If plans did not build Nizhnii Novgorod, and certainly not some hegemonic party, what did? Political leaders (the city council) catered to the demands of powerful and wealthy local industries. Party officials encouraged builders to ignore the plans and build first and plan later. "Construction trusts could flout the demands of city planners because they generally had the backing of industrial bodies, whose political and economic power far outshone that of the city council" (p. 141). Not just industry, but workers as well, determined what was actually built. Workers could successfully lay claim to personal property rights, especially the protection of their homes, to prevent construction. In this respect DeHaan drives yet another nail into the coffin of "totalitarianism," demonstrating how in Nizhnii Novgorod all of society was not terrorized into zombie-like obedience and some were successful in negotiating with power even as the Terror occurred.

The plurality of competing interests, including those of common citizens, together with scarcity, political pressure, and struggles for resources and influence, DeHann demonstrates, "defined socialism and the Soviet experience" and produced the unplanned but built city of Nizhnii Novgorod.

Hugh D. Hudson, Jr., Georgia State University

Klid, Bohdan, and Alexander J. Motyl, comps. and eds. *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine*. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2012. xxviii + 386 pp. $34.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-894865-6.

In the *Holodomor Reader*, editors Bohdan Klid and Alexander Motyl present excerpts from a number of primary- and secondary-source materials (some appearing in English for the first time) relating to the Ukrainian famine of 1932–33. These materials are divided into six sections: scholarship; legal assessments relating to the question of genocide; eyewitness accounts; survivor testimonies; documents; and works of literature.

Some of these categories are broader than they might first appear: The "Documents" section, for instance, includes Soviet, Ukrainian, British, German, Italian, and Polish government documents. Combined, these documents provide insight into how the international community reacted to the Ukrainian famine as it unfolded. The "Literature" section includes novels, prose, plays, and poetry dealing with the theme of the Ukrainian famine and the question of memory.

The editors introduce these materials in an opening interpretive essay, where they argue that the *Holodomor Reader* presents overwhelming evidence that the Ukrainian famine should be considered a genocide. The editors adopt the broadly defined parameters established in 1944 by the lawyer Raphael Lemkin, who included political, social, cultural, and social destruction in his definition of genocide. The narrower United Nations definition, which was adopted by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948, largely defines genocide as an act of physical destruction, such as killing.

The editors express their hope that their reader will "spur specialists and nonspecialists to examine the Holodomor comparatively in relation to other genocides and other famines" (p. xiv). Unfortunately, it is not immediately clear to nonspecialists what new evidence (or arguments) the editors bring to bear on the well-worn question of the Ukrainian famine and genocide. Placing the Ukrainian famine in a broader, comparative context is a worthy goal, but the book lacks certain features, such as a timeline of major events or a glossary of key personages, that would make it more accessible to a broader readership.

In the "Scholarship" section, the editors excerpt major scholarship on the Ukrainian famine, but these excerpts are often too short and jumpy (with as many as a dozen ellipses on one page) for the reader to follow well. The editors state that they have reproduced these selections without their original footnotes for reasons of space, but this makes it difficult for readers to assess the source base of each author's argument. It is also not clear how the selections for the "Scholarship" section were chosen. The editors do present alternate points of view on the question of genocide and the Ukrainian famine, such as the scholarship of R. W. Davies and Stephen Wheatcroft. Yet there are other interpretations of the Ukrainian famine that are notably missing (for instance, Timothy Snyder's *Sketches from a Secret War* and the work of Mark Tauger).

In their interpretive essay, the editors purport to set the Ukrainian famine against the broader backdrop of collectivization and famine in the USSR (pp. xxxiv–xxxvii), yet crucial events, including famine in Soviet Kazakhstan and in the Volga and Don areas, are entirely missing from this summary. The exclusion of the Kazakh famine of 1930–33 is particularly striking, as it would seem to be a natural case for the comparisons that the editors claim they would like to invite.

Sarah Cameron, The University of Maryland – College Park

Storella, C. J., and A. K. Sokolov. *The Voice of the People: Letters from the Soviet Village, 1918–1932*. Annals of Communism. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012. xvi + 425 pp. $65.00. ISBN 978-0-300-11233-7.

This latest offering in the Annals of Communism series out of Yale University Press provides a vivid picture of the Soviet countryside in the 1920s. While too dense for most undergraduates, it will

provide nourishing fare for graduate students reading for general exams, lecturers seeking vivid material to discuss in class, and specialists researching peasant history.

Carmine J. Storella, who teaches history at Carnegie-Mellon University, has made available in English the fruit of a long-term project by a group led by Andrei Sokolov, head of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Russian History. The group has sifted through thousands of letters to the editor from the files of the peasant newspaper *Krest'ianskaia gazeta,* as well as letters and reports from the files of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and other archives. The documents and some of the analysis in the present book appeared in Russian in 1997 under Sokolov's editorship. Storella has ably translated the sometimes flowery, sometimes awkward idiom of the peasant letter-writers. He has also written some of the excellent explanatory text, but does not clarify which parts come from his pen and which from those of his Russian colleagues.

The volume provides full texts or excerpts of 158 documents from 1918 to 1932, bound together with explanations of relevant Soviet policies and analyses of the peasants' self-representation in the letters. This explanatory "substrate" provides a comprehensive and nuanced summary of the scholarship on the period. The book could thus serve as a core text for a graduate course on peasant history or in preparation for general exams. Unfortunately it lacks a bibliography of the secondary sources consulted, which must be ferreted out from the endnotes. Also lacking is an accessible list of the archival files consulted.

The book comprises five thematically oriented chapters covering the 1920s, plus a chapter at the beginning on the Russian Civil War and War Communism and one at the end on collectivization and dekulakization. The central chapters focus on the peasants' reactions to the New Economic Policy, their attitudes toward urban workers and activists, whether their society was transformed, their attitudes toward officials, and how they understood socialism.

The chapter on peasant attitudes toward socialism was especially interesting. The letters show a variety of often creative understandings of socialism and how it fit with Russian realities. Certain aspects of socialist ideology, such as proletarian fraternalism, resonated with the peasants' Christian heritage. Letter-writers made recommendations on how to build socialism, integrating Soviet concepts with their observations of real life. One author poetically described socialism as a convergence of streams into a river "that quickly and boldly flows forward (p. 272)." Another declared, conversely, that socialism is opposed to the very nature of the village (p. 279).

In the final chapter on dekulakization, the volume's editors wonder how many of the people who wrote the letters reproduced here were subsequently deported or imprisoned. The change in tone between these letters from the 1920s and letters from collective farmers of the 1930s suggests that a whole cohort of the most literate and thoughtful peasants was indeed lost to the countryside. Collective farmers' missives from the 1930s seen by this reviewer were mostly denunciations of particular incumbents and focused on specific grievances such as rotting crops and neglected livestock.

In comparison, the 1920s writers in the present volume appear articulate, confident, philosophical, and even cosmopolitan. Some of these authors may have had help from schoolteachers or other educated people in putting their thoughts on paper, but others clearly wrote for themselves. Some authors had had experience in the wider world, possibly through military service or migrant labor. In a 1927 letter, one A. T. Melnichenko, who portrays himself as an untutored peasant, theorizes that the acronym "USSR" must be a misprint for "USCR," or Union of Soviet Capitalist Republics. The editors note that he was "not as guileless as he pretends ... his letter ... [i]s not especially ungrammatical, and his dissection of 'USSR' is a clever device, leading to his subversive conclusion that capitalism, not socialism, is thriving in the land of soviets" (p. 282). Author S. T. Myskin-Zelenov, writing in the same year, drew on evidence from his reading about American work organization and his conversations with Japanese POWs to predict that the United States or Japan would reach socialism before the Soviet Union (p. 283). One L. N. Bondarenko, in a 1928 critique of the Draft Program of the Communist International, enumerated the possible reasons why socialism was not working: it was either inapplicable to real life, badly applied, or undermined by wreckers (p. 286). These writers of the 1920s confidently shared a variety of often sophisticated thoughts about the nature and future of the Soviet system, as few in the 1930s dared to do.

Also surprising was the affinity expressed by some peasants in 1928 for Leon Trotsky, who had just been expelled from the Communist party in 1927 and is not known for particular sympathies toward peasants. Some letters criticized the Soviet system's bureaucratism, a concept associated with Trotsky. One Moscow resident wrote, "I have ... heard from simple, chatty peasants and workers all over that Trotsky was right" and that Trotsky's policies would have been better for both classes (p. 263).

This volume provides ample surprises and food for analysis on many levels, as well as a solid introduction to 1920s Soviet policy and peasant society, for advanced students and researchers. The book also serves an archival function by enshrining and disseminating hundreds of vivid primary sources. Half a century ago, the late historian Viktor Petrovich Danilov and his colleagues took advantage of the Khrushchev Thaw to publish volumes of documents showing the terrors of collectivization. During the Brezhnev years that followed, when historians could not openly criticize collectivization, many researchers worldwide still had access to these volumes of primary sources. The group behind the volume currently under review includes some who worked with Danilov, both in Soviet days and more recently on the "Tragedy of the Russian Village" document collections on the 1930s. Today, as a new Russian crackdown on speech looms, Storella and Sokolov's book on the 1920s could serve the same role of preserving and disseminating the words of peasants as they grappled publicly with the new Soviet order.

Nellie Ohr, Independent Consultant

Goldman, Stuart D. *Nomonhan, 1939: The Red Army's Victory that Shaped World War II*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press 2012. xii + 228 pp. $31.95. ISBN 978-1-59114-329-1.

Often referred to as a little-known battle, the Soviet-Japanese clash at Khalkhin-Gol, or Nomonhan, in August 1939 has, in fact, been extensively studied, most notably by Alvin D. Coox in his monumental *Nomonhan: Japan against Russia* (1985).

Stuart Goldman's book is much shorter but no less valuable. Goldman explains the background to the battle in the context of developments in Soviet-Japanese relations and provides a clear and engaging account of the military action, illustrated by some good maps. Equal weighting is given to Soviet and Japanese perspectives, and Goldman brings to bear a good range of evidence from Russian- and English-language sources.

The one major criticism I have is that Goldman is over-reliant on the memoirs of Georgy Zhukov for his account of the Soviet side of the battle. Zhukov was the commander of the Soviet forces at Khalkhin-Gol. In May 1939, Zhukov was posted to the Far East following clashes with Japan's Kwantung Army on the Mongolian-Manchurian border in the region of the Khalkhin-Gol River. After his arrival Zhukov was appointed the local commander and he began preparations for an encirclement battle that would drive the Kwantung Army away from the Khalkhin-Gol and establish that Mongolia's border with Manchuria was east of the river, not further west as the Japanese claimed. This was no mere border skirmish. Some seventy-five thousand Japanese troops were involved, while Zhukov deployed hundreds of tanks, planes, and artillery. The operation was a stunning success and the Soviet victory made Zhukov's name as a general. In 1969, Zhukov published a chapter on the battle in his memoirs. Quite naturally, it inflated Zhukov's personal role in the proceedings, and his biographers and others have been content to follow his narrative framework. However, in recent years primary-source documentation and some direct access has become available from Russian military archives that presents a different picture of events, one in which Zhukov plays a central role in the preparation and execution of the battle, but in the context of the collective efforts of many layers of the Soviet high command. I feel that Goldman's book would have benefitted from the use of this new material.

Unlike other writings on Nomonhan, this book devotes a lot of space to the political and diplomatic ramifications of the battle. Goldman argues that the unfolding events at Khalkhin-Gol

had a crucial bearing on the negotiations that led to the Nazi-Soviet pact of August 23, 1939, because the Japanese threat and the danger of a two-front war encouraged Stalin to do a deal with Hitler. In the absence of such Far Eastern complications, Stalin might have been more inclined to give the possibility of a triple alliance with Britain and France more of a chance. I am not convinced by this argument. The Soviets were not afraid of the Japanese, not least because Japan was bogged down in a war in China. There were numerous border clashes with Japanese in the 1930s, and the Red Army felt it had their measure, a confidence confirmed by Zhukov's success at Khalkhin-Gol. If you conduct a counterfactual thought experiment and ask if the Japanese threat did not exist would that have made any difference to what happened in Europe, the answer is probably no. Stalin's decision to do a deal with Hitler was far from being over-determined, but it did not require the input of the Japanese factor.

Goldman is on firmer ground when he assesses the impact on the Japanese of their defeat at Khalkhin-Gol. It persuaded them that the northern strategy of expanding in the Soviet direction was not such a good idea. More tempting, particularly after the fall of France in 1940, was expansion into Southeast Asia, a southern strategy that led to the attack at Pearl Harbor. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in summer 1941 some elements among the Japanese were tempted to change course and join in the attack, but the shadow of the defeat at Nomonhan loomed large. At the same time, Stalin took no chances and the Soviets maintained a large military establishment in the Far East, the April 1941 neutrality pact with Japan notwithstanding. In August 1945 this provided a platform for the Soviet invasion of Manchuria—arguably the pivotal event in precipitating Japan's surrender. Zhukov had no part in this operation, but one of the launchpads for the Red Army's invasion was Khalkhin-Gol.

As a starting point for the study of Khalkhin-Gol there is no better book than Goldman's. If you only read one book on the battle, this is it.

Geoffrey Roberts, University College Cork

Hrynevych, Vladyslav. *Nepryborkane riznogolossia: Druga svitova viina i suspil'no-politychni nastroi v Ukraini, 1939–cherven' 1941 r.* Kyiv-Dnipropetrovs'k: Vydavnytstvo "Lira," 2012. 506 pp. $56.95. ISBN 978-9-663834122.

In light of the contradictory responses of the population of Ukraine to the German-Soviet war of 1941–45, how did it react to the Stalinist regime from the late 1930s to the outbreak of the war? To what extent did Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians accept Stalin's new order and to what extent did they resist it, however passively? Vladyslav Hrynevych, a senior research fellow at the I. F. Kuras Institute of Political and Ethnonational Studies (the former Institute of Marxism-Leninism) of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, analyzes how and to what degree members of Ukrainian society absorbed the ethos of Stalin's political regime. He seeks not only to uncover peoples' states of mind but also to understand their reactions to their volatile social and political environment.

Employing recently opened party, military, and secret police archives in Moscow and in Kyiv, he examines the complex attitudes of the population of Ukraine in six long chapters. The first describes his methodology, the Western and post-Soviet historiography concerning these issues, and the sources of his research on public opinion in Soviet Ukraine. The second reviews the attitudes of members of Ukrainian society toward the changes in Soviet foreign policy, which culminated in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 24, 1939, and the subsequent Polish, Finnish, Romanian, and Baltic military campaigns of 1939–40. The third chapter discusses the combat readiness and the morale of the Red Army during these invasions. The fourth concerns itself with the incorporation of the majority Ukrainian-speaking territories of eastern Poland into the USSR in 1939. The fifth chapter treats Ukrainian society's assessment of the Soviet regime's social and economic policies in the 1930s. The sixth analyzes Ukraine under the influence of totalitarian ideologies and the formation

of a Soviet Ukrainian identity within the framework of a new Russocentric Soviet patriotism. Each of these chapters might have become a separate monograph.

Throughout this book the author presents a nuanced approach to the turbulent past, as when he comments on the annexation of Poland's Ukrainian-speaking territories to the USSR in September–November 1939: "Although a positive achievement for Ukrainians ... this happened at the expense of an independent Poland" (p. 11). He graphically describes Soviet anti-Polish actions and the executions of approximately Five Hundred Polish soldiers who surrendered to Soviet troops as revenge for the 1920 Polish "victory on the Vistula River" and as a dress rehearsal for the 1940 Katyn massacre (p. 157). Because the Soviet military did not secure the newly acquired areas fast enough, tensions in the countryside exploded and Ukrainians and Poles started to slaughter each other before the Soviets established effective control over the region. According to Hrynevych, Ukrainians sent from Soviet Ukraine to Galicia brutalized the Poles more than the local Ukrainians (p. 246). The author, moreover, points out that western Ukrainians, when comparing Soviet troops with Polish or German soldiers, assessed Soviet fighting forces as the worst- dressed, worst-equipped, worst-fed, and worst-disciplined (pp. 178–79, 181, 182, 185). His coverage of the rise of anti-Semitism in the USSR and in Ukraine in the late 1930s is first rate, as is his assessment of Ukrainian national consciousness on the eve of the war.

The author's use of archival and electronic sources, his careful reading of Western and post-Soviet historians, and his sophisticated assessment of the multiplicity of reactions to the Stalinist order make this book an extraordinary one. As a combination of monograph and survey, this Ukrainian-language book is not unlike Anne Applebaum's *Gulag,* her *Iron Curtain,* or Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands* and deserves to be published in an English translation. Following the model of an English-language trade book, he provides a superb collection of photographs and political cartoons from inside and outside the USSR highlighting the issues he discusses. Hrynevych also includes an excellent set of vivid anecdotal excerpts from recently published diaries and memoirs, as well as those from the archives.

In his conclusion, the author asserts that the Soviet propaganda machine could not neutralize a wide range of opinions and attitudes (Stalinist, Trotskyist, Bukharinist, fascist, populist, anticommunist, religious, and so on) which circulated in Ukraine on the eve of the war. According to the Soviet census of 1939, two-thirds of the population of Ukraine lived in the countryside and most still retained memories of the government-induced famine of 1932–33, which starved millions and which traumatized the survivors. Many of the millions who had migrated from rural areas to the cities in the 1930s also remembered the tragedy and blamed the regime. The decline of the standard of living at the end of the 1930s and the inflationary pressures induced by the military campaigns of 1939–40 reinforced anti-Soviet ideas and pro-German sympathies. "It's worse to live in the USSR than in the capitalist countries," Hrynevych quoted one Red Army soldier from the late 1930s (p. 370). Most of those hostile to collectivization and to the Soviet regime anticipated a major international conflagration, which they hoped would end the collective farm system and perhaps even the communist regime itself.

Inasmuch as Hrynevych's book is based mainly on the NKVD investigative reports of the local population and the military assessment of its officers and rank-and-file conscripts, his work raises an important question—how pervasive and how fluid were these critical thoughts in Ukraine? The author excels in showing us the ambivalence and confusion in peoples' reactions to Soviet policies, but he—and he will be the first to admit this—cannot tell us how widespread these ideas were or how they evolved over time. Nevertheless, he provides the reader with convincing evidence about the pervasive discontent with the regime in Ukraine, which led to catastrophe after catastrophe after the German invasion.

George O. Liber, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Shrayer, Maxim D. *I Saw It: Ilya Selvinsky and the Legacy of Bearing Witness to the Shoah, with Translations of Major Works*. Studies in Russian and Slavic Literatures, Cultures, and History. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013. xx + 326 pp. $59.00. ISBN 978-1-61811-307-8.

What does it mean to bear witness to the Shoah? What does it mean to bear witness to the genocide of Jews in the Soviet Union? These two questions are at the center of Maxim Shrayer's illuminating study of the Jewish-Russian poet Ilya Selvinsky's work and biography that combines literary analysis with historical and biographical research. Shrayer excels in his response to questions that have occupied, with increasing force since the Soviet Union fell apart in the 1990s, scholars of Soviet-Jewish history and of the Nazi genocide in German-occupied Soviet territories. The crux for the latter achievement is a detailed reconstruction of the effects that the poet's account of the genocide had on the larger public and on his own life and career.

The cover photo, showing the site of a mass-execution of seven thousand Soviet citizens, primarily of Jewish nationality, near the Crimean city of Kerch, is a cogent representation of what it means to confront the history of the Shoah in the former Soviet Union: the observer encounters a natural ravine near a settlement that became a mass grave. The shadows of the photographer and two other visitors meld into the site—visiting the places of massmurder endangers one to unwillingly step on gravesites. Unlike the extermination camps of Poland, the places of death are often unmarked and indistinguishable. The Shoah in the USSR took place in and near the victims and their neighbors' homes and it was embedded in a war that affected the whole population, albeit in different ways.

In January 1942, Selvinsky stood at the same site and looked at hundreds of corpses, murdered by German troops shortly before Soviet troops liberated the area temporarily. The poem "I Saw It" reflects the poet's shock and struggle to make sense of the sight. Though describing the dead and what has been done to them, he contends, he fails to convey what he sees: "no language has been devised." Published shortly thereafter in a number of Soviet newspapers, the poem testifies to one of the earliest contacts of the Soviet Army with the mass murder of Soviet civilians and, specifically, of Jews. Selvinsky, an embedded journalist, thus was one of the first, if not the first, writers to address the Shoah and the struggle to witness it. He was, later on, punished for doing so, losing the chance to participate in the Soviet Army's struggle that he eagerly supported, and losing acclaim for his poetry that, arguably, must be counted among the finest of Soviet provenance.

In four chapters Shrayer traces Selvinsky's life and work, beginning with his writings in the prewar USSR, to reconstruct the peculiar trajectory of a promising poet's dramatic loss of recognition by both the state apparatus and colleagues and disciples. The second chapter shows, in meticulous detail, why and how Selvinsky was demoted to an existence at the fringes of the literary establishment in late 1943. At a time when Soviet troops had achieved crucial victories and were on the advance against the German invaders, the government scrambled for support among the Soviet population. Singling out Jewish suffering, official logic claimed, may have undermined this support. Selvinsky, a proven messenger of the Shoah, was thus silenced. Through a sophisticated literary analysis of two other poems, coupled with a detailed analysis of political trends in wartime Soviet society that is based on archival research and an incisive reading of current scholarship on Soviet policies, Shrayer brings to the fore the dynamics of censorship that tries to send messages while veiling them from public scrutiny. "I Saw It" was too popular to allow for public condemnation. Instead, Selvinsky was accused of slandering the Russian people, that is to say blamed for not reproducing the rhetoric of overall Soviet heroism and praise of Stalin's leadership, in his poems "To Russia" and "To whom Russia sang a lullaby." Moreover, Shrayer skillfully shows (even to readers not trained in literary analysis) that these two poems reference the outsider status of the writer and of the Soviet "Other" more generally, providing further grounds for dismissal from a position that allowed him to impact popular and public debate.

The book is valuable to broad audiences interested in the history of the Holocaust, the history of Soviet Russian-Jewish literature, and the literature of the Holocaust. As the first study of a Soviet-Jewish poet's career who publicly spoke about the Holocaust, the book is an important contribution to recent efforts to scrutinize how the Shoah was represented and perceived in the

Soviet Union. This new perspective, taken up by Harriet Murav, Olga Gershenson, Jeremy Hicks, David Shneer, and others, traces how the Nazi genocide is reflected in, and has impacted, cultural production in Soviet society. These scholars' analyses of artifacts that had a deep impact on large parts of the Soviet population, and how they were perceived by the leadership, are productive for an understanding of how Soviet citizens reacted to, remembered, or reconfigured the murder in their midst.

The quality of Shrayer's book would have deserved greater editorial care by the publisher, though this flaw does not diminish the overall value of the publication. One sincerely hopes that the book will appear in Russian to help reinstate Selvinsky, his work, and the memory of the Nazi murder of Soviet Jews as significant parts of the Russian, Soviet, and Jewish history and culture, of which the poet forms an important part.

Anika Walke, Washington University in St. Louis

Kozlov, Denis. *The Readers of* Novyi mir*: Coming to Terms with the Stalinist Past*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013. x + 431 pp. $55.00. ISBN 978-0-674-07287-9.

An unlikely source has given rise to a rich and stimulating work. Using three thousand of the twelve thousand letters in the archive of the journal *Novyi mir*, Denis Kozlov has traced the development of political engagement among Soviet citizens during the Thaw of the 1950s and 1960s. For the author, modern Russia has been a "literature-centric" society, and *Novyi mir* represents a Soviet-era version of a "thick journal" from the nineteenth century. Ironically, in view of its eventual role as challenger to party-line orthodoxy, *Novyi mir* benefited from Stalin's support in the years after the Second World War, which happened to coincide with an unprecedentedly intense thirst for literature among the Soviet public. As a result, the journal began experiencing growth in its subscriptions, offices, and staff.

Kozlov's book is logically and helpfully organized around a series of episodes—each given its own chapter—that helped shape *Novyi mir* as a pillar of independent thought and, at the same time, nurture a public desire to reckon with the legacy of Stalinism. The first was an article by writer Vladimir Pomerantsev from late 1953 that called for "sincerity" in literature as opposed to the blatantly artificial concoctions of Socialist Realism. Sincerity, notes Kozlov, became a code word for the entire Thaw era. A prominent aspect of the way in which letter-writers reacted to the Pomerantsev article—and, more specifically, to the official campaign against him—is the language used to express their ideas. Even though most correspondents supported Pomerantsev and denounced his critics, they tended to do so in terms that were redolent of the Stalin era. As time went by, and as letter-writers grew bolder in their willingness to tackle the worst excesses of Stalinism, their language became increasingly liberated from the past, a phenomenon to which Kozlov pays particular attention throughout the book.

In subsequent chapters the author deals with readers' reactions to *Novyi mir*'s serialization of Vladimir Dudintsev's novel *Not by Bread Alone* and its withering portrait of entrenched bureaucrats; the publication abroad of *Doctor Zhivago* and the subsequent awarding of the Nobel Prize to its author Boris Pasternak; Ilya Ehrenburg's memoir *People, Years, Life*—also published in *Novyi mir* during the first half of the 1960s—which cautiously began shedding light on the Stalinist terror; Solzhenitsyn's ground-breaking depiction of the camp experience in *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*; the unfolding of the Siniavskii-Daniel' trial and corresponding concerns about legality, democracy, and human rights; and literary critic E. V. Kardin's exposé of the politically designed mythmaking behind an iconic tale of World War II valor. Figuring heroically in many of these episodes is Alexander Tvardovskii, whose second editorship of *Novyi mir* (1958–70) became the journal's "glory period." Kozlov's portrait of the editor is incisive and touching. As this essentially cautious man of letters grew more committed to dealing with the dark side of Stalinism, Kozlov

shows how he sought to publish only "human documents" that used individual experiences to illuminate the larger historical context.

Kozlov's use of readers' letters is both judicious and creative. While not overplaying his hand, he makes a convincing case that at least the "literature-centric" part of Soviet society was expanding its political as well as ethical horizons while evolving a language appropriate to those goals. Perhaps the use of tables would have enabled him to drive home more effectively some of his points about the numerical significance of the letters over time. The author's archival research is enhanced by a thoroughgoing familiarity with the secondary literature. Moreover, his writing makes this monograph a particular pleasure to read. In sum, Kozlov's book represents a major contribution to the scholarship on the Thaw and Soviet cultural history more generally.

James H. Krukones, John Carroll University

Kotliarchuk, Andrei. *"V kuznitse Stalina": Shvedskie kolonisty Ukrainy v totalitarnykh eksperimentakh XX veka*. Istoriia Stalinizma. Moscow: Rosspen, 2012. 222 pp. $19.00. ISBN 978-5-8243-1684-1.

This book explores Stalinism as political-ideological and sociocultural phenomenon, provides a case study of an ethnic minority (Swedes in Ukraine, and investigates the process of the transformation of ethnicity under changeable conditions. Because Stalinism already has been thoroughly discussed in the Russian- and Ukrainian-language literature, Andrei Kotliarchuk uses on it mainly as context that impacted processes occurring within the Swedish ethnic community. This explains the omission of many details regarding the reality of Stalinist Ukraine: the material Kotliarchuk presents on Stalinism is sufficient to convey the destructive influence of its strong authoritarianism and the obviously negative markers deep-rooted in Communist ideology.

Kotliarchuk skillfully uses Foucault's theory of "forced normalization" and Melucci's concept of "collective identity changes" to explain both the appearance of a Swedish ethnicity in Ukraine as well as its subsequent transformations (p. 20). A minority group marked by a strong collective identity and enjoying a long history of juridical and economic privileges and administrative autonomy, Ukraine's Swedish community was subjected to an extended social experiment aimed at transformation it into a community fully loyal to a new (Communist) authority. The result of this social experiment, Kotliarchuk concludes, was that the descendants of the Swedes lost their Swedish ethnic self-consciousness, and that the changes to their collective identity intensified their transformation into *Homo sovieticus* (p. 201).

In spite of all the social, ideological, and political experiments, however, traces of Ukraine's Swedish community still can be found in present-day Ukraine. The Ukrainian census of 2001 revealed that, of the 111 people of Swedish ethnic origin, 18 still speak Swedish, and in the village of Zmiyivka, where descendants of Swedes currently live, traffic signs carry Swedish, and tombstones in the local cemetery carry Swedish epitaphs. Granted, these markers are few, but they play a significant role in the preservation of historical memory and visualization of Swedish ethnicity, particularly in light of the complicated and at times tragic plight of Swedish settlers and their descendants on the territory of the former Soviet Union, who had to endure "Sovietization," "Ukrainization" (chap. 1), being branded as "Swedish enemies and spies" (chap. 3), and, finally, deportation to and "special-settler status" in the Stalinist Komi-Gulag after World War II. One would think that such dreadful twists and turns of fortune would have totally eroded Swedish ethnicity in a part of the world so far from Sweden, but when Sweden's King Carl Gustaf XVI paid an official visit to Ukraine in October 2008, the community was able to demonstrate its survival.

Kotliarchuk does an admirable job of framing the transformation of Ukraine's Swedish community within both the internal and external sociopolitical landscape. He is especially strong when discussing how Swedish settlers first appeared on the banks of the Dnepr River and why they migrated between Sweden and the USSR in 1929 (pp. 10–15). He offers illuminating context for

the Soviet-Ukrainian project "From foreign settlers to national minority," which attempted to construct a four-fold consciousness—Soviet, Russian, Ukrainian, and Swedish (pp. 24–63 and 90–104). He also investigates the use of terror as a social-engineering method in a limited social and cultural space—in Soviet-Ukrainian village of "Staroshveds'ke" (pp. 153–76). And, finally, he details how the Ukrainian Swedish community served as a channel through which information about the real situation in the USSR, especially the Famine in Ukraine, could seep out to the wider world (pp. 104–15).

The main drawback to this volume is the author's failure to acquaint himself fully with the existing literature. Kotliarchuk is wrong to state that "the history of ethnic minorities in contemporary independent Ukraine is on the periphery of scientific search" (p. 10). In fact, there are several research centers engaged in precisely this type of work; roughly a dozen journals are publishing articles on the topic; numerous theses in Ukrainian ethnology, history, and sociology are being defended; the topic is the point of discussion at scientific congresses, specifically those sponsored by the Sociological Association of Ukraine; and numerous monographs on this exact period have been published.

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Bullough, Oliver. *The Last Man in Russia: The Struggle to Save a Dying Nation*. New York: Basic Books, 2013. vi + 284 pp. $26.99. ISBN 978-0-465-07498-3.

This book is a journey, in which Oliver Bullough follows the steps of Father Dmitry Dudko throughout his life (1922–2004) and, in an even bigger way, follows the fate of Russia and its people. The title itself warns the reader about parallels with George Orwell's book, *1984*, which was originally titled, *The Last Man in Europe*. In the Orwellian novel, the protagonist, Winston Smith, is rising to rebel against the hypocritical system created under the watchful eye of Big Brother, only to be caught and reeducated by the KGB. This is pretty much the story of Father Dudko. He was born into a peasant family, west of Moscow. His father was arrested in 1937 for refusing to join a collective farm. Dmitry himself was accused of being involved in anti-Soviet propaganda and arrested in 1948—in reality, his crime was writing religious poetry. He was released eight years later, and finished his studies at a Russian Orthodox seminary.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, Dudko attracted a lot of intellectuals to his parish by connecting to the people's hearts and needs rather than preaching Soviet-style prescribed dogma. He had many followers, not only among the Russian Orthodox, but also among Jews, and free-spirited people in general. Unfortunately, many Russians were filling their spiritual vacuum with vodka, but there were a few looking for real values. Father Dudko created a unique circle of people who felt spiritually free even under the harsh Soviet dictatorship.

This could not go long without being noticed by the KGB. Father Dudko was arrested in the winter of 1980; his followers rallied for his release. The dawn of 1980s was a tough period for dissent in Russia. The relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States reached an ultimate low after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979. The author of this review was among the founding members of an independent peace group in the USSR that was launched in summer of 1981. We were known as the Trust Builders (Group for Establishing Trust between East and West). The tremendous pressure that was applied by the KGB was felt in all circles of dissent. This heavy pressure led Father Dudko to give in in a major way. Not only did he denounce his previous activity as harmful to the State, but he also became a spokesman for the State and the KGB.

Bullough tries to comprehend how this transformation is possible. He again turns to Orwell, where the interrogator declares to Winston Smith: "When finally you surrender to us, it must be on your own free will. We do not destroy the heretic because he resists to us: so long as he resists us we never destroy him. We convert him, we capture his inner mind, we reshape him" (p. 198). Indeed, Father Dudko was reshaped, became highly nationalistic, and blamed the Jews for all the ills of

Russia. How did this happen? In short, it is very difficult to go against the current. Russian people were used to bowing to authority. Father Dudko accepts his KGB interrogator as his brother. Here, another parallel comes to mind: Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* (1935), where the central character, Cincinnatus, becomes very close to his executioner. Yet there were people who did not compromise. They were few, to be sure, but they did exist.

The fate of Father Dudko is tragic, but even more tragic is the fate of Russia as it is shown in Bullough's work. Russia shares the spiritual and physical death of Father Dudko. With a shrinking and aging population, Russia is a "dying nation." The fact that Russia has a total fertility rate below replacement level is not unique; many European countries, including Japan, are in the same category. Driven by modernization, and the changing role of women, fewer babies are born in many advanced societies. But Russia beats these countries by short longevity and high death rates, particularly among men of working age. These are not signs of modernization but of sickness; and the numerous ghost towns with boarded up villages that dot Russia's landscape bear witnesses to this process.

What is the diagnosis? The whole nation is on a drunken rampage and literally killing itself. Just as Orwell's characters had a daily gin intake, Russians have their vodka to drift away from reality. Following findings of Russian sociologists, Bullough writes: "The situation is apparently past the point when diagnoses like drinking, binge-drinking, or perhaps even alcoholism reflect the true meaning of the problem. What is going on today is more aptly described as "pervasive human degradation" and "profound degeneration of a genetic pool" (p. 215).

Bullough's last chapter, "Spring?" has a question mark. Indeed, is spring coming to Russia? Is the new shrinking generation of youngsters capable of building new society, not a society of masters and slaves but of free people? I am not sure Bullough has the answer, and neither do I.

The Last Man in Russia is a brilliantly written, heart-breaking book that unveils Russia's tragic fate through testimonies and observations while offering analysis alongside broad historical narrative.

Olga Medvedkov, Wittenberg University

Hewitt, George. *Discordant Neighbours: A Reassessment of the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-South Ossetian Conflicts*. Leiden: Brill, 2013. 389 pp. $152.00, ISBN 978-90-04-24892-2.

After the 2008 war in South Ossetia, asserting the relevance—or even existence—of separate Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-South Ossetian conflicts, as opposed to a single Georgian-Russian conflict, was quite unpopular in many Western analytical (and especially policymaking) circles. Next to the easy reading of the ready-made script of Russian neoimperialism on offer from President Mikheil Saakashvili's administration in Georgia, trying to discern distinct Abkhazian or South Ossetian concerns, agendas, or grievances was definitely the more onerous option, especially without actually going to Abkhazia or South Ossetia. Having survived the wars of the early 1990s and two decades of excommunication from the international community, Abkhazia and South Ossetia now found themselves in the unenviable position of being all but invisible in the flurry of post-2008 commentary.

Hence the reassessment in the title of this volume, written by a leading specialist in Caucasus languages and prominent advocate since the early 1990s for the Abkhazian cause. This book is written as a corrective to what the author decries as Western naïveté and misplaced faith in Georgian leadership and democratic credentials, insufficient acquaintance among international audiences with the virulence of Georgian nationalism in the late 1980s and, consequently, the resulting insecurity experienced by minorities in the Georgian republic, and overemphasis on Russia's role in the conflicts and determining their outcomes. Hewitt's goal is to reinstate Abkhazian and South Ossetian voices and provide context for internal Georgian debates, which in the author's view has been absent, by making full use of Georgian-language sources. Therefore, this book promises a

long overdue counterpoint to the typically superficial treatment of local conflict drivers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

It is a shame, therefore, that the reassessment offered does not go as far, or as deep, as it might have done. Hewitt fearlessly dispenses with any theoretical concerns in the preface, promising the reader that this book will be a "wholly theory-free zone", a pledge on which he makes good. Rather, the guiding animus of this book is that "facts, as facts, need to be made known, especially when they have been so often deliberately distorted, misrepresented and misreported over the years" (ibid.). Beyond their deliberate distortion, the slipperiness of facts in a context of conflict is a possibility that is not broached here. The nature of the reassessment on offer, therefore, is not methodological or of theoretical cause and effect, but of perspective: this is a book written from the perspective of an ardent advocate of Abkhazian and South Ossetian independence from Georgia, and everything flows from this premise.

This approach implies a kind of methodological cost that becomes more apparent as one reads on. *Discordant Neighbours* does not engage with the existing social science literature on the conflicts and does not offer any theoretically informed socioeconomic, institutional, or geopolitical analysis. There is no overarching framework, other than (presumably the author's) common sense and, at various points, what appears to be close to a "national character" explanation of ethnic conflict focusing on negative traits in the Georgian national character. This makes this book's contribution to the wider social science literature on the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-South Ossetian conflicts difficult to identify. Instead, the book is structured as an ongoing chronology of events, with the narrative emphasis consistently drawn to key factual misrepresentations in (particularly) Georgian-Abkhaz affairs, in order to correct them, and put the record, as the author sees it, straight. As a result, it is the polemics and musings of nationalist intellectuals to which Hewitt is repeatedly drawn, rather than cause, effect, or intervening variables.

Those who know Hewitt's earlier articles on the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict will find much that is familiar in the first hundred-odd pages. He charts a narrative of the Georgian colonization of Abkhazia, understood as a separate national homeland since ancient times. While Hewitt rightly rebuts, as Kevin Tuite and others have done, spurious Georgian theories of the Abkhazians' non-indigenousness, there is a complexity and fluidity to the historical relationship between Abkhazian and Georgian polities and elites that the modern ethnic categories around which this narrative is structured cannot capture.

Moving to the 1980s, the author makes ample use of Georgian written sources of the era. Sure enough, there are rich pickings in the immature imaginings and condescending attitudes of many in the Georgian intellectual establishment from the late 1980s and early 1990s, cited here at length. Unfortunately, there is no effort to unpack, deconstruct, or explain the genesis and dynamics of virulent nationalism; here one finds only refutation. The use of local Georgian-language sources dries up considerably in later chapters, which rely mainly on internet sources. There is no evidence in the text of fieldwork or data-gathering in Georgia after the early 1990s. This means that the voices of those many Georgians soberly reflecting on the course of their nation's history, especially in the post-2008 period, are absent from these pages.

The principal contribution of this book is in the rich array of Abkhazian sources referenced throughout. The author is indeed in a unique position to deploy these sources, and he does so with aplomb. While undoubtedly romanticizing the Abkhazian cause, the author presents a clear picture of consistent, consecutive Catch-22 situations that Abkhazians have confronted since the late 1980s, and their, on the whole, skilful and resourceful responses to them. However, some readers, and not only Georgians, may find the persistent disdain toward Georgia and "the Georgians" and the occasional triumphalism permeating this book not only off-putting, but compromising with regard to the many arguable, but nonetheless valid, points being made.

An aspect of this book sure to arouse controversy is its treatment of Russia's role. While the corrective to the exaggerated emphasis on Russia's role in the 1990 wars is justified (and shared by many other scholars of Georgia's 1990s conflicts), this approach is less adequate when it comes to the 2008 war in South Ossetia. Hewitt's assessment of this war as "one more reckless gambit by a

flawed Georgian leader ... [ending] in total and ignominious failure" surely captures only one part of the story; there is seemingly no desire here for a fuller picture (p. 255). The notion of Russia "making amends" for Stalinist wrongs with its recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia stretches credulity and speaks of an ideological, not analytical, approach (p. 356). Indeed, Hewitt's account reverses the reification of Russia's role in many pro-Georgian accounts: Russia is as invisible here as Abkhazia and South Ossetia are in the works of those authors he has set out to reassess. The causal equation is correspondingly incomplete.

Sadly, South Ossetia is very much the runner-up in the allocation of space and detail in this volume. There is no evidence to suggest that the author has conducted fieldwork in the territory, and he largely restricts himself to citing from secondary literature in those parts of this work dealing with South Ossetia. A properly contextualized and empirically rich history of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict, always the more elusive and more easily manipulated of the two, has yet to be written.

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Hill, William H. *Russia, the Near Abroad, and the West: Lessons from the Moldova-Transdniestria Conflict*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012. xx + 271 pp. $55.00. ISBN 978-1-4214-0565-0.

This book, a narrative focusing on the southwestern confines of the "Russian space," is an event unto itself: a must-read, full of inside information, for any student or scholar studying Moldova, Transnistria, and de facto statehood (particularly de facto statehood under Russian supervision), and all tinged with an awareness of Russia's perception of the West. It also should be read, and maybe even re-read, by any scholar, student or erudite observer with an interest in Eastern Europe.

As a research volume interwoven with many elements of a professional memoir, the book has a specific approach based on the authors' personal values and formative experiences. One such experience is reflected in William Hill's use of the name "Transdniestria" in the very title and throughout the book in general. A blending of the international "Trans" and Russian "Dniester," which is less and less used by Moldovans living on the right bank of the Nistru River, the author writes that he keeps to this form for reasons of "neutrality, consistency and stubbornness" (p. xiv), which, although not a plea for neutrality, can be attributed to some sort of comfort of conviction among the staffers at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Although neutrality is hard to maintain when dealing with entrenched discourses in a protracted conflict, Hill could have offered more explanatory insights on the use of this most common word of his book, if only because Transnistria is de jure part of Republic of Moldova and could be referred to according to the legal authority's own terminology. A presupposed reason could be the reference to "Transnistria" in Western historiography on the Holocaust, although the author is not explicit about that.

The volume's structure is easily grasped. The first three chapters describe the complex relationship between Russia and the West during the 1990s and first half of 2000s. They bring nothing new to the debate, but they cogently contextualize the main foundation on which the patterns of Russian interaction with the West occurred and the permanent form it took after the series of events now conventionally called the "Kozak Memorandum." The gist of the book comes in the ensuing chapters, where the author transforms the dynamics of the protracted Transnistrian conflict into a barometer of Russia's mercurial relations with the West. The crescendo of events surrounding the Kozak Memorandum of 2003 is described in detail, with inside information to which the common observer normally has no access. The author broadly uses conversations, discussions (closed or otherwise), and personal reports, interlacing these with the visions, ambitions, and interests of Moldovan, Transnistrian, and Russian stakeholders as expressed during the negotiations aimed at solving the conflict. Hill's own contribution to events provides food for thought, eventually compelling the reader to ask to what degree the personality heading the OSCE is shaping the policy

choices of the organization. In this context, a benign bias that threads its way throughout the text stems from the author's civic background. As a citizen of a state which is one of the most eloquent examples of federal republic (the United States), Hill provided input that sought a solution based on the most consensual state administrative platform possible, that is one based on federalism and decentralization of authorities (as seen in the OSCE's eventual proposed agreement).

The author seems to manifest a certain tension toward the civil society of those days, tangentially blaming it for contributing to the failure both to federalize Moldova and to provide the international community with a precedent for solving an ongoing conflict in the post-Soviet area. It would have been very useful to know the author's view on why this society is so fiercely anti-federalist and willing to struggle for Moldova's development as a unitary and federalized state. In this respect, Hill does not pay much attention to identity issues, nor, in particular, to the strategic identity issues of elites on both sides of Nistru River and in Moscow (since the Transnistrian conflict in general and the Kozak memorandum scenario in particular, was and is a cycle of events of mostly Russia's making).

The concluding chapter is shorter than one would expect, given the book's structure, but perhaps for good reason: it is too early to draw any conclusions about the Transnistrian conflict, as well as about Russia's place in the world after the collapse of USSR. The book's final chapter, then, can be completed only after the conflict is resolved. Ten years after the Kozak Memorandum, the conclusions of the book are true as ever, which is striking testament to the intractability of the conflict.

An interesting element is the analysis of the individual. The book itself is an individual-level analysis—the individual as a leader and stakeholder. And there is little hope that we will ever have a similar analysis by protagonists of the Kozak Memorandum which in many respects ran opposite to OSCE mediator document. It would, however, be useful to have accounts by other participant-stakeholders, since in the jargon of conflict analysis in the post-Soviet space the word "Kozak" is an acronym for the (con)federalization *a la russe* of post-Soviet countries. Hill enjoyed the immense advantage of having been in the midst of the very events that, had they been brought to a resolution, might have set a precedent (however questionable) for an entire continent. He officially represented the OSCE—and, one might judge, indirectly the U.S. position—on the conflict, contributing directly to the process that fortunately brought the Kozak Memorandum to a standstill. Imagine how much better we would understand the events of 2003 if other participants in the negotiating process were to publish their own memoirs and accounts. Whether that happens remains to be seen. Until then, Hill's book will remain the central bibliographic reference to the "Kozak Memorandum" and Russia's management of its southwestern borderland.

Octavian Milewski, Black Sea – Caspian Sea International Fund, Bucharest

Social Sciences, Contemporary Russia, and Other

Yaroshinskaya, Alla A. *Chernobyl: Crime without Punishment*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2011. xxi + 388 pp. $39.95. ISBN 978-1-4128-4296-9.

The author, a former member of the USSR Congress of Deputies and prominent environmental activist, revisits the April 26, 1986, accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine. Her book provides a searing indictment of the former Soviet authorities for what she perceives as cover-up and lies following the accident.

Alla Yaroshinskaya's volume covers a broad array of topics in twenty-three short chapters from the immediate aftermath of the accident to the present. They include her initial efforts to publicize the effects of the accident in her native region of Zhitomir in Ukraine, and at the Moscow Congress of Deputies, where Yaroshinskaya walked to the front of the assembly hall and confronted Gorbachev directly.

She outlines how the true impact of the accident—victims, the radiation fallout, the dangers to civilians, the evacuations, and the clean-up work—was systematically concealed from the public. Among those most responsible, she singles out especially Yuri Izrael, chairman of the USSR Committee for Hydrometeorology, Leonid Ilyin, the USSR's chief radiologist, and Anatoly Romanenko, the Ukrainian minister of health.

The book also looks at former Soviet tolerance levels for radiation and the "35-rem-per lifetime" concept, which the author maintains remained in force long after its rejection by the scientific community. Chapters ten and eleven examine the fallout in more distant regions and the origins of the Chernobyl nuclear plant and its defects. Chapter 15, on the earlier accidents in the Urals, is particularly informative.

Perhaps the highlight is chapter 16 on "Secret Documents of the Kremlin," which describes how in December 1991 the country was collapsing and archives of Congress deputies were being loaded onto a vehicle. To preserve the minutes of the secret task force on Chernobyl, she opened a safe and extracted a large pile of documents, but could not find a copying machine. Ultimately, she was able to use the copier at the newspaper *Izvestiia*, thus preserving for posterity important records that included meetings of the Politburo.

The reader can only admire Yaroshinskaya's courage and fortitude. On the other hand, the accusatory invective detracts from the overall quality of the book. Rather than an investigation, it turns into an angry indictment. Subjected to her invective are the IAEA, the WHO, many of the leaders of NGOs who allegedly worked for their own purposes, Valery Gubarev, the science correspondent for *Pravda*, and even Sakharov's widow Yelena Bonner, who seemingly jumped on the pro-nuclear bandwagon.

The tone of the volume may be derived from three of Yaroshinskaya's assertions: "The people's deputies literally had to squeeze the truth out of Yuri A. Izrael" (p. 127); "To preserve itself, the totalitarian system had to do evil and cover its tracks" (p. 256); and, lastly, "The August 1991 coup literally saved those evildoers and other, even more highly placed persons, from inevitable punishment" (p. 293). The stark and unremitting portrait of malevolent officials, and the frequent demands that they should be brought to justice—in the Epilogue she pleas for an international tribunal to charge them with "crimes against humanity"—illustrate the passion of the narrative.

Plainly, Yaroshinskaya has vast knowledge about Chernobyl, but she writes more like a lobbyist than a dispassionate observer. The tone adds to the appeal of the book perhaps, but undermines its value. Twenty-five years on, the Chernobyl disaster is not forgotten, partly because events at the Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan in the spring of 2011 brought renewed attention to the earlier accident. But much has been forgotten, and the author of this book is ideally placed to remind the public of its enormity. One wishes she had done so in a more balanced manner.

David R. Marples, University of Alberta

Ledeneva, Alena V. *Can Russia Modernise?* Sistema, *Power Networks and Informal Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. xvi + 314 pp. $32.99 (paper). ISBN 978-0-521-12563-5.

Ask almost any citizen in the post-Communist world to explain why their country differs from the West and you are likely to receive a single-word answer: mentality. In *Can Russia Modernise?* Alena Ledeneva exhibits a similar penchant for the grand concept, except in this case the explanation for post-Communist distinctiveness rests not on political culture but a peculiar configuration of informal institutions, which she calls *sistema*. In terms of its basic political logic and antimodernizing consequences, of course, Russia's *sistema* differs little from other authoritarian regimes, where authoritative decisions are also made by opaque informal power networks rather than transparent formal hierarchies and competitive markets. Bound to each other out of a combination of personal loyalty, fear, and greed, authoritarian political leaders everywhere insist on maintaining "manual

control" of the system through an arcane array of unwritten rules because they are unwilling to allow citizens to determine elections, judges to decide politically significant cases, or consumers and private firms to steer the economy.

Ledeneva's purpose here is not, however, to locate Russia in the comparative literature on authoritarian regimes but to "explore the daily functioning and mundane practices of Russia's 'state machine'" (p. 1). Where her first two books examined informal practices in the *narod*, this book shifts the focus to the unwritten rules that inform *vlast'*. In her words, "if blat networks subvert the existing [formal] rules of the game bottom-up, power networks do so top-down, by its insiders, on its own field, by its own rules, without checks and balances" (p. 108). Driving all of her research is a desire to understand How Russia Really Works (the title of her previous book), which is a welcome antidote to some of the literature in the field that is theoretically sophisticated but does little to deepen our understanding of contemporary Russia. Although many of the basic contours of *sistema* will be recognizable to all students of authoritarian politics, Ledeneva has performed an invaluable service by unveiling the specific features of Russia's version of "manual control." Even specialists will find useful the extensive glossary of *sistema*-related Russian expressions at the end of the book.

The successful integration here of traditional oral and novel textual sources solidifies Ledeneva's reputation as the leading political ethnographer of modern-day Russia. To expose the hidden world of high politics in Russia, Ledeneva relies on evidence drawn from forty-two in-depth interviews she conducted with high-ranking political insiders as well as innovative analyses of telephone justice in Russia, judicial decisions in British court cases involving prominent Russian litigants, and elements of the material culture of the Russian political elite, most notably the *migalki* (flashing lights on official cars) and the *vertushka* (intragovernmental telephone system). As Dmitrii Rogozin observed, "the cooler the *vertushka*, the more powerful the bureaucrat" (*chem vertushka kruche, tem biurokrat moguche*) (p. 132).

Can Russia Modernize? identifies four distinct power networks, which differ in terms of the frequency and location of contacts, with the latter distinguishing public and private domains. These networks range from the "Inner Circle" and "Core Contacts" to "Useful Friends" and "Mediated, or Periphery Contacts." Because proximity to "the body" still holds sway in Russia, the person of Putin defines the networks, though he is, as Ledeneva and others argue, also obliged to play by the networks' rules, and so his own freedom of maneuver is severely constrained by *sistema*.

To answer the question set by the book's title, Ledeneva is not optimistic about the prospects for replacing *sistema* with a form of rule that accepts the uncertainty of outcomes implicit in formal institutions. She does recognize, however, that the international environment is already eroding some of the pillars of *sistema* through financial integration, technological modernization, and legal globalization. Another threat to *sistema* comes from works like this one, which expose to public view a form of rule that can only thrive in the shadows.

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Hedlund, Stefan. *Invisible Hands, Russian Experience, and Social Science: Approaches to Understanding Systemic Failure*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. xvi + 307 pp. $95.00. ISBN 978-0-521-76810-8.

Stefan Hedlund, a distinguished expert on Russian political economy, has written a quirky, sweeping book that uses the example of the Russian transition to shed light on the causes of systemic failure—that is, in "cases where things go massively wrong" (p. xii).

The book's core mission is to lambast the inadequacy of contemporary social science theory for understanding the complex dynamics of systemic failure. Hedlund argues that the increasing theoretical sophistication and disciplinary specialization of the social sciences neglects to take into account historical and cultural idiosyncracies as well as encourages inappropriate hubris in our predictive capacities. In fulfilling this mission, he promises first to critique the ideology of the

"invisible hand"; second, to ask what kind of institutions might prevent systemic breakdown; and, finally, to suggest how we can improve our theories in such a way that they can better "help in devising successful deliberate intervention" (p. 3). This is an immense analytical agenda, and in practice Hedlund spends most of the book addressing the first of these three intellectual tasks.

He begins by observing that four recent "cataclysmic events" demonstrate the limitations of the ability of institutions either to self-correct or to be corrected through formal policy intervention: the collapse of Soviet power, the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, the global financial crisis, and the European sovereign debt crisis. But the book as a whole focuses primarily on Russia as an illustration of what can go wrong and why social scientists failed to understand it. Hedlund builds on a theory of historical-cultural path-dependence to forge an institutionalist critique of the Washington consensus one-size-fits-all reform agenda and what he calls the "societal default position [of neoclassical economics]—if only all obstacles can be removed, success will be guaranteed" (p. 34). He argues that post-Soviet Russia experienced the vicissitudes of unchecked greed like massive asset-stripping because deregulating the command economy without addressing certain deeply embedded Russia-specific historical and cultural norms encouraged such predatory behavior.

Many others have condemned the Washington consensus and its role in Russia's economic transformation; indeed, Hedlund himself has often written on this very topic. Hedlund's main contribution here is not so much the verdict itself, but the sweeping, meandering, and erudite path through which he reaches it and the implications that he draws from it. The book's first two chapters engage in a close reading and critique of contemporary social science theory, particularly that based on neoclassical economics. The third and fourth chapters examine Russia's pre-Soviet collectivist and autocratic cultural patterns and how they evolved into counterproductive (from the standpoint of economic efficiency) embedded norms under the command economy. Chapters 5 and 6 examine the reproduction mechanisms of such economically suboptimal informal norms, asking how a country can become "trapped in [a] low-performance equilibrium" that stymies efforts to engineer institutional change (p. 153). Chapter 7 ambitiously asks when history matters, finding that "history will matter in a non-trivial sense only when it can be shown to prevent market forces from weeding out inferior institutional solutions, in politics as well as in the economic marketplace" (p. 198).

Hedlund reveals his "scaffolding for a new departure" (p. 267) only at the book's very end, where he calls for bringing back Weber's "economy and society" approach, for complementing deductive modeling with inductive case studies, and for reaching a better understanding of how informal norms can be manipulated both endogenously and exogenously.

He is far from alone in his criticism of the shortcomings of narrowly deductive, model-oriented social science. For example, Hedlund's concerns echo the earlier Perestroika movement in the U.S. political science profession that called for greater methodological pluralism and historical-cultural awareness in social science research. Unlike many Perestroikans, however, Hedlund is still at root a positivist who has faith in the power of causal analysis. In that sense, Hedlund has written an optimistic book: despite the many sins of contemporary social science, he still believes that redemption is possible.

Juliet Johnson, McGill University

Tsygankov, Andrei P. *Russia and the West from Alexander to Putin: Honor in International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. xii + 317 pp. £60.00. ISBN 978-1-107-02552-3.

Andrei P. Tsygankov's substantial contributions to the study of Russian foreign policy have always straddled the realist and constructivist traditions. In this sweeping new volume, he uses his original theoretical vision to argue that the concept of "honor" as a global power explains the broad expanse of Russian foreign policy decision-making from 1815 to the present. He uses this honor-based

framework to explain Russian cooperation, defensiveness, and assertiveness toward the West under several tsars, decades of Communist party rule, and two post-Communist presidents.

Tsygankov's historical cases are fascinating, often utilizing Russian-language sources that are less familiar to the Western audience. Many political scientists and international relations theorists will nonetheless find fault with the book. His thorough literature review develops the concept of honor in depth, but does not define what a non-honor-based policy choice would be. This means there is no way to falsify Tsygankov's arguments; the concept of "honor" is sufficiently elastic to explain almost any choice. Tsygankov also does not explain *why* Russia is an honor-driven society; it may be telling that Mikhail Gorbachev receives short shrift here. Was Gorbachev's willingness to make unilateral concessions toward the West *not* driven by honor? If not, why was his coalition different from those of his counterparts at other times in history? Tsygankov doesn't tell us whether Russia is unique, or whether instead all or much foreign policy worldwide and across history is honor-motivated. His focus only on Russia leaves us without a clear sense of whether the book has generalizable implications for international relations more broadly. In the concluding chapter, Tsygankov discusses the identities of other states today, but never answers the question of whether they, too, are driven by honor.

Tsygankov could have done more to situate his arguments in the broader literature. He wisely points out that it is ruling coalitions, not simply individual actors or unitary states, that bear responsibility for foreign policy choices. Yet he does not reference the substantial literatures on organizational politics or collective action that might have given more heft to this coalition decision-making concept. Instead he dismisses all of what he calls "rationalist" theories (p. 23) for the insufficient attention they pay to honor. This leaves him also dismissing potential tools to understand why honor is such an important driver of coalition politics in Russia. Tsygankov criticizes hardline realist power-politics arguments about international relations as similarly rationalist. Yet his description of what "offensive realists" might think about Russia's behavior toward Georgia in the 2008 border war, for example, is scant (pp. 250–52), ignoring both the nuances of the theories and the detailed evidence they would want to bring to the case. Indeed, many modern realists do not attempt to explain foreign policy, which they recognize can be caused by a variety of complex domestic factors. Instead, they explain the outcomes that occur when states choose to act either wisely or not within the power-based incentive structures they face. Presumably, pursuit of honor might sometimes lead to overconfidence and risky choices, setting states up to fail. It would be interesting for Tsygankov to tell us what kind of honor-based thinking is either appropriate or dangerous for state leaders to follow, and in which circumstances.

This book will nonetheless be of wide interest to specialists in Russian foreign policy. Its scope makes it a useful source for courses in that field. Tsygankov's deep analysis of Tsarist foreign policy decision-making is an especially welcome addition, since most surveys of the Russian imperial era are not focused on foreign policy or relations with the West, per se.

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Pilkington, Hilary, Elena Omel'chenko, and Al'bina Garifzianova. *Russia's Skinheads: Exploring and Rethinking Subcultural Lives*. Routledge Contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe Series. New York: Routledge, 2013. x + 285 pp. $44.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-415-63456-4.

Despite the title, this book is not an overview of skinhead subcultures in Russia. It is an ethnographic study of one particular group of friends in the northern Russian coal-mining town of Vorkuta. Thirteen young men and five women, born between 1977 and 1989, are formally listed as respondents. Of these, several men became part of the "core" of Vorkuta's fluctuating ultranationalist skinhead scene over the course of the research period, which included three stages of fieldwork by the authors and, in part, by El'vira Sharifullina and Ol'ga Dobroshtan: an initial acquaintance in 2002–3 prompted by

a study of drug use, and about two months each in 2006 and 2007. This focus on a small network of young people enables the authors to provide a detailed and multifaceted account whose depth is unrivalled in the study of either youth subcultures or extreme nationalism in contemporary Russia.

Hilary Pilkington sets the stage by discussing the evolution of skinhead culture into a transnational phenomenon since the 1960s through a complex process of borrowing, re-importing, media representation, and transformation. She then discusses the fluid boundary between "mainstream" and "subcultural" lives as well as the relevance of Western (mostly British) conceptions of subcultures to contemporary Russia. Along the way she provides a judicious summary of much of the Russian literature on skinheads—no mean feat, since those publications tend to mix systematic empirical research with conjecture and hearsay, or at least be vague about their sources. One of the dilemmas in the literature on politicized youth scenes in Russia has been the question of whether to treat them as political movements, as street gangs, or as subcultures—definitions that are almost invariably, albeit unproductively, seen as mutually exclusive, even as participants in these scenes are assumed to be comprehensively defined by membership in their respective groups. The subculture label in particular is often used dismissively—"as if branding skinhead a 'subculture' renders it either theoretically self-explanatory or so socially and politically marginal that it does not merit further understanding" (p. 9).

Pilkington, Omel'chenko, and Garifzianova structure their book carefully in order to go beyond mere ascription of this kind. Instead of assuming that being "skinhead" has certain fixed implications, and that skinhead identity is primary for their respondents, the authors contextualize the young people's everyday lives in a declining city with a brutal history and a harsh climate—their fathers absent and/or violent, their job prospects limited, close friendship ties and intense, aggressively masculine bodily interaction their main source of self-esteem and cohesion. The book's second, and central, part investigates "the meaning(s) of skinhead" for their Vorkuta respondents against this background. The authors discuss not only various aspects of racist/neo-Nazi/ultranationalist ideology and situate the sources of the different ideological building blocks, but also strive to identify the precise relationship between discursive expressions of ideology and everyday practices ranging from different types of violence to changing ways of inhabiting subcultural styles and fashioning the male body. Along with the introduction and conclusion, this is the part that should be of most immediate relevance to those interested in violent xenophobia in contemporary Russia. Such readers will relish the empirical richness to which this brief review cannot do justice and, hopefully, feel inspired to carry out research of similar depth elsewhere in Russia. The authors argue strongly and convincingly that there is no reason to view skinhead culture in a shrinking Russian industrial town as somehow less authentic than their equivalents in London and New York. However—and this is my only serious qualm with the book—even though it is true that a study of skinheads in Vorkuta need not be less informative than a similar study in Berlin or Leeds, I would have wished for a more systematic discussion not only of where the Vorkuta group stands in relation to international and Russia-wide ideologies, but also what, if anything, it teaches us about skinheads elsewhere in Russia. What kind of variation is there among skinhead cultures in different regions? Is there anything about Vorkuta that renders its skinhead scene particularly interesting, compared to those in other inhospitable post-industrial towns, or those that are better off? Perhaps it is too much to ask of the authors to supplement their work in Vorkuta with at least cursory first-hand observations from other regions, but failing that, the extent and the precise ways in which the subjects of the book stand for "Russia's skinheads," or skinheads more generally, remain somewhat unclear. This gap between in-depth local fieldwork and (albeit cautious) nationwide generalization, so characteristic of anthropological research in particular, is of course difficult to fill, yet a tentative typology would have helped counteract the rash simplification that the book's title—though not its authors—seems to invite.

However, it is "reflections on the research process," the third part of the book, that is in many ways the most remarkable section. It contains much that is of critical relevance to anyone doing ethnographic fieldwork in Russia, especially as part of an international team, and will perhaps particularly benefit male researchers, who typically face greater challenges in recognizing and

acknowledging hierarchies within such teams and between sociologists and respondents. What makes this part even more poignant and crucial is the fact that some of these respondents had been involved in extreme xenophobic violence, and one female member of the group may even have participated in a racist murder. This adds a twist to the researchers' desire to confront some of the hierarchical relations built into their work in the field and to take their respondents' subjectivity seriously.

Omel'chenko's chapter draws heavily on the reflections of one of the skinhead respondents, who had become "an experienced sociological subject" to the point of toying with the idea of becoming a sociologist himself (pp. 190, 196). In addition to reflections about both sides' gendered attitudes, one observation that is fascinating and relevant well beyond the book's topic is the perception of sociology, by that respondent but also in the post-Soviet context more generally, as "essentially an extrapolation of journalism" (p. 192—or, alternatively, a form of number-crunching). Garifzianova's account of her unanticipated emotional responses to, and involvement with, one of the male skinhead respondents is moving and bold, especially given the usual strictures of Russian academic writing. She relaxes self-censorship, dispenses with claims to urbanity, and takes the serious risk of exposing her own insecurities and contradictions to an extent that researchers usually reserve for their "subjects." The reward, for readers, is an unusually direct and vivid glimpse into the fieldwork experience. I came out of her chapter with a heightened sense of the efforts we researchers often invest into suppressing our emotional entanglements in the field in order to better objectivate our interlocutors. Hilary Pilkington rounds off this section with a discussion of reflexivity and inequality in the team. If this book, clearly a genuine team effort, readily presents itself as such to an English-language audience, that is in no small part thanks to Pilkington's supererogatory contribution in translating her Russian colleagues' chapters into English, thereby challenging Anglophone authors to take Russian contributions to the study of youth subcultures seriously.

Mischa Gabowitsch, Einstein Forum, Potsdam

Pringle, Tim, and Simon Clarke. *The Challenge of Transitions: Trade Unions in Russia, China and Vietnam*. Non-Governmental Public Action Series. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. x + 218 pp. $85.00. ISBN 978-0-230-23330-0.

This book explains how trade unions in Russia, China and Vietnam have adapted to the global economic integration of formerly state-socialist economies since the late 1980s. Their study builds on decades of related research and publications, especially by Clarke, as well as prodigious primary research and field work in all three countries. The result is a densely written, richly detailed account that tells the reader a great deal about how unions are functioning, and how labor is faring, in these countries. It contributes greatly to our knowledge, and is essential reading for anyone interested in this region and/or labor politics, generally. The book's many accounts of specific incidents, conflicts, and resolutions communicate to the reader the concrete issues, discourse, and context of labor in these economies. At the same time, the text makes it rather hard work to find the broader patterns and comparisons among the cases; this reader, at least, wishes there had been more direction and summary throughout the book.

As Pringle and Clarke explain, transitions in Russia, China, and Vietnam have differed both politically and economically. In Russia the monopoly of the Communist party-state ended, giving unions space for initiative, and workers greater organizing rights. In China and Vietnam, by contrast, unions remain under party-state control, and most independent organizing initiatives are illegal (though some are tolerated *de facto*.) The three states also integrated differently into the global economy: after a long economic downturn Russia recovered through exports of energy resources, while China and Vietnam grew through foreign investment in export sectors. These differences produced somewhat divergent pressures and opportunities for unions. Though conservative pressures

everywhere remained strong, activism by workers "from below" served as the main force driving unions' reform and greater responsiveness.

Pringle and Clarke find that Russian unions have achieved more than Chinese and Vietnamese, have more often taken on genuinely representative functions, and have defended workers' interests. The reasons are mainly political: Russia's unions have more independence and, most significantly, independent unions, rising from the grass roots and confrontational in their strategies, emerged to challenge the old Federation. While most of these independents were marginalized, they motivated the old Federation to compete. One chapter is devoted to specific examples of the possibilities and "best practices" found in public and private-sector unions in Russia.

Unions in China and Vietnam, subject to stronger control and shielded from overt challenges, remain more docile. Here most of the conflicts emerge in enterprises owned by foreign investors and employing migrant workers; wildcat strikes were common after 2005. Trade unions typically try to settle such disputes with limited concessions to workers, enforcing legal entitlements but resisting other demands.

The book at the same time makes it clear that differences among the three cases should not be exaggerated. It provides abundant evidence that the collective agreements, which have in all three cases replaced state-determined wages, remain everywhere largely formal and rarely provide more than the legal minimum. Unions in Russia, China, and Vietnam continue to collaborate with state bodies, remain closely integrated into structures of management, and are committed mainly to overseeing workers' formal rights, mediating conflicts, and behaving more like human resource and welfare departments than partisan organizations. They avoid confrontation and at best stand between employers and workers, seeking conciliation and social peace. The legacy of communism, in sum, dominates the present while, in the authors' view, better possibilities for the future can at least be glimpsed in Russia.

Linda J. Cook, Brown University

Gill, Graeme. *Symbolism and Regime Change in Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. viii + 246 pp. $95.00. ISBN 978-1-107-03139-5.

Graeme Gill has written the post-Soviet history of Russia's attempt to *write* a history of Soviet times. On the cover of his book is a picture of Mikhail Gorbachev at the Kremlin Wall, laying a wreath near the bust of Joseph Stalin. If one were to oversimplify but still capture the thesis of the book, Stalin is the elephant in the room, a touchstone for the confusion of state with nationalism, of political philosophy with constitutional government, of executive-driven legislation with a tangle of soviets and committees, and of a strong man who can lead Russians through history's horrors with the (very same) leader who visits horror upon his people.

Symbolism and Regime Change does not pretend to compete with the many recent anthropologies of Soviet culture. Gill looks specifically at "regime," a portmanteau word that includes "government" but implies both transience and tyranny. Because it supplanted a very different governing culture, post-Soviet leadership had to establish legitimacy by inventing a "metanarrative, a body of discourse which simplified ... ideology and acted as a means of mediation between regime and people" (p. 3). That metanarrative confronts a seventy-year period that witnessed the most significant rupture in Russian history since the Petrine reforms.

Gill begins with the visions of Russian leaders since Gorbachev. Boris Yeltsin's "Russia" was as coherent a concept as anyone's, Gill asserts. The Russia that emerged from the pro-Soviet putsch of August 1991 was distinctly nationalist (non-Soviet) and anti-Communist. Yeltsin's implied understanding of the Russian state was remarkably open, but rather than give his vision content, he became embroiled in power struggles with the Duma, reopening rather than solving Russia's historical problem with the legislative function. For Gill, Putin and Medvedev represent, respectively, a

paternalistic and a slightly democratic vision of a strongly centralized government—a return to the Soviet model.

At the core of the book are chapters devoted to three select arenas of image-making: politics, the populace, and the city of Moscow. Gill reconstructs the popular metanarrative by analyzing highly public events of the last twenty years: the marginalization of religions other than Orthodoxy, the debate over Lenin's Mausoleum, and the invention of the National Unity Day, which replaced November 7 with the commemoration of the 1612 uprising against the Poles. Gill believes these contentious events have remained symptoms of, not solutions to, an "identity malaise." In fact, Gill's strongest, unspoken point is that drafts of a post-Soviet metanarrative have never produced more than discrete chapters, authored by a series of ambivalent leaders. Yeltsin's anticommunism provided no useful, stable prototype for a new history. In looking for a pristine origin to replace the Bolshevik Revolution, Putin failed to find a prerevolutionary model that the people would accept, and ended by awkwardly appealing to the baffling legacy of the Soviet epoch. The era appeared free of corruption, but it exalted Russianness without defining it and relied on Stalin, an executive accountable to no one. But since Stalin now stands for terror and repression, "the result is something of a humdrum history in which Stalin, while important, is not exceptional." Putin has reinterpreted the Stalinist period as an epoch in which "key leaders ... have a role to play, but ... fundamental forces shape the direction of developments" (p. 170).

Gill's Moscow chapter relies on the studies in Czapliczka's *Cities after the Fall of Communism* (2009) and *Preserving Petersburg*, edited by Goscilo and Norris (2008), as well as the theory of "place memory" developed by Pierre Nora. Although strong cultural messages have been carried by altering street names, removing statues, and creating new furniture for the cityscape (the rebuilt Cathedral of Christ the Savior and the Victory Park), Gill believes they have all been subverted by a contemporary Moscow topography which at best remains either cluttered or obstinately Soviet.

Following Petr Chaadaev's foundational definition of Russia in the 1830s, Gill seems to make coherence his measure of a successful myth. In his brief comparison with the United States, he might note that the famed stability of our republic's own metanarrative overlies—and perhaps allows for—a remarkable degree of disruption and contradiction. In the same vein, students of Moscow's history may ask if the city has ever presented anything like a unified message, and might suggest that an integrated urban narrative can be built upon an underlying multiplicity of messages (Los Angeles). Before the Revolution Moscow was very close to the hodgepodge it is today, beginning with its iconic square, flanked by a very Russian-looking Kremlin and a most un-Russian 1890s department store.

One cannot fault the book for being exclusively about Russia, but one misses the historical parallels which the erudite Gill might draw upon. In modern Germany or postrevolutionary France, Gill could contrast other nations' efforts to develop a metanarrative following the catastrophic collapse of tainted regimes. The strength of Gill's work lies in its very identification and pursuit of the Russian leadership's most important domestic agenda item today, and for those interested in Russia's policy abroad, it is crucial to know how much of the leadership's rhetoric is driven by domestic consumption.

John M. Kopper, Dartmouth College

Herrera, Yoshiko M. *Mirrors of the Economy: National Accounts and International Norms in Russia and Beyond*. Cornell Studies in Political Economy. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010. xx + 252 pp. $49.95. ISBN 978-0-8014-4585-9.

The Russian economic transition, as has now become clear, was immensely controversial, unnecessarily long and costly, plagued by corruption and scandal, and profoundly corrosive of nascent democratic institutions. Against this pitiful backdrop, Yoshiko Herrera describes an improbable success: the remarkable transformation of Russian statistics to conform to Western norms.

This is an impressive accomplishment of international organization, writ small, and the story of how it took place is more than a contribution to understanding the Russian transition. The book makes a fascinating contribution to the field of international organization.

The outcome of interest appears to be overdetermined. First, some radical change became necessary in 1992 as the system of central planning was dismantled, because continuing to implement the Soviet-era system of full enumeration of economic production was no longer technically feasible. Second, adopting a new set of statistical definitions was logically consistent with the introduction of a market economy, since tracking quantitative production was no longer necessary and market-oriented aggregates were essential for formulating public policy. Third, adopting the System of National Accounts (SNA) was the obvious choice, since it was the consensus international standard for national income accounting; there was no credible alternative with which the SNA had to compete. Fourth, adopting the SNA was the rare initiative on which everyone seemed to agree during the transition; it had supporters across the political spectrum, from Khasbulatov to Gaidar, and early on was codified in law and government programs. Fifth, international organizations urged the implementation of the SNA and provided resources and training to do so, because high-quality data was necessary for their own programming. Finally, the bureaucratic agents in Goskomstat tasked with implementing the transition apparently had no incentive not to do so, and in fact were eager to get on with the business of modernizing Russian statistics as a matter of professionalism. In short, in a historical period where almost nothing went as planned in Russia, every circumstance seemed to conspire to make the transformation of Russian statistics a success.

This case history does not allow us to draw inferences about general trends, or to determine whether any of the factors enumerated above were necessary or sufficient to produce the observed outcome, but it does provide a persuasive illustration of a mechanism of international influence that is often overlooked. At each point, it appears that all of the relevant actors were persuaded that implementing the SNA was an eminently sensible idea. The process of formulating the SNA's standards, which took place in international organizations over several decades prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, was a process of mutual accommodation and information exchange. By the end, everyone was convinced. The decision by Russian authorities to adopt the SNA similarly took place without any opposition. Indeed, at a time when international organizations find it increasingly difficult to overcome entrenched domestic opposition, the case of Russian statistics suggests the virtues of persuasion.

Randall W. Stone, University of Rochester

Luerhmann, Sonja. *Secularism Soviet Style: Teaching Atheism and Religion in a Volga Republic*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011. xiv + 275 pp. $27.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-253-22355-5.

In this innovative and fascinating book, Sonja Luerhmann presents an important and intriguing provocation: what might a study of Soviet atheism reveal about religion in post-Soviet Russia? The answer, Luerhmann suggests, has to do with how Soviet secularist modernizing projects cultivated a particular style of knowledge formation and presentation that has been picked up by post-Soviet religious movements. During the Soviet era, the cultivation of a secular modernity required the development of methods to train Soviet citizens into the appropriate scripts, information, and forms of persuasion necessary to support atheism, what Luerhmann calls the creation of a "didactic public." Post-Soviet religious practitioners have drawn on these rhetorical and representational styles to (re)introduce religious traditions and cultivate followers. Consequently, Soviet-era antireligious approaches have ironically made possible many forms of post-Soviet religious practice in Russia.

To make this argument, Luerhmann focuses on didactic practices among *methodicians*, a term that designated the professionals who implemented cultural and political programing in local communities, typically through formal institutions such as culture clubs, libraries, or similar groups.

Through detailed historical data, Luerhmann describes the creation of pedagogical methods to design, coordinate, and facilitate "didactic events" such as workplace lectures, neighborhood meetings, conferences, literary events, and festivals. Methodicians were responsible for generating both the content of these events and the forms through which they were disseminated. What becomes apparent is that in many cases the form or structure was often more important than the content, a reality that eventually makes it possible for religious groups to borrow the structure for their own purposes. Thus, one of the critical points that emerges is that, despite these similarities, it is inappropriate to conceive of Soviet secularism and post-Soviet religiosity as the same thing, a point that Luerhmann makes by borrowing from Weber's notion of elective affinities.

Luerhmann draws extensively on both archival historical data and ethnographic data that she gathered during fieldwork in the autonomous Republic of Marij El in the Volga region between 2000 and 2008. During the course of her research, Luerhmann visited numerous "didactic events" among a diverse community of secular and religious institutions. This allows her to provide critical detail about Russian Orthodox and non-Orthodox religious communities, including other Christian traditions that are recent arrivals, as well as those with historical roots in Russia but often overlooked in discussions of post-Soviet religious life.

The book is organized around a progression of themes, beginning with an overview of studies of atheism, secularism, and postsecularism that situates Russia within its own historical and ethnographic context and explores how the Russian experience fits within the broader analytical literature on religion and secularism, much of it drawn from recent work in anthropology. Luerhmann then traces out how Soviet secularizing processes were constituted and implemented and how this emphasis on methodological concerns translated into pedagogical practices, followed by a discussion of events that occurred in the Marij El region as local religious and political communities at different moments were closed, opened, and reinvented. Within each section, Luerhmann moves between Soviet-era events and contemporary occurrences, thus giving a richly textured and nuanced historical account.

Luerhmann's ethnography makes an important contribution to studies about the nature of and the relationships between secular and religious movements in Russia. At the same time, its impact will extend beyond studies of religion to shed critical light on processes of knowledge formation and knowledge transmission. In many ways, because Luerhmann does such a good job of attending to and unpacking Russian styles of persuasion, it will be of tremendous value to scholars working on a wide range of topics, from political ideology to forms of aesthetics and representation to institutions and bureaucracies, not just in Russia but across the former Soviet Union.

Melissa Caldwell, University of California – Santa Cruz

Black, J. L., and Michael Johns, eds. *Russia after 2012: From Putin to Medvedev to Putin – Continuity, Change, or Revolution?* Assisted by Alanda Theriault. Routledge Contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe Series. Routledge: New York, 2013. xxii + 234 pp. $145.00. ISBN 978-0-415-69399-8.

This comprehensive overview of contemporary Russian domestic, economic, military, and foreign affairs promises "food for thought" (p. xvii) and delivers a full banquet. The chapters, completed in the middle of 2012, focus on the Medvedev presidency from 2008 to 2012. The authors, all with some connection to Canada, provide useful surveys of their topics that are well written, succinct, and highly informative. The book offers a good refresher course on recent events in Russia and a handy introduction to current academic debates. Since most of the chapters originated as part of a briefing for the Canadian government, the volume provides that rare bridge between academia and policymaking.

While Medvedev was never able to escape Putin's shadow, examining the details of his presidential term is interesting because it suggests what a gradual reformist evolution of the Putin

system might have looked like. More than a year after Putin's return to the Kremlin and the book went to press, such a course seems like the road not taken. For example, Peter Solomon's chapter on legal matters describes efforts to evaluate the December 2010 guilty verdict against magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky as one of the "new sources of policy ideas" (p. 32). Putin curtailed this effort in 2013, suggesting that new ideas are not welcome. Similarly, J. L. Black draws on Russian press sources to lay out Medvedev's efforts to fight corruption and modernize Russia; but again, there is little evidence that Putin has shown any interest in these themes since returning to the Kremlin.

The key questions animating Putin 2.0 are: How does he manage to keep his grip on power in such a complicated country as Russia? And what forces for change will ultimately unseat him? The book does not provide a grand theory to answer these questions, but its competent examination of the details points to the important factors in discussing these issues, providing benchmarks that analysts can use in measuring progress or failure. Joan DeBardeleben's overview of the 2011–12 elections highlights the increased citizen activity that Putin's return to the presidency stimulated and the resurrection of the gubernatorial elections. In a similar vein, John F. Young predicts that "limited political pluralism will emerge from local and regional governments", though he cautions that they will face obstruction from the overwhelming power of the central state (p. 54). Likewise, the need to reduce corruption in the military is crucial for progress, as Roger N. McDermott points out. However, the question posed in the subtitle—continuity, change, or revolution?—is never really addressed, and the phrase "time will tell" (p. 218), or its cousin "remains to be seen" (p. 35), appeared frustratingly often.

Of course, I have a few quibbles. One strange oddity to the omission of a chapter on the energy sector, which is the major part of the Russian economy and, to some extent, shapes its political and social evolution as well (though Vladimir V. Popov's chapter does a good job describing the misuse of Russia's energy rents and the foreign policy chapters address some issues). Also missing is an analysis of the media and the internet, again major factors shaping Russian life, with social networks and on-line news sources a potential source of change in the future (a "revolution stalled" in Sarah Oates' elegant phrase). The chapters about women's rights ("Russia's first woman president"! p. 82) and education reform ("outlook seems positive"! p. 69) are provocative, but what about the North Caucasus, ethnic minorities, immigration, nationalism, and related issues?

Finally, there is not much of a synthesis chapter. With such an excellent collective of authors, it would be interesting to try for a concluding statement that brings together their insights in a more comprehensive way. Such a conclusion could take the form of developing scenarios, trying to compile a list of "drivers of change" that will define the foreseeable future, or perhaps some other approach. Hopefully this collective will reunite for another iteration of their study and take their analysis, and the back-breaking enterprise of edited volumes, to the next level.

Robert Orttung, George Washington University

Menzel, Birgit, et al., eds. *The New Age of Russia: Occult and Esoteric Dimensions*. Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 2012. 448 pp. €29.80. ISBN 978-3-86688-197-6.

The New Age of Russia is a brilliant addition to 1997's *The Occult in Russian and Soviet Culture* and includes work by some of the same contributors. It argues that the occult revival in Russia is "by no means simply a question of popular culture," but rather the result of seven decades of "forceful repression of metaphysical thought in Russia" (p. 14). It reminds the reader that occult traditions did not disappear during those seven decades; there was no radical break. Further, it strongly suggests that Russia's occult traditions are no longer forbidden territory for academic research. With regard to that, however, occult traditions have not truly been forbidden territory for scholars. Research into the *fin-de-siècle*, for example, provides especially rich Russian source material; and, in the West, Will Ryan's groundbreaking work, *The Bathhouse at Midnight: Magic in Russia* (1999), encourages scholars not to avoid what often have been considered specious topics.

The New Age of Russia is organized in four sections. In the first part, “Prerevolutionary Roots, Early Soviet Manifestations,” the topics addressed are the occult in late-Tsarist popular entertainment, esoteric societies in the 1920s and 1930s, early Soviet political occultism, the artist Nicholas Roerich’s social messianism, and Tsiolkovskii’s fusion of the occult and science (which initiated Soviet science fiction and the idea of space travel).

The second part, “Manifestations in the Soviet Period (1930–1985),” includes chapters that discuss the occult revival of the 1960s–80s, esoteric literature from the 1960s–80s, alien encounters in Soviet science fiction, and the possibilities of active Cosmism in a totalitarian Utopia.

In the third part, “The Occult Revival in Late and Post Soviet Russia (1985 to the Present),” studies focus on the esoteric following the collapse of Communism, occultism as a form of dissidence, traditional religion’s resurgence as accompanied by the esoteric and the occult, the new religions of neo-paganism, the occult in post-Soviet counter-history, the current state of Shamanism studies, a second article on the legacies of Nicholas Roerich in today’s Russia, and transpersonal psychology. In the fourth and concluding section “Comparative Aspects, Continuity and Change,” occultism is interpreted as a response to spiritual crisis, a theory initiated by the author’s research and one which has stood the test of time. A second article suggests ways in which Russian mystical literature might be read differently in order to be better understood. The book concludes with Michael Hagemeister’s helpful and carefully selected biography and a brief section about the authors of the articles.

Nearly every author notes that serious occultism operated underground to avoid the attraction of the Soviet regime, under which all forms of belief were considered vestiges of formal social orders. Nonetheless, occultism managed to survive both the Soviet system and the Russian Orthodox Church and its censors, whose beliefs systems, rituals, and iconography are in themselves esoteric. Aristocrats engaged in the occult as popular entertainment as well as to achieve personal results such as healing, foretelling the future, connecting with deceased loved ones, and making wishes.

Particularly fascinating is Julia Mannherz’s chapter “The Occult and Popular Entertainment in Late Imperial Russia,” which ought to be longer. She touches on supernatural theater, the stuff of Parisian *Grand-Guignol* (1897 and after) rather than, say, Faustian themes as produced by V. A. Kazanskii’s theaters in St. Petersburg. There is a place in Mannherz’s chapter for theatrical occultism on the smaller scale of underground cabaret in Russia—a subject that begs exploration. No doubt her research has been expanded in her newly published book *Modern Occultism in Late Imperial Russia* (2012).

The two chapters on Nicholas Roerich, Markus Osterrieder’s “From Synarchy to Shambhala: The Role of Political Occultism and Social Messianism in the Activities of Nicholas Roerich” and John McCannon’s “Competing Legacies, Competing Visions of Russia: The Roerich Movement(s) in Post-Soviet Russia,” make superb use of original source materials and address aspects of Roerich, his philosophies, and his body of work as both serious endeavors and the notions of a charlatan. Neither chapter is worshipful, which is especially important for historians interested in Roerich, who often must wade through the fan mail to get to the guts of Roerich’s life and work.

A fourth chapter of interest is Natalia Zhukovskaia’s “Shamanism in the Russian Intelligentsia (Post-Soviet Space and Time).” Perhaps the most thoughtful question that Zhukovskaia puts forth, now that shamanism is legal, is “Why do shamans choose to form organizations?” Her answer addresses sacred space and cult sites as “protected objects” (p. 339).

My choices for the articles of interest are not meant to slight any of the other articles in this collection. I highly recommended this work, especially for scholars with an interest in the hidden facets of Russian culture.

Kristi Groberg, North Dakota State University