Review of Makarov, I. A.; et al. (2021) Povorot k prirode: Novaia ekologicheskaia politika Rossii v usloviiakh “zelenoi” transformatsii mirovoi ekonomiki i politiki. Doklad po itogam serii situatsionnykh analizov

Skalamera, M.

BOOK REVIEWS

Literature and Fine Arts

Ospovat, Kirill. *Pridvornaia slovesnost': Institut literatury i konstruktsii absoliutizma v Rossii serediny XVIII veka*. Intellektual'naia istoriia. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2020. 480 pp. R600.00. ISBN 978-5-4448-1218-1.

Kirill Ospovat's erudite and clever book productively revisits eighteenth-century Russian literature's connections to social and political institutions. It argues that literature of the mid-eighteenth century, largely functioning at the court, aspired to instill in its audiences new understanding of statehood. It did that, in part, by promoting new ideas about proper behavior—in the first place, for courtiers, but also for all educated Russians. Literature thus had instructional and disciplining functions. Rooted in careful close reading of the key texts of most prominent writers of the time (Kantemir, Trediakovskii, Sumarokov, and Lomonosov), the book convincingly demonstrates their good knowledge of European models, which they adjusted to fit local situation. The book's scholarly apparatus builds on the work of a broad array of theoreticians and literary scholars, both Russian (Lev Pumpianskii, Grigorii Gukovskii, Iurii Lotman) and Western (Walter Benjamin, Norbert Elias, Gigorio Agamben).

Pridvornaia slovesnost' has three parts subdivided into six chapters. The chapters are followed by a list of Works Cited, a name index, and an extended Summary in English (I take the titles of parts and chapters from this Summary). The introduction establishes theoretical premises on which the book's analyses are based. It also provides previews of the chapters.

Part I, "The Principles of Courtly Taste," has two chapters: "'Useful and Agreeable': Poetry, Statehood, and the Court in the Mid-Eighteenth Century," and "An Apology for Poetry: Aleksandr Sumarokov's *Two Epistles*." The first explores normative texts that circulated in Russia in the 1730s–1750s. Ever since Grigorii Gukovskii published his seminal article "On Russian Classicism" in 1929, these texts have been interpreted as manifesting eighteenth-century normative aesthetics. Ospovat's approach is different: he argues that the high number of normative works produced and translated at that time signal their authors' efforts to affirm literature's role as an instrument of social discipline. He thus connects the normative character of eighteenth-century literature with the writers' efforts to compel new norms of social behavior. The second chapter analyzes Sumarokov's two epistles, on Russian language and on poetry, as examples of this kind of social disciplining: the first affirms the crucial importance for courtiers and service nobility of writing well, and the second establishes poetry as a proper pursuit for these groups.

Part II, "The Lyric of Power," has three chapters. The first, "'By Me Kings Reign': The Political Theology of Biblical Paraphrases," explores political functions of the genre often considered to be the most personal at that time. While it is certainly worthwhile to look at it from a different perspective, more solid support for some claims the chapter makes would be welcome. For example, the chapter argues that the 1744 collaboration between Trediakovskii, Lomonosov, and Sumarokov in transposing Psalm 143 was "a poetic articulation of an official political theology" (p. 474). To back up this claim the chapter cites the epigraph from Horace's *Ars poetica* (*Sic honor et nomen divinis vatibus atque / carminibus venit*), which opens the booklet with the three transpositions, and Trediakovskii's similar assertion in the introduction to the booklet, "By poetry poets gained the tsars' favor" (*Stikhami prikhodili piity i u tsarei v milost'*). Yet both statements establish the poetry's supreme significance, not necessarily its political role. Chapter 4 offers a superb close reading of Lomonosov's *Ode Paraphrased from Job*," showing its connections with the contemporary ideas about the state as well as with Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man* and Hobbes's *Leviathan*. Chapter 5, "Acclimation, Allegory, and Sovereignty: The Political Imagination and the Lomonosovian Ode," provides an in-depth discussion of the solemn ode, the genre closely associated with Lomonosov's name. The chapter examines devices the ode uses to legitimize the imperial power and to involve its audiences

in this legitimizing process. Part III consists of one chapter, "Empire, Poetry, and Patronage During the Seven Years' War," and primarily focuses on Elizabeth's favorite Ivan Shuvalov and his cultural projects.

Pridvornaia slovesnost' offers a wealth of material and many convincing readings of eighteenth-century texts. It therefore richly contributes to the field. My one regret is that it mostly neglects eighteenth-century literature's function as a self-fashioning tool. A number of studies (Donna Stanton's *The Aristocrat as Art*, Jonathan Dewald's *Aristocratic Experience and the Origin of Modern Culture*, W. Gareth Jones's "The Russian Language as a Definer of Nobility," to name a few) show that writing in general and writing poetry in particular was crucial for the nobility's self-fashioning both in the West and in Russia. Acknowledging literature's importance in shaping not only public but also private sphere would balance and strengthen this excellent book's main argument.

Irina Reyfman, Columbia University

Vaysman, Margarita. *Self-Conscious Realism: Metafiction and the Nineteenth-Century Russian Novel*. Oxford: Legenda, 2021. 174 pp. $99.00. ISBN 978-1-781883-83-9.

This book develops the newly growing interest in Russian realism and, more specifically, in the question of metapoetics as part of that literary formation. The broader interest is best represented by the formative volume *Russkii realizm XIX veka: Obshchestvo, znanie, povestvovanie* (2020), of which Margarita Vaysman is one of the editors. The focus on the metaliterary aspect of realism is evident in the publication of Vaysman's current book in the same year as Chloe Kitzinger's *Mimetic Lives: Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Character in the Novel* (2021) and Aleksei Kozlov's *Literaturnaia reputatsiia pisatelia-belletrista: N.D. Akhsharumov v 1850–1880-e gody* (2021). All three books have been reviewed by Kirill Zubkov in *Russian Literature* (2022).

The question of metapoetics within realism, as Vaysman points out, has become prominent in view of the outdated assumption that the conventions of realist fiction, emphasizing a close relation between literature and life, were antithetical to metacommentary, which unavoidably questioned that very relation. Recent scholarly work, including Vaysman's book, convincingly shows that realist fiction both in Europe and in Russia did not avoid metacommentary, but rather consistently and variously engaged in it.

In the Russian tradition, Vaysman argues, metacommentary became uniquely prominent for three reasons. First, Russian culture imported aesthetic forms and manifested its importation of the novel by foregrounding metacommentary: this aspect is central to the foundational pre-realist texts, including Pushkin's *Evgenii Onegin*, Gogol's *Mertvye dushi*, and Lermontov's *Geroi nashego vremeni*. Second, the question of literature's relation to reality was crucial during the height of Russian realism in the 1860s, a period when literature played an outsize role in discussions of social and political issues: writers experimented with fiction's resources in representing and changing life. Third, the primary institution of the Russian press was the thick journal, combining news, diverse information, art criticism, and serialized fiction. As writers tended to perform multiple institutional functions, they were conditioned to blur the lines between fictional and non-fictional texts, raising questions as to their respective properties. These trends inform Vaysman's readings of three novels published by writers deeply involved in the Russian press at a key point in the development of realism in 1862–63.

Vaysman begins with Nikolai Chernyshevsky's seminal *Chto delat?* to argue that he relies on metafictive devices in order strategically to create "ontological ambiguity" between fiction and reality in his novel. His narrator repeatedly evokes Chernyshevsky the journalist, engages readers in extra-diagetic discussions, and transparently hints at the writer's own presence, and even that of his wife, in his fictional narrative—all the while continuously commenting on the conventions of art. Vaysman suggests that Chernyshevsky's goal was twofold: to effect political and social change by literary means while also educating readers about the aesthetically progressive ways of relating to fiction.

Vaysman observes a similar strategy in Aleksey Pisemsky's *Vzbalamuchennoe more*. Aiming to influence his readers politically, Pisemsky not only engaged them in extradiegetic conversation but also inserted himself in his novel as a character who reads his own earlier published story and directs his characters in the world of St. Petersburg's press. Vaysman convincingly argues that Pisemsky's meta-efforts intensified in the course of his novel's serialization: as the writer grew frustrated with his own literary status, he increasingly performed as a literary critic and, moreover, as a real-life guide for his audience in his novel.

Vaysman's treatment of Avdotia Panaeva's *Zhenskaia dolia* is different from those above, and highly productive, especially insofar as it addresses women writers' subaltern status during the period. Working within patriarchal narrative conventions, women engaged in continuous commentary on those conventions, in ongoing "underarguments" within them. One of the prominent forms such underarguments took was "narrative transvestism." As women writers, like Panaeva, frequently published under male pseudonyms, the narrators of their novels often performed complex gender ambivalence: they treated themselves, their authors, and their readers, as well as literary conventions, as variously male and female within the same texts.

Vaysman's valuable work on three second-tier fiction writers, along with Kozlov's focus on a similarly second-tier Akhsharumov, and with Kitzinger's readings of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, encourage further and more general scholarly accounts of the ways in which metapoetics worked as part of realism—and, more broadly, as part of the metapoetic aspect in the Russian cultural tradition.

Konstantine Klioutchkine, Pomona College

Andrew, Joe, and Robert Reid, eds. *Tolstoi and the Evolution of His Artistic World*. Studies in Slavic Literature and Poetics 64. Leiden: Brill, 2021. x + 323 pp. $150.00. ISBN 978-90-04-46562-6.

This volume comprises thirteen essays that originated in a 2010 conference held at Oxford to commemorate two coincidental anniversaries: one hundred years since the death of Tolstoy and forty since the founding of the Neo-Formalist Circle. The essays reflect both on a century of Tolstoy studies and on the achievements of that British working group, whose major focus over the decades has been nineteenth-century Russian literature.

The introduction by Joe Andrew offers a brief history of Anglophone (indeed, mostly British) Tolstoy studies since the late nineteenth century. Its major contention is that thematic criticism, particularly focused on biographical and moral issues in Tolstoy's works, predominated until the 1960s, when more formal, text-based approaches gradually came to prominence. This volume demonstrates, according to Andrew, the continued productivity of the formal approach to Tolstoy. The essays that follow largely confirm this claim, with several outstanding contributions in particular showing what close attention to the structure of Tolstoy's works can continue to teach us.

The chapters fall into clusters around several works—*The Sevastopol Stories* (contributions by Donna Tussing Orwin and Audun J. Mørch), *War and Peace* (Jane Gary Harris, Katalin Kroó), and *Anna Karenina* (Deborah A. Martinsen, Diane Oenning Thompson, Robin Feuer Miller, Irina Makoveeva)—with a few chapters devoted to other works (Rose France on *Family Happiness* and Chekhov's *Three Years*, Robin Milner-Gulland and Olga Sobolev on "The Kreutzer Sonata," Joe Andrew on "Father Sergius") or to themes or patterns that run across Tolstoy's *oeuvre* (Eric de Haard on Tolstoy and poetry, Helena Goscilo on the "moral significance" of women's breasts in Tolstoy's writings). Although the essays mostly stay close to Tolstoy's texts, some of the volume's best work examines the connections between Tolstoy and Chekhov. Miller's sensitive essay proceeds in deliberately anachronistic fashion, reading Koznyshev's failed proposal to Varenka at the beginning of part 6 of *Anna Karenina* as if it were a fourth story accompanying Chekhov's "Little Trilogy." This scene overflows with the kind of under-defined meanings (including Tolstoy's most unusual smoking scene) and pained miscommunication (mycological musings that block the words of

proposal) that are typical of Chekhov and seem contrary to Tolstoy's signifying practice. It is as if the consummate Tolstoian novel anticipated the innovations of Tolstoy's successor.

Several of the essays on *Anna Karenina* succeed in making important points on the basis of small details. Martinsen carefully examines the numerous instances when characters' teeth hurt and finds that dental pain serves as an embodiment of the shame of sexual rejection. By focusing on tooth pain, Martinsen shows how the more traditional ethical criticism can be sharpened by close attention to textual details, which signal situation rhymes within the text and invite productive comparison with other works where dental pain is intertwined with ethical choices (Augustine's *Confessions* and Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*). Thompson's chapter, "The Problem of Tragedy in *Anna Karenina*," is more focused than its title suggests, devoting most of its space to a consideration of one of the novel's more neglected characters, Anna's son Serezha. Attending carefully to Serezha's actions, she observes how he inadvertently comes to resemble his mother: "Serezha is attracted to danger—the penknife, the candle and now the train. These shared symbolic links again suggest an uncanny and deep bond between mother and son" (p. 217). Here, too, the fatidic links seem to close in on Anna even as she tries to change things by pushing a photograph of Serezha out of her album using a picture of Vronsky.

Several chapters invite readers to consider, or reconsider, some of Tolstoy's more peremptory creations, where the writer's strong opinions seem to leave no space for interpretation. Millner-Gulland and Sobolev remind us that "The Kreutzer Sonata" remains a deeply puzzling work despite Tolstoy's own attempts to define its meaning. Andrew, in the volume's concluding chapter, offers a careful neo-formalist analysis of "Father Sergius" that comes to some surprising conclusions about the meaning of this ostensibly Christian-didactic work. Earlier in the volume, the valuable chapter by de Haard directs our attention to Tolstoy's neglected verse compositions and surveys his attitudes toward poetry. The novelist's hostility to poetry seems overstated. Tolstoy knew the work of Tiutchev by heart and continued to treasure it late in his life, as attested, for instance, by Aleksandr Gol'denveizer. Nevertheless, he did write striking condemnations of verse as such and objected to it for reasons similar to his criticism of conventional conversation: poetic form inclines the creator of verse to falsehood and insincerity. Genre, meter, and rhyme have as great a role in generating the sequence of words as the writer's intention to express the truth.

This volume has been a long time coming. Some of the papers take into account developments in the last decade of Tolstoy scholarship, while some appear not to have been updated. Another consequence of this lag between original conception and publication is that the volume does not contain work by a single junior scholar (indeed, even at the time of the conference, most of the participants were well-established in the field). This makes sense insofar as the conference was a reflection on past accomplishments, but it is precisely because many of the papers make such a good case for the study of Tolstoy's forms that it would have been nice to see work by some representatives of the younger generation of Tolstoy scholars. Likewise, while many prominent Western scholars contributed to the volume, there are no contributions by scholars based in the former Soviet Union, and only one from the former Warsaw Pact. These concerns notwithstanding, Andrew's and Reid's volume offers a wealth of insightful and informative discussions of Tolstoy's artistic world.

Vadim Shneyder, University of California, Los Angeles

Kitzinger, Chloë. *Mimetic Lives: Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Character in the Novel*. Studies in Russian Literature and Theory. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2021. 256 pp. $39.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-8101-4396-8.

In *Mimetic Lives*, Chloë Kitzinger analyzes the techniques that make characters in the novels of Russian realist titans Fedor Dostoevsky and Lev Tolstoy appear especially "lifelike"—a phenomenon she terms "mimetic life" (p. 36). In an intervention in the theorization of European literary realism broadly construed, Kitzinger takes under scrutiny the idea that this discursive illusion gives novels

a certain ethical power: that their fictional populations, in the encounter with the reader, are effectively real and autonomous, and thus can broaden and enrich the reader's empathetic capacities.

This intervention has particular relevance for the scholarship of Dostoevsky's and Tolstoy's work. As Kitzinger points out, the view that literary characters have some autonomy from the texts that formed them has drawn critique from various twentieth-century schools of literary criticism, including the Marxist, structuralist, and psychoanalytic. But it has held sway via the lasting influence of Mikhail Bakhtin's approach to the works of Dostoevsky. Bakhtin held up the immediacy of Dostoevsky's representations as an example of literature that is extraordinarily "free," making novel-reading, in Kitzinger's summary, "as open-ended and contingent as life with people, and as consequential for the reader's understanding of her own relationship to others and the world" (p. 153). Likewise, early Anglo-American theorizers of the novel including Virginia Woolf, Henry James, and Percy Lubbock saw in Tolstoy's extraordinarily particularized literary worlds a paragon of "novelistic vitality" (p. 10). Kitzinger argues, contra Bakhtin, that the perception of something that looks like autonomous life in the works of these authors is the effect of complex "character-systems" that rely on the novel's status as a closed system and reveal its necessary internal coherence as a discursive object.

Kitzinger makes this argument by way of four chapters that offer illuminating readings of three of the most toweringly canonical works of the Russian canon—*War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*—as well as *The Adolescent* (a novel less favored than the other three, but which has received significant scholarly attention in recent years). Building on Alex Woloch's study of the ethics of attention-distribution in the European realist novel, *The One vs. The Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* (2003), but sharpening his point, Kitzinger attends to the ways that "realist narratives set up their *own* rules" for distributing the illusion of real "life" among their characters, rather than treating "mimetic life" as an "absolute quality proper to every character" (p. 9). Kitzinger's readings are the book's major strength, and they effectively elaborate her theoretical intervention. Her chapters take on each novel as a whole and offer comprehensive articulations of the character-system that each employs.

Kitzinger examines how Tolstoy's schematic system of major families tied to thematic qualities in *War and Peace* begins to buckle under his desire to apprehend the vast particularity of life on a broad and horizontal plane. Despite the author's world-absorbing ambitions, characters major and minor only "live" via the asymmetrical distribution of "mimetic life": "it is the economies of bounded narrative attention themselves that make possible the illusion of a boundlessly living world" (p. 63). On the other hand, the narrative chaos of *The Adolescent* serves in Kitzinger's reading to reflect the disjuncture of modern life—and thus to anticipate a more whole and perfect novel and character to come. *The Adolescent* reveals Dostoevsky's utopian orientation: "Dostoevsky presents that future novel and type as transforming the world they capture and, in turn, the world in which they are read" (p. 95). Kitzinger's reading of *Anna Karenina* focuses on the way that Anna's marked and corporeal protagonicity holds space for the anti-protagonist Levin. Levin's character is meant to maintain an openness that would allow readers to identify with and absorb him into themselves, rather than to observe and contemplate him—in contrast to the relationship explicitly cultivated between the reader and Anna. Similarly, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, the characteristics that define each named Karamazov brother collectively and individually serve to open up space for these characters to be "temporarily abstracted from any kind of trait an omniscient narrator could assign, while still shaping and holding our imaginative attention," which again invites an immediate, rather than reflective, relationship between reader and character (p. 146).

In these chapters, Kitzinger's steadfast analysis aims squarely at demystifying the most mystical aspects of these extraordinarily celebrated works of literature. She reveals the literary-representational techniques through which Dostoevsky and Tolstoy sought to realize their grandest supra-literary ambitions. Ultimately, Kitzinger argues that their novels remain just that, novels, enclosed in their own aesthetic universe because this is all they can be. Precisely the work of making characters that seem to jump from the page with their own living force requires setting up a self-contained character-

system, such that "there is no guarantee that well-made novels will serve any extra-aesthetic purposes at all" (p. 17).

Mimetic Lives convincingly revises many of the most familiar and influential approaches to Tolstoy and Dostoevsky by delineating how the desires of both to exceed the strictures of the novel form kept them bound within it. It is an ambitious and important contribution to the scholarship of these authors and to the theoretical apprehension of European realism.

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Martinsen, Deborah A. *Dostoevsky's* Crime and Punishment: *A Reader's Guide*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2022. xii + 121 pp. $24.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-6446-9784-9.

Deborah Martinsen's *Dostoevsky's* Crime and Punishment: *A Reader's Guide* is a slim but erudite volume for readers and teachers of the 1866 novel. Martinsen synthesizes here the wisdom and experience of decades reading, discussing, analyzing, and teaching the novel as part of Columbia University's Core Curriculum, in her own classes on Dostoevsky, and in her research on the Russian writer's works.

The *Guide* consists of an introduction, five chapters, four appendices, a bibliography, and an index, packed into 121 pages. No word of it is superfluous, and its brevity allows for greater utility. The nine pages of chapter 1 include a brief historical introduction, subsections on reading *Crime and Punishment* as a product of its time and as a Petersburg text, and a helpful list of characters and their names' meanings. There is just enough information to introduce a reader to Dostoevsky and his nineteenth-century Russian context here, and readers are invited to learn more through carefully curated footnotes, which appear on nearly every page. Each of the five chapters is centered on the reader: what themes or ideas the reader needs to understand, which sources the reader might look to for additional information, and how best to guide the reader through Dostoevsky's novel. Following the historical introduction and overview, subsequent chapters focus on specific parts of the book: parts 1 and 2, parts 3 and 4, and, finally, part 6 and the epilogue. The appendices include illustrations and maps, a remarkable chronology of the novel's events detailed down to the minute, an overview of contemporary Dostoevsky studies scholarship on the novel, and a chronology of Dostoevsky's life.

While the *Guide* is not explicitly a manual on teaching the novel, Martinsen provides helpful advice for teachers. Her suggestions are wide ranging and include everything from discussion prompts, to a close reading of the novel's first six paragraphs, to an outline of how to structure a lesson on Part 1 of the novel. Teachers of Dostoevsky's works will find the *Guide* a powerful tool both for developing an overall teaching strategy for the novel and quickly reviewing the important points before class on a busy teaching day. It complements other resources for teaching Dostoevsky and *Crime and Punishment* that have recently come out, among them Martinsen and Olga Maiorova's wide-ranging and encyclopedic *Dostoevsky in Context* volume (2016); *A Dostoevskii Companion: Texts and Contexts* (2018), a volume I co-edited with Connor Doak and Kate Holland that presents primary and secondary sources thematically; and Michael Katz and Alexander Burry's useful *Approaches to Teaching Dostoevsky's* Crime and Punishment (2022), which collects essays on different classroom approaches. Of these four, I believe that Martinsen's *Guide* is best suited for introducing the novel and suggesting a path through the novel and its themes. Martinsen's resources for further reading also point readers directly to these other volumes and their use in planning to teach the novel or for individual investigation.

Martinsen's reading of *Crime and Punishment* draws on her distinctive approach to the dynamics of shame across Dostoevsky's works, *Surprised by Shame: Dostoevsky's Liars and Narrative Exposure* (2003). Her insights on characterization, emotion, and the subconscious are carefully and thoughtfully embedded in her analysis of *Crime and Punishment*. Rather than allowing that analysis to provide all the answers, however, she focuses on the questions that it raises. This gives Dostoevsky's reader, using the *Guide*, agency in their path through the text.

Beyond research expertise, the *Guide* clearly demonstrates Martinsen's generous engagement with the field of Dostoevsky studies. Martinsen, a brilliant editor and interlocutor who brought Dostoevsky scholars together in conversation, has brought these connections to bear throughout the *Guide*, in mentions of others' work in the text, the work's careful footnotes, her overview of contemporary scholarship, and, finally, its considered bibliography. *Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment: A Reader's Guide* is a project Martinsen saw to completion during the final months of her life and it is truly a gift for all teachers and readers of Dostoevsky's novel.

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Bowers, Katherine, and Kate Holland. *Dostoevsky at 200: The Novel in Modernity*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. 264 pp. $75.00. ISBN 978-1-4875-0863-0.

This impressive volume celebrating Dostoevsky's bicentenary does justice to the author's unique genius and offers a compelling explanation for his novels' capacity to remain ever contemporary for successive generations of readers. Ironically, according to *Dostoevsky at 200*, his enduring appeal originates in the way Dostoevsky met a specific historical moment. In the 1860s-70s Russia underwent rapid transformation as a result of Alexander II's modernizing reforms, yet the changes were neither comprehensive enough to satisfy radical thinkers nor timely enough to sync with the quickening pace of scientific progress. The resulting disconnect is the quintessential experience of modernity, which Katherine Bowers and Kate Holland characterize as marked by "a rupture between the experience of the past and the expectations of the future" (p. 4).

The ten chapters of this exceptionally well curated volume converge at the intersection of genre and historical contingency to consider how Dostoevsky's formal innovations emerged in response to the challenges of his time. Such questions require in-depth examination of the historical and literary context. Thus, many of the contributions return to well-trod topics, but imbue them with fresh perspective by asking new questions and deepening our knowledge of Dostoevsky's engagement with "nineteenth-century social change, scientific and economic theories, and the socio-historical development of the literary text" (p. 15).

The introduction invites us to consider that, "In formal terms, the rupture between past experience and future possibility could be viewed as a problem of genre" (p. 5). The volume is exclusively focused on the novel and particularly "on works that fail to conform to conventional generic categories or frames of expectation because of their hybridic, confusing, or problematic form, especially *Notes from the Underground*, *The Idiot*, *Demons*, and *The Adolescent*" (p. 11). Several excellent chapters also focus on *Crime and Punishment*. Meanwhile, Vadim Shneyder's provocative examination of gender and capitalism in the portrayal of the pawnbroker from *Crime and Punishment* and Grushenka from *Brothers Karamazov* is the only chapter to delve into Dostoevsky's final novel. This is by design. As the editors explain, the volume's interest lies in the development of Dostoevsky's thinking about the novel, rather than its culmination. Dostoevsky's genre-bending works like *Diary of a Writer* and his short works of the 1840s also fall outside of the collection's scope. The aim is not comprehensive coverage, but rather depth and originality of the readings, which come together into a thought-provoking conversation.

The first chapter, by Holland, revisits the subject of Dostoevsky's disintegrating duel plots by analyzing "the poetics of the slap" in *Notes from the Underground*, *Demons*, and *The Adolescent*. Holland traces Dostoevsky's scenarios to their literary antecedents and points out that rather than serving as stable references that uphold the values of the aristocratic honor code, the texts Dostoevsky draws on already present a semiotic crisis that is highlighted by his gestural poetics. Sarah J. Young's evocative essay explores "how the relations of self, other, and space are constricted through sense perception" in *Crime and Punishment* and *The Adolescent*" (p. 119). As part of her discussion, Young reconsiders Dostoevsky's over-used motif of eavesdropping as a technique of triangulation

that enables embodiment and shapes character development. In her chapter on *The Idiot*, Bowers reconsiders another common motif—the "uncanny feeling of being watched," arguing that "it signals the beginning of gothic narrative force in the text" (p. 143). Bowers's essay adds new life to the topic of the Holbein painting by integrating it into the novel's portrayal of murder victims as gothic bodies.

The discussions of gestural poetics, embodiment, and the genre memory of the gothic body as an animating force contribute to the volume's central focus on the materiality of Dostoevsky's texts and position it within the current scholarly conversation. Young attests to the issue's importance: "Dostoevsky saw a spiritual existence grounded in the real world, rather than divorced from it, as the solution to the crisis of faith he associated with the age and depicted in his works" (p. 119). This next group of chapters illuminates Dostoevsky's dialogues with contemporary science, which shape his "realism in a higher sense" that is deeply grounded in the material world. Melissa Frazier discusses Dostoevsky's critique of "vulgar materialism" and its proponents, who claimed "matter as the only measure of reality." But Dostoevsky does not reject matter; instead, Frazier argues that he "reconfigures allegory to better accommodate a material world that his Underground Man calls 'living life'" (p. 82). Alexey Vdovin demonstrates how closely *Notes from the Underground* draws on Sechenov's 1863 *Reflexes of the Brain* and argues that Sechenov's treatise serves as a discursive model for the Underground Man's narration. Greta Matzner-Gore elucidates Dostoevsky's interest in statistics to offer an insightful reading of *Crime and Punishment* governed by "a poetics of improbability," which shapes the novel's characterization and its improbable epilogue. "Quetelet and his followers valorized the probable, the average and the ordinary," Matzner-Gore writes. "*Crime and Punishment* suggests, to the contrary, that it is ... the statistical outliers—the odd, unusual, and unlikely—that reveal the true nature of reality" (160).

Frazier, Vdovin, and Matzner-Gore's essays recognize how seriously Dostoevsky engages with contemporary science, even as he resists predictive systems that would reduce humanity to a set of reflexes or calculations. Anna Berman, Chloë Kitzinger, and Ilya Kliger shift frameworks to consider Dostoevsky's negotiation of European novelistic conventions. Berman examines Dostoevsky's resistance to the "genealogical imperative" of the marriage plot in favor of the recuperative bonds of "accidental" families. Kitzinger reads the theme of illegitimacy in *The Adolescent* as Dostoevsky's meta-poetic examination of his eccentric narrative techniques. Kitzinger offers a fascinating rejoinder to Berman's pithy observation that "Russian marriage plots tend to fail" by connecting *The Adolescent*'s theme with Chaadaev's quip that Russians are akin to Europe's illegitimate children (p. 51). Kitzinger explains that the illegitimate child's sense of "rancor and exclusion also signals the bitter national bind of post-Reform Russia as Dostoevsky saw it, faced with the task of reconstructing foundations that it never really fully owned" (p. 183).

The volume's ambitious readings open up to larger questions about the Russian novel's distinctiveness, given its sociopolitical context. Kliger's brilliant essay examining *Crime and Punishment* and *Demons* as considerations of the problematics of autocracy and sovereignty serves as a worthy closing chapter. Kliger's reading casts new light on Raskolnikov's contradictory behavior, explaining that Raskolnikov's need to remain hidden, which contends with his simultaneous desire to be noticed, is predicated on the novel's participation in two different symbolic regimes: the regime of socialization typical for the nineteenth-century novel, and the regime of sovereignty, according to which Raskolnikov seeks to publicly claim the power over life and death. Kliger's reading is emblematic of the volume's approach and accomplishment, as attention to context combines with an innovative framework to open new perspectives on well-traveled texts. *Dostoevsky at 200* offers an impressive array of new scholarship on Dostoevsky and compelling reasons to turn to his novels time and again.

Irina M. Erman, College of Charleston

Layton, Susan. *Contested Russian Tourism: Cosmopolitanism, Nation, and Empire in the Nineteenth Century*. Imperial Encounters in Russian History. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2021. x + 480 pp. $139.00. ISBN 978-1-6446-9420-6.

Contested Russian Tourism focuses on the practice and history of tourist writing in nineteenth-century Russia, primarily regarding trips to Western Europe but also to the northern Caucasus, Georgia and the Crimea. This very detailed account of tourist travelogues and works of literature featuring tourism creates a revealing continuum between now fairly obscure writers and extremely well-known ones. Susan Layton provides a synthesizing narrative about the course of the nineteenth century seen through the lens of travel. The practice of, and debate over, tourism sheds new light on major literary and cultural debates, particularly between conservatives and radicals. Tourism was at first the province of Russian aristocrats like Karamzin, its conventions founded on the example of Byron. The scope of travel broadened to include a wider variety of tourists, enabled by the development of the railway and the expansion of tourist amenities, and impacted by such events as the Crimean War. The meaning of tourism was complex from the beginning, bringing out educated Russians' fraught relationship to Western Europe—engendering a sense of inferiority, especially in comparison to the ur-tourists, the British, but also the potential to build sophistication and knowledge, to become "cosmopolitan" in the main sense of the word, a citizen of the world, although the term itself became contentious. Tourism was accompanied by "anti-tourism," or tourist phobia, the looking down upon "mere tourists" by those who thought themselves superior in education and sophistication. Alignments were not always those one might expect: the revolutionary Dobroliubov felt so drawn to Europe that he (unsuccessfully) proposed to an Italian woman and hoped to stay.

Depending on a reader's particular interest, the amount of detail about certain texts may overwhelm a bit, but the argument restores the influential role of less prominent writers, is inclusive of women's texts and women travelers, and pays attention to the readership of high-profile journals that promulgated tourism, such as *Niva*. The real payoff comes when canonical works are seen in a new context, particularly texts by Dostoevsky, Turgenev, and Tolstoy. Dostoevsky's "Mr. __bov and the Question of Art," from 1861, and his *Winter Notes on a Summer's Impressions*, 1863, are read against the debate about the universality of art, with the first text emphasizing the cosmopolitan stance (contra Chernyshevsky and others) that "'healthy art' fills a universal need for the 'eternal ideals' of harmony and serenity," while the second, *Winter Notes*, is parodic, and instead critiques those who worship Western culture (p. 246). *Winter Notes*, read against the conventions of Russian travel accounts to Europe, in which the art of Italy reigned supreme, rail travel could be seen as either civilized and comfortable or as ruining the pace of travel and destroying the "authenticity" of a given location, and arguments over leisure vs. "edifying" travel, yields interesting new insights. Parodying a panoply of previous writers such as Herzen, Fonvizin, Mikhail Mikhailov, Druzhinin, Panaeva, and inevitably Karamzin and Chernyshevsky, the narrator of *Winter Notes* bypasses art completely as a "badge of nationalist resistance to the 'worship' of foreign culture" (p. 257). Crushed by the nobility of a salesperson, he spends his entire one hundred francs rather than the ten he planned—a parody, it turns out, of Mikhailov's *Paris Letters*, in which French salespeople were gracious regardless of how little the customer spent. Debates over travel literature likewise inform such texts as *The Idiot*, in which Prince Myshkin finds that, contrary to numerous travelogues praising the exemplary qualities of the Swiss people, a local woman who has been seduced and abandoned requires protection from her cruel fellow villagers.

The treatment of travel in *Anna Karenina* is particularly interesting, addressing not just literal travel like Kitty's trip to Soden and Anna's sojourn in Italy, but the tourism of the "foreign prince" accompanied by Vronsky to bear hunts, associations of characters like Stiva, Anna, and Vronsky to European arts and pursuits, and illuminating the contrast between Levin's traditional, Russian estate and Vronsky's, with its accoutrements of foreign pleasure trips abroad. The lens of travel lends new coherence to themes of Europeanness, Russianness, and modernity in the novel.

The book's other main story line is the Russian vogue for travel in the North Caucasus, Georgia, and Crimea. Russia's imperial territory to the south had already been the site of travel accounts by

prominent writers like Pushkin and Lermontov, as Layton had discussed in her previous book. As time went on the Caucasian spas became more of a closer-to-home alternative to European ones, and writers treated the local people in varied ways, sometimes contemptuously, sometimes acknowledging their loss of power, and sometimes as exotic. The location also served to allow middle-class visitors to play the role of aristocratic tourists. Here, too, lesser-known writers played an important role: Lidiia Veselitskaia's "Mimi at the Spa" is far more a model for Chekhov's "The Lady with the Dog," Layton argues, than its commonly invoked ancestor, *Anna Karenina*.

Katya Hokanson, University of Oregon

Dubinets, Elena. *Russian Composers Abroad: How They Left, Stayed, Returned*. Russian Music Studies. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021. xxiv + 362 pp. $36.00 (paper). ISBN 978-0-253-05778-5.

Elena Dubinets begins *Russian Composers Abroad* by staking out her terrain: "Russian classical music is a globally recognized brand—like vodka, caviar, and Dostoevsky. Yet Russian music has never been *simply* Russian" (p. 1). This book weaves together the history of emigration from Russia and the USSR since the turn of the twentieth century, an ethnography of contemporary émigré composers, diaspora studies, and the business of classical music. Dubinets primarily focuses on composers who left during the 1970s and after, and writes about at least two generations of composers—including figures such as Alfred Schnittke and Sofia Gubaidulina, as well as Lera Auerbach, Elena Firsova, Alexander Raskatov, Alexander Rabinovitch-Barakovsky, and many more. As the opening pages of this book make clear, these composers are not all ethnically Russian, and Dubinets's understanding of "Russianness" is not strictly Russian—it is multiethnic and multicultural, changing over time, and yoked together by the Russian language. In *Russian Composers Abroad*, identity is not a reified concept, but a set of cultural, musical, personal, and professional practices that are constantly in flux—"flickering identities," in the words of composer Boris Filanovsky (p. 112).

A rich body of scholarship exists about music and identity, examining music from many different people, times, places, and genres. Dubinets's approach innovatively situates diasporic music in diaspora studies and considers how these composers retain and/or reshape their cultural affiliations with home while building civic alliances in their new nations. Some who are not ethnically Russian use emigration to emphasize their actual ethnicities, be they Jewish, Ukrainian, Tatar, Azerbaijani, among others. Some find themselves presenting generally European or globalized identities, while others (including some who are not ethnically Russian) perform a Russian identity. Dubinets examines the dynamics of cultural identity by weaving together these composers' personal experiences, their compositional choices, and their professional activities. She also never loses sight of the many external pressures they encounter, which prompt many to modify their self-presentation depending on the context.

Dubinets provides nuanced discussions of the practicalities of emigration and the classical music business: How do these composers create new lives in new places? Who helps them? How does emigration impact their musical styles? How do audiences relate to their music? How do people back home view those who left? Dubinets offers readers a look at both state-funded classical music in Russia and at the ways in which classical music operates internationally. In doing so, she contributes to the existing scholarship on music, neoliberal capitalism, and globalization. This close attention to the practical realities of professional music careers abroad gives rise to fascinating reflections on musical meaning. Dubinets considers how composers' experiences are translated into stories about cultural and ethnic identities, about late- and post-Soviet emigration, and about the traumas of emigration. These stories transform into marketing that attracts performers, funding, and transnational music organizations. And, these stories land with audiences, ultimately influencing how they understand the music they hear. Musical meaning, like cultural identity, emerges as an intricate process involving composers, performers, sound, money, discourse, and audiences as both

consumers and listeners. Each chapter includes a detailed discussion of a composition that addresses the issues at hand. For music scholars, it is gratifying to see that Dubinets explains compositional details and musical sounds as wrapped up with the dynamics of cultural identity, emigration, and the music business. By discussing so many composers and so many pieces in detail, Dubinets makes available a whole world of truly wonderful and fascinating music.

The preface and acknowledgments make clear Dubinets's personal investment in her topic: she emigrated from Russia in the 1990s and has since created her own music career in Seattle and now London, often curating concerts of the composers she writes about. *Russian Composers Abroad* is a masterful synthesis of Dubinets's own background as a music scholar, as an immigrant, and as an arts administrator. This book is a pleasure to read, it is rich and complex, elegantly written, and accessible to students and scholars across disciplines. As a final note, this book speaks to our current moment. Dubinets's meditation on cultural, ethnic, and musical identities, coupled with her knowledge of the classical music business in Russia and internationally, provides a meaningful framework for understanding why the war in Ukraine has caused a reckoning with related power dynamics in the classical music world.

Maria Cizmic, University of South Florida

Vergara, José. *All Future Plunges to the Past: James Joyce in Russian Literature*. NIU Series in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, 2021. xiii + 254 pp. $54.95. ISBN 978-1-5017-5990-1.

It is hard to imagine a more taxing assignment than studying James Joyce's influence. His gravitational hold on other writers is as multifaceted as it is oceanic. Between the muted chords of *Dubliners* (1914) and the vibrating, associational spider webs of *Finnegans Wake* (1939), Joyce's artistic concerns expanded to cover a colossal territory. "Which Joyce?" is the first question for any scholar of influence. José Vergara does not shy away from the matter of plural Joyces, but his focus is *Ulysses*.

All Future Plunges to the Past is the first book-length investigation of Joyce and the Russians since Alexander Woronzoff's *Andrei Bely's "Petersburg," James Joyce's "Ulysses" and the Symbolist Movement* (1982) and Neil Cornwell's *James Joyce and the Russians* (1992). There is little overlap. Woronzoff's monograph explores Symbolist influences on the two writers, and Cornwell, even in his sections on Bely and Nabokov, is as concerned with "Russia in Joyce" as he is with the converse. And precise thematic correspondences between novels carry less weight for Cornwell than they do for Vergara.

To Joyce's mirror Vergara holds up Yuri Olesha, Vladimir Nabokov, Andrei Bitov, Sasha Sokolov, and Mikhail Shishkin. Though *All Future* makes nods to the total literary output of these five, it highlights one novel by each: *Zavist'* (1927), *Dar* (1938/52), *Pushkinskii dom* (1978), *Shkola dlia durakov* (1976), and *Venerin volos* (2005). This seventy-eight year span in publication dates bridges a true millennium of revolution and counterrevolution in European arts. Vergara wisely concentrates on stylistic and thematic imports from Joyce, but is forced to scant to some degree the cultural, technological, and literary *zeitgeist* that shaped Joyce's age.

From the enormous library of themes which his Russian authors share with Joyce, Vergara emphasizes the search of sons for fathers. For the Joyce/Nabokov pairing, evidentiary parallels leap from the page. Stephen Daedalus's father, a hopeless and helpless fixture of Dublin bars, makes room for the tantalizing substitute of Leopold Bloom, while Nabokov's hero Fyodor yearns to reconstitute his dead father through some written text. But in the case of Vergara's other authors, one-to-one comparisons tend to be less neat, with the traits of *Ulysses* characters sometimes fused or diffused. In *Zavist'*, for example, Nikolai Kavalerov begins in imitation of Joyce's Stephen but his actions then echo Bloom's return to the faithless Molly. Andrei Babichev, meanwhile, behaves paternalistically toward every character in the novel. So who is Bloom? Nikolai or Andrei? Vergara

accepts these confusions, and reassuringly admits that none of his Russian authors are literalist imitators of *Ulysses*.

Given the frequency of the "lost father" theme in Western literature, readers expect Vergara to show that Russian writers have done more than dip their hands in a stream that happens to include Joyce. This Vergara accomplishes with eloquence and precision. Setting Molly Bloom beside Sokolov's figure of the Student, for example, Vergara notes that the latter's "stream of consciousness records not his thoughts directly so much as a physical, frenzied *transcription* of those very ideas that flitter through his mind ... just as Joyce's heroine is embodied by her text ... the only apparently concrete thing the reader can identify" (p. 115).

Among his five comparisons, Vergara's reading of Shishkin uniquely places *Finnegans Wake* front and center. It also uses Joyce's theory of history to describe what Shishkin saw as his "near-mythical" task: "Much of [*Venerin volos*] focuses on people fleeing their homes in search of sanctuary. ... [Shishkin's] narrative positions humanity in general—and the author as an emblematic case—as refugees seeking meaning" (p. 170). A theoretical outlier in *All Future*, this chapter will spur debate among Shishkin readers for its discussion of historical and ahistorical time. It is Vergara's most original.

There are no sins of commission in *All Future* and omissions are inevitable. For the reader in search of textual echoes, is it necessary to reach as far back as Joyce, when Borges' or Saramago's more current and equally playful meditations on myth, biography, and history make them natural literary compatriots of Bitov and Sokolov? Beginning with *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Joyce used extensive quotation as a device, and Post-Modernist writers have run with it. But Vergara should specify more exactly the nuance of each instance of quotation. When is it merely a borrowed device, when is the substance of the quotation a reference to Joyce, and when is it a parody of Joyce? Finally, one wishes that Vergara had speculated on the creative downside of Joyce's long shadow. The Irish exile has come to stand for the avant-garde writer *par excellence*, and in the case of Sokolov and Shishkin, at least, one senses an anxiety of Joycean influence. Have his emulators believed it necessary to experiment without interruption in order to remain in the avant-garde?

All Future concludes with excerpts from interviews with contemporary Russians, asked by Vergara to comment on a variety of "Joyce in Russia today" questions. The remarks themselves read a bit thin, but serve as a foil to make Vergara's own learned and imaginative meditation on Joyce sparkle all the more brightly.

John Kopper, Dartmouth College

Leach, Robert. *Sergei Tretyakov: A Revolutionary Writer in Stalin's Russia*. London: Glagoslav Publications, 2021. 256 pp. $26.50 (paper). ISBN 978-1-914337-17-8.

Finally, an autobiography of Sergei Tretyakov has been published, and this conscientious work provides crucial impulse toward the creation of a much-needed, complete edition of Tretyakov's works. In this enjoyable and vividly written book, the British academic and theater director Robert Leach introduces us not simply to Tretyakov's time, but also to his thinking, which was influenced by, and has had influence upon, such great minds as Vladimir Mayakovski, Boris Arvatov, Alexander Rodchenko, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Sergei Eisenstein, Bertolt Brecht, and Walter Benjamin.

The book's fourteen chapters explain the historical, aesthetic, and personal contexts of all of Tretyakov's important works. Interestingly, Leach considers the play *I Want a Baby*—the premiere of which he staged himself in 1990 and later translated it into English—as one of the author's most significant works (p. 144). And this current biography implicitly comments upon Leach's 2019 collection of Tretyakov's theatrical works from the 1920s. The author shows that, not only in the "roaring" 1920s but right until his death in 1937, Tretyakov was an all-round artistic talent and cultural theorist who participated fully in the artistic, cultural, and political debates of both decades.

While elaborating a comprehensive account of Tretyakov's working life, Leach is not afraid to engage with difficult questions that remain open: Was it "Stalin's Russia," as the title proposes,

in the eyes of Tretyakov, or did he believe in a fair proletarian state to which he contributed by his "operativism"? Did his forced confession—a detailed story of being a Japanese spy—contain any truth?

Searching for answers to these and other questions in Tretyakov's bio-bibliography takes us on an extensive, interwar topographical journey that reaches from Moscow to China, the Caucasus, Czechoslovakia (at the time), and the Weimar Republic. Born in Kuldiga, in present-day Latvia, Sergey Mikhailovich went to Moscow for his studies, and in 1919 moved to Vladivostok. Between 1919 and 1922 he visited China, and then in 1924 he moved to Beijing, where he taught Russian. After returning to Moscow, he dedicated himself to the documentary arts, including cinematography. In 1927 he traveled to Georgia, where he was a consultant for the state film studio of Tbilisi and explored the isolated region of Svanetia. Subsequent years he would spend mainly as a reporter, interested particularly in the collectivization of villages in Soviet peripheries reaching from Siberia to the Northern Caucasus.

A victim of Stalin's Great Terror, Tretyakov killed himself in Moscow's Butyrka Prison after being forced to confess that he was a Japanese spy. His books were banned in the Soviet Union until his wife, upon her release from a labor camp in the 1950s, started to reestablish his work. Leach's autobiography also reestablishes for us Tretyakov the futurist, factographer, playwright, photographer, and film enthusiast. Its main message we find in the statement: "Of all the artists, writers, theatre practitioners and commentators in the swirling dynamism of the 1920s *avant-garde* Moscow, Sergei Tretyakov was perhaps the most forward-looking, versatile, energetic, and original" (p. 65).

If I may suggest some improvements for a second edition: The name of the first translator of *I Want a Baby* into German is Ernst Hube, not "Erist Hub" (p. 216). The parallels to Tretyakov's works in the plays by Bertolt Brecht concerning motherhood had been demonstrated previously in 1975 by Fritz Mierau (pp. 219–20). This and other works, such as the letters from Tretyakov to Brecht, should be consulted. And, finally, it would be extremely useful for readers and scholars to be able to read the interviews Leach conducted with Tretyakov's adopted daughter, Tatyana Tretyakova-Gomolicaya.

Tatjana Hofmann, ETH (Zurich)

Podzemskaia, Nadezhda. *Kandinskii o Dukhovnom v iskusstve: Polnoe kritichskoe izdanie*. vol. 1, O d*ukhovnom v iskusstve*. 746 pp.; vol. 2, *Istoriia knigi, nauka ob iskusstve*. 704 pp. Moscow: BuksMArt, 2020. R7,148.00. ISBN 978-5-907043-71-8.

Nadezhda Podzemskaia's fundamental study of Kandinsky and his most famous essay on art is a work of unprecedented scope that constellates the history and design of the text with its philosophical exegesis. The book consists of two volumes, each about seven-hundred and fifty pages.

Podzemskaia reevaluates and challenges the established art-historical narratives about Kandinsky, revealing the full breadth and complexity of his oeuvre through philosophical and historical contextualizations. She shows the changes wrought by the various translations of the text as Kandinsky himself iterates it, revising repeatedly, a process Podzemskaia connects to his artistic practice. She argues that Kandinsky incorporates, challenges, and engages with movements as seemingly ideologically and aesthetically disparate as Surrealism and Constructivism (as well as Marcel Duchamp, Paul Klee, Kazimir Malevich, and virtually every other major figure in early twentieth-century art) in order to unify and synthesize them within his own intricate conceptual and formal system.

The first volume includes the editor's introduction and foreword, and annotated publications of Kandinsky's *On the Spiritual in Art*'s first, second, and third Russian editions, as well as the third German edition, Kandinsky's explicatory charts and tables, and assembled supplements from various editions. Each edition is annotated, drawing connections to Kandinsky's intellectual influences, noting the likely references he is making to contemporaries, and emphasizing passages significant to later texts. This arrangement allows the reader to grasp the changes in the text as Kandinsky edits

and alters its reception, functioning less as a set of footnotes and more as a parallel text running along the margin, dedicating whole paragraphs to explicating individual points in the artist's essay. The scope of this annotation is genuinely impressive, constellating a gamut of philosophical and artistic references structuring Kandinsky's text, but unapparent and uncovered only through Podzemskaia's research.

The second volume represents a separate work of research, consisting of the methodical analysis and examination of the creation of Kandinsky's text in three chapters, covering the history of the text itself, the history of its publication, and the history of its design. These essays represent a monumental act of art historical scholarship, showing the enormous stakes and ambitions of Kandinsky's artistic project. The second volume's thorough examination of the material, formal, and theoretical aspects of Kandinsky's practice compellingly demonstrate that Kandinsky was in constant engagement and conversation with the major foci, problems, discourses, and binaries of modernist art. For instance, it methodically and exhaustively traces Kandinsky's engagement with the concept of abstraction, his particular views on terms like "non-representational art" or "objectless art," the influence of major philosophers, such as Kojève on turning Kandinsky from the term "abstract" to the term "concrete," and similar exactitudes in Kandinsky's discourse. Podzemskaia juxtaposes Kandinsky's occult readings with his interest in folk art, his ideas on the mystical "dissolution and condensation" of things with his interest in Cezanne's still-lives, forging fascinating and unexpected connections (2:90). Individual focus is dedicated to tracing the likely sources of influences of key concepts and ideas, and exploring Kandinsky's views on the overlap of the senses and on the emotional impact of music, color theory, and spirituality. Kandinsky's *On the Spiritual in Art* is thus revealed to be a blueprint for a sweeping and ambitious artistic project spanning decades.

The volumes themselves are elegantly designed artworks, and at times seem to be directly following Kandinsky's lead in how they present information. For example, the first volume offers a set of graphics visually explicating various elements of the text—from the chronological sequence of translations to which translations deviate from the original text more. Such choices are clearly referencing Kandinsky's own informational graphics and tables, as a pastiche and a tribute, using Kandinsky's own designs to offer his text to a new generation of artists and art historians.

These volumes are absolutely necessary to any scholar working on Kandinsky. They would be deeply interesting to anyone intellectually curious about the artist's legacy, as well as to anyone seeking a broader engagement with the philosophy and art of both his immediate circle of artistic and intellectual comrades, and the modernist avant-garde as a whole.

Daniil Leiderman, Texas A&M University

Posner, Dassia N., and Kevin Bartig, eds. *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev*. Russian Music Studies. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021. 460 pp. $50.00. ISBN 978-0-253-05788-4.

A complex and rigorous exploration of the artistic lineages, *Three Loves for Three Oranges: Gozzi, Meyerhold, Prokofiev* offers a detailed study of the intertwined creative paths of Gozzi's theatrical fairy tale (*fiaba*), Meyerhold's divertissement, and Prokofiev's opera. This carefully conceived and elegantly executed collection of essays and originally translated theatrical texts is an immense multidisciplinary historiographic undertaking, which includes insightful contributions of seventeen scholars from the fields of theater and art history, Italian and Slavic Studies, and musicology. Engaging with an impressive array of themes and theatrical practices that range from commedia dell'arte to Russian Modernism, the volume is tightly focused on the three iterations of *Three Oranges*—their genealogy, dialogic connection, and revolutionary role in fostering artistic innovation. The editors, Dassia Posner and Kevin Bartig, with Maria De Simone, carefully lay out the scope of the volume providing a well-defined set of probing questions. They ask how these three works can be mutually informative in rethinking the binary between tradition and invention, and what this examination of

artistic genealogies can reveal about the intricate interplay between continuity and disruption, authorship and attribution, self-referentiality and meta-theatricality in the creative process. Nuanced and multilayered, this authoritative study highlights the significance of actor-centric work in challenging dominant modes of theatrical expression, illuminates the role of theatrical text in shaping new collaborative experiences, and traces the relationship between different genres such as improvisatory scenario and opera.

The volume's three-part structure—The Fiaba, The Divertissement, and the Opera—follows the complicated journey of the *Oranges* tale, which spanned several centuries and formed the artistic legacy through the pioneering works of Gozzi, Meyerhold, and Prokofiev. A key contribution to this ground-breaking study is the inclusion of the original translations of each *Oranges* iteration scrupulously annotated by the editors and placed in a comparative context. The translation of Gozzi's *Reflective Analysis of the Fairy Tale* pinpoints the work's polemic nature drawing attention to the references that Gozzi makes to Venetian theatrical debates as he advocates for "improvised, collaborative practice" in the style of Italian commedia (p. 43). The original translation of Meyerhold's script for improvisation reflects its heavy indebtedness to Gozzi's reflective analysis but also notes creative choices unique to Meyerhold's own artistic practice. Prokofiev's libretto reveals striking similarities with Meyerhold's divertissement, contrary to Prokofiev's claim that the major influence on his opera was Gozzi's *fiaba*. The annotated translations underscore mutual influences between the *Oranges* versions but also point to the continuing transformation of the fairy tale as it traveled across cultures, languages, aesthetics, and politics.

The chapters in each part offer an invaluable context surrounding the creation of the three *Oranges* and their crucial role in leading theatrical revolutions. While addressing the specifics of each historical period, together they convincingly demonstrate how "the authors of all three *Oranges* designed their unconventional works to be manifestos for a new theatre that celebrated audience responsiveness, imaginative freedom ... and ... innovation to be achieved by challenging dominant traditions of the past and present" (p. 2). The first three chapters in Part I place Gozzi's work in a multifaced cultural landscape of the eighteenth-century Venetian theater, contemplating the impact of theatrical wars on Gozzi's dramatic compositions (Alberto Beniscelli), providing an overview of Antonio Sachi's acting troupe that first performed Gozzi's improvisatory comedy in Venice in 1761 (Giulietta Bazoli), and examining the fruitful creative partnership between Sacchi and Gozzi that resulted in an innovative theatrical experience which celebrated magic, humor, and the power of imagination (Domenico Pietropaolo). The following two chapters grapple with the complexities of Gozzi's theatrical legacy. Ted Emery argues that Gozzi's "conservative social ideology ... shapes and informs [his] imaginary fair-tale worlds," an important aspect that Meyerhold and his collaborators "chose to omit" in their admiration for Gozzi's artistic gift to break the bounds of realism and celebrate fantastic transformations on stage (p. 109). Natalya Baldyga underpins the influence of Gozzi's style on Romanticism and locates "the ingredients of Gozzi's pastiche" expressed through his use of "satire, fantasy, and cultural exoticism" in various German reimaginings of "Three Oranges," specifically in the works of Goethe, Tieck, and Hoffmann (p. 125).

The focus of chapters in Part II is on Meyerhold's theatrical practice and philosophy that led to the creation of the divertissement (1914), an only partially produced "playable scenario for actor improvisations," which involved Meyerhold's collaboration with Konstantin Vogak and Vladimir Soloviev (p. 151). Raissa Raskina offers a comprehensive analysis of Gozzi's compelling influence on Meyerhold as a director-reformer that was deftly articulated in his theatrical periodical *Love for Three Oranges: The Journal of Doctor Dapertutto* (1914–16). Vadim Shcherbakov traces the history of the commedia form in Russian theater and discusses its profound impact on the development of Meyerhold's theatrical language. Lawrence Senelick highlights the fundamental contributions of Russian theater historian Konstantin Miklashevsky to the revival of commedia dell'arte in Russian modernist theater. Julia Galanina illuminates connections between Meyerhold's divertissement and Prokofiev's opera revealing a series of controversies through artists' letters and legal documents—all of which point to the composer's attribution error concerning the opera's original sources.

The chapters in Part III effectively intersect the areas of musicology and theater history, placing Prokofiev's work in the Russian operatic tradition and examining the staging of the opera in various cultural and political contexts. These engaging discussions involve a thorough analysis of the deep-rooted bond between commedia and Russian opera (Inna Naroditskaya), examine Prokofiev's daring use of exaggeration and parody in his *Three Oranges* (Natalia Savkina), and trace the references and allusions in this "slapstick version of a grand opera" (p. 367) to the work of Prokofiev's famous predecessors such as Rossini, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Leoncavallo (Simon A. Morrison). The remaining two chapters provide intriguing details about the opera's production history. John E. Bowlt explores the dazzling theatricality of its world premiere at Chicago's Auditorium Theater in 1921, which featured ingenious sets and costumes designed by acclaimed Russian artist Boris Anisfeld, while Kevin Bartig follows the opera's postrevolutionary journey in Russia centering on its 1926 experimental production at Leningrad's Mariinsky Theater directed by Sergei Radlov, Meyerhold's former student.

Rich with intertextual references and cross-cultural associations, which occasionally results in perhaps unavoidable overlaps, *Three Loves for the Three Oranges* challenges the reader to embrace a multilinear approach in considering artistic lineages and creative influences. Highlighting the importance of multiple cultural and disciplinary perspectives in historiographic research, the volume boldly paves the way for further investigations of theatrical genealogies.

Julia Listengarten, University of Central Florida

Prokhorov, Alexander, Elena Prokhorova, and Rimgaila Salys, eds. *Russian TV Series in the Era of Transitions: Genres, Technologies, Identities*. Boston, Academic Studies Press, 2021. 277 pp. $119.00. ISBN 978-1-64469-643-9.

This latest offering in ASP's rapidly growing "Film and Media Studies" series is their first volume dedicated wholly to the small screen. Edited by three established scholars of Russian cinema and television, this useful collection includes a brief introduction by the editors, nine articles, and five interviews with producers, screenwriters, and directors active in Russian Television in recent years. College students and teachers of contemporary Russian media will find it an informative and useful introduction to the subject.

In a wide-ranging introduction, the editors agree that the television series is "the essential part of Putin-era popular culture" today (p. 8). Among the topics they briefly mention are the explosive growth of TV production, the proliferation of production companies, the changing status of television *vis-à-vis* cinema, Russian television's integration into a global market, and the transition from traditional broadcast to streaming media. Although mostly informative in nature, the introduction does make several claims about the Russian television series today, some more convincing than others: for example, that socially engaged Russian series represent something akin to western "quality TV"; and that by virtue of a new and significant gender, generational, geographic, class, and ethnic diversity, Russian TV series represent progress over Brezhnev-era programming while presenting an "idealized, fantasy-prone representation of the Russian and Soviet imperial past" (p. 15).

The authors of the nine essays approach this impossibly large subject from diverse and complementary angles: some concentrate on individual series or *auteurs*, while others focus on historical and/or sociological themes, sexuality, and technology. The thread which holds the articles together, if it doesn't exactly meld them into one overarching argument, is their authors' belief that Russian television series can provide a privileged view into Russian society and culture. According to this reading, Russian culture today is, well, a mess: its past distorted by contemporary political and religious values, its present traumatized by the unacknowledged horrors of the past, its uncertain future obscured by wish-fulfilling fantasy. None of this, of course, will surprise anyone who has paid attention to the news in recent months.

Most of the authors agree that by adapting Soviet values to the specific circumstances of post-Soviet Russia, television series are actively contributing to nostalgia for a lost Soviet world. Alyssa

DeBlasio, for example, shows how the programming at the Kul'tura channel, Russia's equivalent of PBS, perpetuates Soviet-era assumptions about the nature and function of high culture. Stephen Norris expertly analyzes the clash between history, memory, and politics surrounding the series *Penal Battalion* (*Strafbat*, 2004) to show how the filmmakers transformed the Soviet fight against fascism into, remarkably, a war fought for Russian Orthodoxy. Elena and Alexander Prokhorov situate two recent historical series about Catherine the Great (*Ekaterina*, 2014, and *Velikaia*, 2015) within a triple context: the Soviet tradition of films about "progressive royal empire-builders," the post-Soviet passion for big budget "patriotic" blockbuster spectacles, and the global fad for romanticized portraits of royalty (pp. 98–99). They conclude that, by emphasizing the role of religion and the secret services in the construction of Catherine's autocratic power, and by justifying state violence against individuals who might oppose state security, these ostensibly historical series justify central elements of the Putin government's ideological program.

Rimagaila Salys is a particularly adroit guide to Vitaly Moskalenko's *Orlova and Alexandrov*, a 2015 series dedicated to the two great stars of Stalinist musical comedy of the 1930s. After describing the biopic genre in Russian and American film and TV, Salys turns to her real subject: how the series distorts the past by overlooking its subjects' conformism and hypocrisies and by ascribing to them contemporary values like orthodox piety. By liberating two of the biggest stars of Stalinist cinema "from accusations of ideological servility" to an inhuman regime, she concludes, *Orlova and Alexandrov* encourages contemporary Russian viewers to overlook the horrors of Stalinism (p. 96). Lilya Kaganovsky brings profound historical knowledge, a keen alertness to visual style, and a formidable ability to make the most of theoretical and psychological models to bear on Peter Todorovsky's series *The Thaw* (*Ottepel'*, 2013). Beginning where most of the other articles in the collection end—by recognizing that the series uses "recognizably nostalgic Soviet tropes ... with a contemporary post-Soviet audience in mind" (p. 116)—Kaganovsky goes on to examine the complex and surprising ways that the show constructs, breàks down, and ultimately reinforces normative gender norms. Written elegantly and with immense intelligence and tact, "Between Pornography and Nostalgia" should be required reading for all those studying, or writing about, Russian media.

The rest of the articles in the collection are dedicated to television series set in the present day. Both Tatiana Mikhailova and Vlad Strukov describe how popular television series undercut officially sanctioned attempts by the Putin government to promote nuclear families and traditional values. Mikhailova makes good use of sociological data in her analysis of Vadim Perelman's series *The Affairs* (*Izmeny*, 2015) about a sexually liberated heroine who has perfected a system to cheat on her husband with several men at the same time, while Strukov applies his expertise in gender theory to show how *Ol'ga* (2016–20) "interrogates the very notion of family" and challenges "all kinds of normativity" (p. 193). Starting from the concept of "neo-noir," the three co-editors argue, not entirely convincingly, that noted *auteur* Yury Bykov's high profile TV series, *The Method* (*Metod*, 2015) and *Sleepers* (*Spiashchie*, 2017), "recast the moral and social issues raised by Dostoevsky for the 21th century" while also providing "proper mourning and distancing from the ghosts of a traumatic past" (p. 180). Finally, Saara Ratilainen discusses the phenomenon of "post-legacy television," that is, DIY series made by non-professionals and posted straight to the internet, on the basis of one of one of the first, and most popular, web series, *Bitches* (*Stervochki*, 2011–15).

Russian TV Series is not without flaws or omissions. For example, the editors' assumption that TV is the essential element of Putin-era popular culture is nowhere examined. Nor is there any discussion of the commercial dimension of what is, unlike Soviet television, an unapologetically commercial enterprise. And rather than real conversations, the "interviews" are not much more than answers to specific, and very simple, questions. Finally, recent events have rendered some of the views expressed in this collection—that Russian television is participating in a global market or that television series can subvert official narratives - to say the least, problematic.

Anthony Anemone, The New School

History

Blanc, Eric. *Revolutionary Social Democracy: Working-Class Politics across the Russian Empire (1882–1917)*. Historical Materialism 228. Leiden: Brill, 2021. xiv + 455 pp. $229.00. ISBN 978-90-04-44992-3.

According to Eric Blanc, the central issue dividing social democrats in the Russian Empire after the 1905 Revolution, and the central political question of 1917, was whether to ally with the capitalist class and "bourgeois" parties in making a democratic revolution. Blanc says orthodox Second International socialism rejected class collaboration in favor of workers' political hegemony, a stand championed by German social democrat Karl Kautsky (whose revolutionary reputation Blanc seeks to restore). Blanc holds that until 1906 all the Russian Empire's social democrats adhered to this orthodoxy, and that the Bolsheviks and left social democratic parties in the empire's borderlands continued to do so through 1917. Building on Lars Lih's work, he describes Lenin's positions (for example, in *What is to Be Done?*) as fully orthodox; moreover, he argues, borderlands revolutionary socialists—particularly Polish, Latvian, and Jewish social democrats—often anticipated Lenin's arguments. From 1906, though, Mensheviks and other moderate social democrats, disillusioned by the results of the 1905 Revolution, deviated from orthodoxy by embracing alliances with the bourgeoisie.

Blanc emphasizes contexts that shaped social democratic politics in Russia and its imperial borderlands. In Russia, he argues, the autocratic police state both prevented development of stable party bureaucracies, unions, and electoral politics that might have mitigated worker militance, and fostered social democratic consensus on the primacy of revolutionary direct action. Post-1905 repression shattered that consensus, as moderate socialists adopted a class coalitionist approach to revolution and the state. Across the empire's borderlands (or rather, its European borderlands) revolutionary socialists remained consistently more militant than their Russian counterparts. And in Finland, where the context of legal trade unions and open electoral politics initially led social democrats to a reformist stance, tsarist repression in and after 1905 turned the party toward the orthodox orientation. Of the borderlands' parties, Blanc gives greatest attention to the complex factional disputes in Poland (and is unsparing in criticism of Rosa Luxemburg's undermining of united socialist front tactics).

Blanc argues that, well before the Great War's outbreak, Kautsky and other orthodox Marxists viewed Russia as capitalism's weak link, insisted that anti-capitalist democratic Russian revolution could spark revolutions in Europe, and believed that a socialist Europe could help Russia advance toward socialism. He implicitly rejects attributing this logic to Lenin's wartime analysis of imperialism. He also overtly rejects the claim that Lenin "rearmed" the Bolsheviks in April 1917 by pressuring supposedly reluctant moderates to abandon conditional support for the Provisional Government. Following Lih, he treats Lenin's April Theses as reiterating orthodox positions already shared by Bolshevik activists. According to Blanc, in 1917 the Bolsheviks attempted to draw moderate socialists back to orthodoxy and create an anti-capitalist socialist bloc, since only by rejecting alliance with the bourgeoisie and pursuing soviet power could Russia achieve the goals of democratic revolution. Their consistent rejection of moderate socialist conciliationism brought a Bolshevik-left socialist coalition to power, he argues, and so achieved—for a time, at least—workers' (but not proletarian) hegemony. Blanc sees events in Finland in 1917-Spring 1918 as demonstrating that orthodox social democrats similarly could guide workers to an anti-capitalist "rupture" in a parliamentary electoral context, therefore undermining subsequent Leninist claims that Bolshevik tactics provided the only path toward workers' power. He blames failure to achieve anti-capitalist "ruptures" in other borderland contexts (and in Germany) on moderate socialists' preference for alliance with bourgeois parties and foreign imperialists. Blanc usefully notes that in 1917 Bolsheviks did not call the revolution "socialist"; such claims came only during the Russian Civil War, as corollary to the claim that Bolshevism alone could lead to socialist revolution.

This precis does not cover all arguments in Blanc's very ambitious volume. Blanc has read widely but selectively in many relevant languages—mostly secondary sources, but also some primary sources. He occasionally battles historiographic strawmen, a tendency that might have been tempered by more attention to recent historiography. Blanc draws on long-standard social histories to briefly discuss workers' lived experience, but generally reduces working-class politics to social democratic activism (with cursory reference to the Socialist Revolutionaries). The book's thematic organization leads to much unnecessary repetition; rigorous editing would have amplified Blanc's many cogent insights. The volume's exorbitant price may put it beyond reach of many readers, including young socialist activists who are among Blanc's intended audience.

Michael C. Hickey, Bloomsburg University

Cronin, Glenn. *Disenchanted Wanderer: The Apocalyptic Vision of Konstantin Leontiev*. NIU Series in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, 2021. 261 pp. $49.95. ISBN 978-1-5017-6018-1.

For post-Soviet Russia, which continues to search for an identity that could account for her cultural diversity, the figure of Konstantin Leontiev is back in vogue. It was Leontiev who distilled the infinitely enchanting idea of modern Russia as "blossoming complexity." According to this idea Russia had always developed as a state civilization where the Russian people, language, and culture flourished in competitive yet ultimately supportive coexistence with other traditional languages and cultures. To escape the threat of nationalism, which he believed would dissolve Russia politically, Leontiev called on Russia to reject Western liberalism and remain true to her imperial Byzantine roots, a political order founded on autocracy and Orthodox Christianity. This Byzantinism ostracized him from both the Westernizers and the Slavophiles, unjustifiably relegating a prolific writer to the periphery of the contemporary intellectual life. Glenn Cronin offers a meticulously researched, nuanced study of Leontiev's life and thought, providing the reader with a remarkably comprehensive insight into one of Russia's most original thinkers.

The connecting thread that ties together Cronin's study is the concept of "aesthetic morality"—an idea to which Leontiev has remained faithful throughout his life. Already as a young person Leontiev discovered that aesthetic distaste provides a firmer ground for moral action than any ethical system. Only beauty can account for the complex inner workings of the human soul, while ethical propositions inevitably culminate in a simplification of society, producing a universal "average man" and essentially negating life. Perhaps the most radical aspect of Leontiev's "aesthetic morality" was a refusal to strive for better life circumstances and an acceptance of evil as a necessity. Inequality and struggle created that variety of conditions and feelings which made the beauty of life possible. Leontiev hung on to this Manichean bent in his worldview even after his conversion to Orthodox Christianity by finding firm support for "aesthetic morality" in the Church's ascetic imperative. As far as Leontiev was concerned, the monastic duty lies not so much in following a rule as in worshipping God and reconciling himself to the reality of existence. This aesthetic theology with a flavor of Schopenhauer Buddhism allowed Leontiev reconcile with the Church's moral teaching his bisexual lifestyle. This important aspect of Leontiev's life Cronin treats with utmost respect, without digressing into unhelpful psychologization.

Leontiev's violent conversion to personal Orthodoxy on a sickbed in Salonika, with a subsequent futile attempt to become a monk on Mt. Athos, marks the climax of the book. In this moment of spiritual struggle Cronin sees a transition to a political philosophy that becomes Leontiev's most significant intellectual contribution. The visit to Athos coincided with the height of a passionate religious dispute between the Greeks and Bulgars. Attempting to discern the reasons for supporting the Greek patriarch over his fellow Slavs, Leontiev began to formulate his political vision as founded on religious rather than national identity. The articles on "Pan-Slavism and the Greeks" and "Pan-Slavism on Athos" culminated in the masterwork *Byzantinism and Slavdom* (1872–73), which contained the essence of Leontiev's rejection of a nationalist conception of Russia. Cronin offers a

close study of Leontiev's idiosyncratic theory of the rise and fall of civilizations, showing how it both borrowed from Nikolai Danilevsky's monumental *Russia and Europe* (1869) and built on it. While Leontiev shared Danilevsky's fundamental conception of the state as organism, he rejected the idea that racial and linguistic affinity constituted its only reliable basis. To the blood principle Leontiev offered the Byzantine principle—a union of diverse cultures by means of their acceptance of autocracy, Orthodox Christianity, rejection of bourgeoise morality, and a wholehearted embrace of Byzantine aesthetics.

In addition to a nuanced study of Leontiev's biography and political philosophy, Cronin's book offers an insight into Leontiev the writer. Cronin discusses Leontiev the novelist and the literary critic. Leontiev's polemic with Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, whom he famously accused of sentimentalized Christianity, receives close attention. By way of concluding remarks, it is worth noting that Cronin's eloquent and engaging prose softens the otherwise formidable density of his subject matter. In particular, his descriptions of Leontiev's diplomatic service in Turkey is exquisite, allowing the reader to taste some of the eastern charm that so profoundly shaped Loentiev's worldview. A lesser stylist could not have rendered the philosophically robust terrain so smooth.

Denis Zhernokleyev, Vanderbilt University

Rechtman, Abraham. *The Lost World of Russia's Jews: Ethnography and Folklore in the Pale of Settlement*. Translated by Nathaniel Deutsch and Noah Barrera. Jews in Eastern Europe. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021. xi + 314 pp. $40.00. ISBN 978-0-253-05693-1.

Remarkably talented autodidacts, newcomers from traditional religious schooling into the world of modernity, dominated intellectual circles of East European Jews in imperial Russia and other countries. Among them was Shloyme Zaynvl Rapoport (known more commonly as S. An-sky, 1863–1920), a writer, ethnographer, and revolutionary activist, whose institutionalized education stopped after a religious elementary school, or *heder*. From 1912 to 1914 he headed a pioneering ethnographic expedition to about seventy towns in Ukraine, then in the Russian Empire. Students of the privately sponsored Jewish Academy, which was based in St. Petersburg, played an important role in the expedition. Historian Simon Dubnow, an autodidact himself and the most prominent faculty member, described the student body as "made up mainly of provincials, self-taught or experts, former members of yeshivahs, well versed in specialist Jewish subjects, but without sufficient background of general education" (p. 5).

Abraham Rechtman (1890–1972), one of the students of the Jewish Academy, not only took part in An-sky's endeavor but also published a Yiddish-language account of the expedition in 1958, in Buenos Aires, the title of which in English would have been *Jewish Ethnography and Folklore: Memoirs about the Ethnographic Expedition Led by Sh. An-sky*. Now available in this reliable and readable translation, it is a logical "sequel" to Indian University Press's 2016 *Going to the People: Jews and the Ethnographic Impulse*, edited by Jeffrey Veidlinger. The English title, *The Lost World of Russia's Jews*, is both catchier and, significantly, apt. To an uninitiated contemporary reader, the shtetl is a terra incognita or a schmaltzy rustic place populated by philosophical-cum-naïve dairymen and their marriageable daughters.

The book introduces the reader to the history of the expedition and to a broad range of aspects of life in the Pale of Jewish Settlement. Much attention is paid to the architectural landscape of the shtetls, most notably to the synagogues and prayer houses, and to the cemeteries. There are descriptions of chronicles, or *pinkesim*, of communities and various local societies. The *pinkesim* were "always considered to be a holy object. There was even a belief that fire could not damage a house in which a *pinkes* [the singular of *pinkesim*] was present and that a woman in labor would never experience any difficulty giving birth there" (p. 168). Shtetl-dwellers tended to have deeply rooted beliefs in curing, sorcery, and magic centering around the role of female and male exorcists.

Throughout Ukraine "there were old women, whom one turned to in every time of trouble and in every case of misfortune" (p. 241).

In some places, the expedition aroused suspicion and resistance from the local authorities, but ultimately it was the outbreak of World War I that made it impossible to continue the work. The preserved materials collected by the expedition are scattered over archives and libraries in Russia, Ukraine, Israel, and the United States.

Numerous endnotes, an index, a bibliography, and Nathaniel Deutsch's "Introductions," give the book a more scholarly shape than its Yiddish original. It is certainly to be regretted that the editors and publisher did not find it necessary to include a map, and thus help the readers visualize the geographical setting; there are also inconsistences in rendering geographic names. A misleading comment explains the word Fonye as "the Yiddish version of the Russian name Vanya (the diminutive of Ivan)" (p. 110). First, it is a diminutive of other Russian names, such as Afanasii and Trifon. Second, it was used by some Jews as a *pejorative* term for Russians.

In all, it is a useful book, which provides a competent insight into a world that is no more.

Gennady Estraikh, New York University

Veidlinger, Jeffrey. *In the Midst of Civilized Europe: The Pogroms of 1918-1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust*. New York: Macmillan, 2021. 480 pp. $35.00. ISBN 978-1-250-11625-3.

This is a sobering and disturbing account of the anti-Jewish violence that beset the Jews living in the contested territory of Ukraine and eastern Poland in the aftermath of World War I and the collapse of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. Over one thousand pogroms occurred between 1918 and 1921 and, while estimates vary, well over one hundred thousand Jews lost their lives at the hands of marauding soldiers of various armies, peasants, and townspeople. Many more hundreds of thousands were wounded and died of disease, hunger, and injuries sustained during the pogroms. Pogromists destroyed Jewish property, raped Jewish women of all ages, pillaged synagogues, stores, and homes, and humiliated Jews in myriad ways with impunity. Aid workers did their best to publicize to whomever would listen about the dire situation facing Jews in Ukraine and worried that the Jewish population would cease to exist if the fighting and carnage did not stop. The anti-Jewish violence of 1918–21 was the worst tragedy to befall the Jews of Europe until World War II.

Jews were caught in the blood-soaked conflict between armies vying for control of the region: Red Army troops were engaged in a fight for survival with not only the Whites and Cossacks, but also with troops hoping to establish an independent Ukraine or expand Polish control of lands to the east. Efforts to maintain control over the vast territory led to near-continuous warfare that wreaked havoc wherever combatants clashed. The targeting of Jews in particular stemmed from the fact that they were seen as the sources of the problems besetting gentile society. While religious animosity, frustration with the failure of the redistribution of land in some regions, the desire for loot, and economic resentments motivated some pogromists, Jeffrey Veidlinger stresses that the myth of Judeo-Bolshevism was the common element found in the overwhelming incidents of anti-Jewish violence. The fear and hatred of Bolshevism, whose antireligious policies angered peasants, were so profound that in one instance Polish troops shot a group of Jews who were meeting to discuss the production and distribution of matzo. Pogromists scapegoated Jews for the formidable challenges caused by war and revolution, and they believed that the Jews deserved their "just desserts." Just as soldiers of the White, Polish, and Ukrainian armies set upon Jews to avenge military defeats at the hands of Red Army soldiers, these same actors had no compunction attacking Jews to celebrate military victories. Jews had no safe haven to which they could retreat.

Veidlinger underscores the fact that many of the pogroms were not the result of undisciplined troops acting without the knowledge of their superiors. Rather, the anti-Jewish violence was, at times, deliberate military policy, sanctioned by commanders intent on punishing Jewish civilians for their purported ties to and support of the Bolsheviks. Particularly jarring was the sight of well-

dressed, well-groomed, and seemingly cultured and educated officers supervising the pillaging of Jewish homes and stores and the killing of innocent civilians.

The author draws upon an exhaustive reading of heretofore neglected archival materials, newly discovered witness testimonies, trial records, and the findings of public and government commissions. He contends that the bloodletting of these years prepared the ground for the Holocaust slightly more than twenty years later. Veidlinger carries the story of anti-Jewish bloodletting into the interwar years in order to drive home the point that the inhabitants of this region of Europe were no strangers to violent attacks on Jews: the legacy of the pogroms taught the German military and SS what could be done with regard to Jews if the will existed. The pogroms were not a dress rehearsal for the Holocaust, but, as Veidlinger argues, they made it possible to envision genocide. Uncanny parallels between the behavior of soldiers and civilians between 1918 and 1921 and World War II cannot be overlooked. The drunken revelry that accompanied the torture and killing of Jews is particularly poignant.

In general, genocide in the twentieth-century Europe was the product of war, ideology, and the brutalization of society. I have studied earlier waves of pogroms and, notwithstanding the many compelling explanations that historians, sociologists, and political scientists have proffered, the fact that a gentile could wake up one morning and decide to kill with relish and conviction a Jewish family that had lived next door for years beggars the imagination. The intimacy of killings in which perpetrators knew the names of their victims is particularly chilling. Veidlinger's masterful account of the pogroms of 1918–21 does provide insight and advances our knowledge and understanding of these events and the motivations of the perpetrators. *In the Midst of Civilized Europe* supersedes previous studies of the pogroms and is the most compelling analysis of these events I have encountered. It puts on display the author's prodigious and admirable skills as a researcher, historian, and writer.

Robert Weinberg, Swarthmore College

Sokolova, Anna. *Novomu cheloveku, novaia smert'? Pokhoronnaia kul'ltura rannego SSSR*. Studia religiosa. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2022. 456 pp. R750.00. ISBN 978-5-4448-1723-0.

Recent years have seen increased attention to death and dying among social scientists in Russia. In 2015–16 the short-lived but influential journal *Archeology of Russian Death* became the first academic platform for scholars interested in death studies. Several monographs on death and funerary practices in contemporary Russia by its founder, Sergei Mokhov, became a sensation. Mokhov was the first scholar to synthesize existing knowledge on death-related practices in Russia since the early modern period to provide context for contemporary traditions. Building on Mokhov's framework of Russian death-related practices as part of broader European funerary culture, Anna Sokolova's *New Death for a New Person?* provides the first comprehensive analysis of the changes in death culture during the first three decades after the revolution. Sokolova's original research is based on archival and published primary sources and thoughtful engagement with anthropological theory.

The starting point of the study is the peculiar absence of death from public spaces in contemporary Russia, in contrast to societies in Europe and North America. There are no funeral processions, obituaries, or other public elements of mourning. This reluctance to engage with death publicly, Sokolova argues, has roots in Russia's Soviet past. Banishing death from daily lives, as Philippe Aries has demonstrated, is part of the Western path to modernity. Yet the Bolsheviks faced unique challenges in reimagining death and death-related rituals. Their failure to develop viable alternatives to prerevolutionary, religion-based funeral practices created a void that Soviet citizens were left to fill on their own.

After the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917, the secularization and Sovietization of rituals became an important element of revolutionary transformation. Funerals were no exception. Traditionally managed by the clergy, death-related practices were fundamentally rooted in religious

notions of life after death. The need to replace those rituals was clear to the Bolsheviks, but what should replace them, if anything, was not. Some, like the head of the League of the Militant Godless, Iemelian Iaroskavskii, believed that no rituals were necessary at all. His opponent in this debate, Lev Trotskii, argued that working people needed rituals to break the monotony of their lives. If the state did not offer them alternatives, they would continue relying on the priests. The party should help the working masses unleash their creative protentional and develop new, revolutionary funerary practices. An example of such creativity were so-called "red funerals," at which speeches by comrades replaced religious services. "Red funerals," however, had little appeal outside the small circle of party and Komsomol members.

Another death-related issue the Bolsheviks faced was the maintenance of cemeteries. Before the revolution, the church took care of burial sites. Maintaining graves had religious significance because in Orthodox Christianity believers were expected to resurrect in their own bodies after the Judgment Day. Now that resurrection was no longer a politically acceptable goal, the purpose of burying bodies and maintaining graves was unclear. In fact, there seemed to be a much more modern and hygienic way to deal with dead bodies—cremation. A network of crematoriums efficiently processing corpses aligned neatly with a broader vision of industrialization. The first Soviet crematorium was completed in 1928. However, to the disappointment of a small but vocal group of cremation enthusiasts, the practice did not become popular. Many were suspicious of the technology: rumors of corpses twitching in the furnace certainly did not help. Most importantly, cremation was too expansive for most Soviet families, as well as for the state. The network of crematoriums, therefore, never materialized and the majority of Soviet citizens buried their dead in crowded and underfunded municipal cemteries.

The story of the Bolsheviks' effort to transform funeral practices, as told by Sokolova, is a story of failure. "Red funerals" were empty and meaningless, and the funeral infrastructure was in shambles. While I have little doubt about the poor state of municipal cemeteries and endemic shortages of everything, including wood for coffins, I wonder if the question of meaning could be approached from a different angle. Even though only a relatively small number of Soviet citizens chose "red funerals" for their loved ones, the mere fact that they did demonstrates that, at least for them, the new rituals had meaning. Contemporaries' remarks on the hollowness of the ceremony could also be taken in perspective. How many Russians felt that way about Orthodox funerals? Perhaps the difficulty in finding meaning in Soviet-style funerals stemmed from the difficulty of accepting death. Sokolova's book provides an excellent starting point for discussing this and other questions about death in the USSR.

Alissa Klots, University of Pittsburgh

Edele, Mark. *Stalinism at War: The Soviet Union in World War II*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. xii + 257 pp. $35.00. ISBN 978-1-350-15351-6.

The role of the USSR in the defeat of Germany and its allies during the Second World War—long minimized in Cold War national mythologies that tidily recast the war as a fight between democracy and totalitarianism—has been the subject of a proliferation of accessible histories in recent years. Mark Edele's *Stalinism at War* enters this fray as a standout title. The book situates the Soviet-German war of 1941–45 within a wider chronological and geographical framework. This is consonant with recent historiographical interventions that have attempted to correct the Eurocentric notion that the global conflagration began only with Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939 and ceased in 1945. As Edele affirms, this dating obscures the conflict's global origins as well as its messy, post-1945 convulsions. Edele broadens the war's chronological boundaries by several years, starting with the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 and concluding in 1949, with the suppression of armed rebellion in the Baltics and the victory of the communists in China. But while this revised dating rightly brings the war in Asia onto equal footing with "Hitler's war" in Europe, the effect is

not to diminish, but rather to make absolutely plain, the centrality of the USSR throughout the long Second World War.

At every turn, the book illuminates Soviet leaders' and citizens' responses to global events while remaining ever attentive to the way global events hinged on Soviet developments. From the outset of war in Asia, Stalin sought to protect his country's eastern flank from Japanese aggression. He did so by supporting the Chinese nationalists, by bolstering his forces in the east, and through the ethnic cleansing of the eastern borderlands. Indeed, the Sino-Japanese war was the catalyst for the first wholesale ethnic deportation of Stalin's Terror, which targeted Soviet Koreans. Meanwhile, growing tensions and border disputes between the Soviet Union and Japan culminated in a major Soviet military victory at Khalkhin Gol. This event not only elevated the talented Georgii Zhukov to prominence but also convinced Tokyo to pursue a "southern strategy," which would eventually bring Japan into conflict with the United States in the Pacific and spare the USSR a two-front war when the German invasion of the USSR did arrive.

Following this "defensive war in the east" came "an offensive war in Europe." This phase saw the USSR assist in the dismantling of Poland, wage war with Finland, and annex the Baltic states, Bessarabia, and Northern Bukovina—all made possible by the signing of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. The results were mixed. Stalin had incorporated new territories and peoples, yet this meant new sources of potential disloyalty. The notorious German-Soviet pact also disoriented Soviet citizens, who struggled to make sense of it. Meanwhile, the Winter War with Finland, although ostensibly a Soviet victory, convinced the German leadership of the USSR's fragility and pushed Finland into an alliance with Hitler.

From June 1941, Operation Barbarossa—the start of the third phase—put the Soviets on the defensive yet again. By early 1943 the Soviet victory at Stalingrad ushered in a fourth phase, which culminated in the Red Army's hard-fought taking of Berlin, and a subsequent offensive campaign against Japan. As elsewhere, Edele's analysis of the course of the Soviet-German war is nuanced and convincing. Put simply, the Soviet Union withstood the German onslaught and turned the tide of war because the Red Army learned to fight, or rather, it learned how to minimize its losses while inflicting greater and greater damage on the enemy. As these lessons increasingly bore fruit on the battlefield, the regime and military were "backed by larger and larger segments of the population" as "the compact between different social groups and the state crystallized more and more" (pp. 135, 148).

Victory over the Axis did not bring immediate peace. Rather, the Soviet war entered a final, fifth phase, as Moscow struggled to reassert control in the country's hinterlands amid famine and food rationing, and in the western borderlands where civil war persisted until 1949. Edele captures the immense scale of populations in motion, as often-brutalized groups of returning soldiers, POWs, forced laborers, and deported ethnic minorities traversed the Eurasian continent. Given this context, Victory Day emerges here as a rather artificial and anticlimactic, if understandable, milestone. In the words of one wearied Soviet citizen quoted in the book: "Emaciated, coughing. With spinal injuries and arthritis, gastric ulcers. ... That's how I remember victory" (p. 176).

The book's long-view approach offers general readers a number of important correctives to the conventional understanding of the war. Among other things, Edele underscores the vastly multiethnic nature of the Soviet war effort and the vital importance of the USSR's eastern frontier, where Chinese forces "bogged down" the Japanese and where invaluable Lend-Lease aid arrived via Japanese-controlled waters (p. 7). Also significant is the book's focus on the interplay between the war and Stalinist domestic politics. Most salient, however, is the constant emphasis on the centrality of the Soviet Union to the broader (and longer) global conflict.

Given the book's scope and concision, the author can be forgiven for treating certain areas in greater depth than others. Edele's somewhat terse discussion of the war's memory, for example, and his argument that the war victory "locked in" the Stalinist economic system, though plausible, could use further elaboration. Specialists might also quibble with certain asides. The degree to which "the regime had wagered on Russian nationalism as the mobilizing ideology" during the 1930s, for instance, seems overstated (p. 66). Nevertheless, these are minor points and in no way detract from

what is a superb account of the Soviet Second World War, one the present reviewer will be assigning to classes for a long time to come.

Jonathan Brunstedt, Texas A&M University

Tikhomirov, Alexey. *The Stalin Cult in East Germany and the Making of the Postwar Soviet Empire, 1945–1961*. Translated by Jacqueline Friedlander. Harvard Cold War Studies. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022. 384 pp. $125.00. ISBN 978-1-66691-189-3.

The cult of the leader has been well researched both in a variety of national dimensions and from different perspectives. Alexey Tikhomirov offers an innovative approach to this phenomenon by analyzing the export and reception of Stalin's cult in East Germany from 1945 to 1961: his method of entangled history opens new vistas. The transnational transfer of the Soviet leader's cult was complicated by the new German regime's need to reverse the previous infernal image of Stalin into a positive one, and then, after the turn to de-Stalinization in 1956—into a taboo one. Tikhomirov's analysis of the Soviet Military Administration's and East German Socialist Unity Party's (SED) policies is the strongest part of the study. For the USSR, the inculcation of Stalin's cult in Eastern Europe and, generally, clientelism ethics, was a part of the country's Sovietization policies that would allow it to realize postwar imperial ambitions and exercise control. For the German new elite, dominated by Communists (with their political tradition of personality cults), who had been educated in the Soviet Union and therefore were used to its patron-client relations, Stalin's cult fulfilled various functions. For them, following the Soviet model in everything was their path to power and the way to resolve all national problems swiftly (sometimes via direct consultations and requests for resources from Stalin). It also guaranteed that the Communist party's program would be realized and, not least, that they would retain their privileges amid the starvation and ruins of postwar Germany. For the SED, the same as for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Stalin's cult was an instrument for legitimating its own totalitarian rule.

The author centers his study on the party-state discourse on "how to construct the state and society" (p. 58). And here Tikhomirov is especially convincing in his examination of the mechanism of "making the cult community": how Stalin's image as enemy and occupant was transformed into a consolidating symbol, what functions it fulfilled in East German society, and what wounds in the collective psyche it was designed to heal. The imposed cult responded to the exhausted, disoriented East German people's need for normalization and stabilization in the wake of the catastrophe by offering a way for them to deal with their traumatic past and reinterpret the national defeat as a positive new start. By channeling the interpretations along the lines of guilt, shame, and repentance, and through them to rebirth and a new socialist start, the cult discourse aimed to alleviate pain and humiliation and build new identities. Soviet propaganda offered new norms, a new *Fuhrer*, and a path to "salvation" via a grand project of reconstruction, socialism, and democracy. It structured the world by building the images of friends and enemies: Stalin as a "friend of German people"; fascism and Western capitalism as new enemies. The "alignment with the Stalin cult was a postwar survival strategy ... a rational choice, granting" a kind of normality (p. 84).

Chapter 5 discusses the mechanisms by which the general population accepted the cult. It is rich in fascinating facts, anecdotes, and new archival evidence. It concludes that East Germans "clearly did not trust the best friend," but under pressure complied with the cult narrative and the rules of game and "played the prescribed roles" (pp. 314, 115). It became a ritual that explained the new world, opened the opportunities for upward mobility, and still allowed for preserving a degree of autonomy that smoldered in biergarten conversations, dissident underground leaflets, and iconoclastic reactions. When Tikhomirov discusses the hypocrisy and cynicism of East Germans' compliance while harboring their autonomy under the pressure of state ideological norms, he contributes to a larger debate. Michael David-Fox in *Crossing Borders* (2015) and Evgeny Dobrenko in "Socialism as Representation and Will" (2004), among others, put forward the notion of the ritualistic and performative dimensions of ideology (a show of "good behavior"), which took

precedence over the content of inner beliefs in Stalin's Soviet Union. Alexei Yurchak in *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More* (2005) reasons that this gap between ideological performance and content widened in late post-Stalin USSR. In this context, the story of the implementation of Bolshevik methods of repression and indoctrination on foreign soil raises important questions about the limits of social engineering and its complex relationship with political culture and deep layers of a nation's collective psyche.

The study is well-grounded in Russian and German archival sources. It has plenty of archival photographs illustrating the indoctrination practices. The methodology that the author selected—entangled history—proved most productive for analyzing a broad range of historical evidence and factors and raised historical research to a new level.

Olga Velikanova, University of North Texas

Abylkhozhin, Zhulduzbek, Mikhail Akulov, and Alexandra Tsay, eds. *Stalinism in Kazakhstan: History, Memory, and Representation*. Translated by Anton Platonov and Simon Pawley. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2021. ix + 203 pp. $100.00. ISBN 978-1-7936-4162-5.

With the war between Russia and Ukraine and the various economic, travel, and cultural sanctions between Russia and much of the Western world, it will likely be difficult in the short and medium-term for foreign Soviet scholars to conduct research within Russia itself. This situation will likely lead to an increase in academic work on the non-Russian former Soviet republics as scholars move to work in regions with more accessible archives and resources. Auspiciously, *Stalinism in Kazakhstan* offers readers insights into current scholarship carried out by Central Asian researchers from several different fields, offering a needed English-language Central Asian perspective to the growing research on the non-Russian union republics by Western scholars, and more specifically to the growing literature on Soviet Kazakhstan. Furthermore, this volume contextualizes Kazakhstan within the larger Soviet narrative by eschewing a focus on nationality or ethnicity, which is often front and center in many works on the region, and instead highlights points of similarity and comparison with the broader Soviet experience.

This collection of essays is divided into three sections on history, memory studies, and the fine arts. In the first section, on history, Mikhail Akulov, Zhulduzbek Abylkhozhin, and Zauresh Saktaganova examine the use of terror and repression within Kazakhstan and the Soviet Union as a whole. Akulov compares the intermixing of terror and utopia in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, and describes how the utopian goals of both regimes made violence an inherent part of their social systems in both wartime and peacetime. Abylkhozhin discusses the use of violence during collectivization in Kazakhstan and contextualizes dekulakization, denomadization, and the seizure of livestock and grain within the larger repressive policies and ideologies of the state. Saktaganova discusses the post-World War II purges within the Kazakh Academy of Sciences. She argues that the postwar purges were more personalized than during the 1930s, and that they were often instigated by jealous and less qualified members of the academy. Saktaganova asserts that it is the responsibility of historians to not only identify and tell the tales of those who the Soviet state repressed, but also to identify and publish the names of those individuals who denounced their colleagues.

The section on memory explores how individuals in Central Asia continue to come to terms with Stalinism's odious influence. Yuriy Serebriansky's essay is an interesting hybrid work that attempts to create a "collective image" of Soviet settlers who were forcibly deported to Kazakhstan. It combines a fictionalized account of a Polish child being deported to Kazakhstan, a 1936 document ordering the deportation of Polish and German families from Ukraine to Kazakhstan, and accounts of individuals from deported families in Central Asia, all to present a narrative on the memories and traumas these forced settlers experienced. Ekaterina Kuznetsova examines the accounts of those who survived Karlag, the large Gulag camp system near Karaganda. She also focuses on the background of Dolinka, where the main Gulag administration for Karlag was located, both before the construction of the Gulag system and after the Stalinist era. Alexandra Tsay examines collective

memory and trauma among Soviet Koreans whom the Soviet state deported to Central Asia in the 1930s. She argues that officially enforced silence regarding state crimes and brutality during the Soviet period has resulted in a modern Kazakhstan that is a "post-memory space" in which nearly every segment of the population has to contend with a traumatic past that some might wish to forget, but others desire to explore (p. 118).

The final section of *Stalinism in Kazakhstan* discusses the impact of Stalinism on art and artists in Central Asia. Marinika Babanazarova, the former director of the Nukus State Art Museum, details the creation of the museum and its founder, Igor Savitsky, in the 1960s, as well as how he acquired art from repressed artists. She connects the Soviet repression of artists with the development of an arts culture in Uzbekistan. Babanazarova also discusses the biographies of several repressed artists who had fallen into obscurity in the Soviet era, and whose works the museum had acquired and displayed. Guldana Sarafova examines the lives and work of artists who had been exiled to Karlag and were inmates in the larger camp system. She notes that repressed artists did have some opportunity for artistic expression, although they were seldom able to convey aspects of Gulag life in their art. Similar to Babanazarova, Sarafova contends that while most repressed artists returned to their homes after Karlag, several remained in Kazakhstan, where they had a significant impact in the development of artistic culture in the region through their teaching of upcoming Kazakhstani artists. The final essay, by Asel Kadyrkhanova, examines the manifestation of Soviet trauma in contemporary art in Kazakhstan. She contends that Kazakhstani society has never fully mourned or acknowledged all of the trauma the country had gone through during the Soviet era, and that one way in which this acknowledgment of trauma can be conveyed is through art. Khadyrkhanova describes several of her own pieces of art that are specifically meant to identify and raise discussion on the impact of trauma in Kazakhstan.

While this volume does a solid job of introducing Russian-language Central Asian scholarship to an English-speaking audience, the different academic writing styles and varying quality of some of the essays can be jarring for readers. While partially an element of being components of a larger edited work, a few essays, despite making insightful points about the impact of Stalinism in Central Asia, feel a bit shallow and lacking in rigor, and several essays are more descriptive than argumentative. Despite these issues, *Stalinism in Kazakhstan* succeeds in its larger purpose of promoting Central Asian scholarship and contextualizing Stalinist Kazakhstan within the larger Soviet narratives on Stalinist repression, memory studies, and artistic development without having to do so exclusively through the lens of ethnicity or Soviet nationality policy. It is refreshing to see Central Asian and Kazakhstani scholarship moving in this direction.

Jonathon R. Dreeze, Cornell College

Erlacher, Trevor. *Ukrainian Nationalism in the Age of Extremes: An Intellectual Biography of Dmytro Dontsov*. Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2021. 654 pp. $84.00. ISBN 978-0-6742-5093-2.

Trevor Erlacher offers an engaging book on Ukrainian political thinker Dmytro Dontsov (1883–1973), situating him in European, Russian, and Ukrainian intellectual history. Dontsov's doctrine of Ukrainian integral nationalism emphasized the nation over individual rights and promoted a militant, authoritarian world view. Iconoclastic authoritarianism and cosmopolitan ultranationalism marked Donstov's evolution. Dontsov grew hostile to liberal democracy as he rebelled against the Russian Empire, the Bolsheviks, and older Ukrainian nationalist trends. Dontsov's nationalism combatted foreign influences and national minorities, yet it emerged due to his upbringing in the Russian intelligentsia, and it evolved in European and North American exile.

Dontsov came from a middle-class Russian family in southern Ukraine. He embraced Ukrainian nationalism in the imperial capital, St. Petersburg. As a Marxist revolutionary in St. Petersburg,

Kyiv, Vienna, and Lviv, Dontsov broke with Ukrainian socialists and "bourgeois nationalists." He claimed they were too conciliatory to the Russian intelligentsia and Russian imperialism. As he fought Russian nationalists and Slavophiles, Dontsov internalized their illiberal politics. Only a militant, uncompromising nationalism could free Ukrainians from Russian rule. Dontsov's turn to Ukrainian nationalism reflected a turn-of-the-century crisis in Marxism and positivism experienced in imperial Russia and Europe.

World War I and Russia's revolutions of 1917 inspired Dontsov and other Europeans to glorify militarism and dictatorial methods. As a propagandist in Berlin and Bern, and later for Hetman Pavlo Skoropads'kyi in Kyiv, Dontsov claimed Ukrainians were a Central European nation deserving the right to self-determination, and that imperial Germany could save Ukraine from destruction by Russia.

As a writer and editor in interwar Polish Lviv, Dontsov resisted the post-Versailles political order. He called for an active nationalism that emulated the brutality, discipline, hierarchy, and ideological fanaticism of the Bolsheviks and Fascists. Dontsov's reactionary revolution, like that of German conservative revolutionaries, rediscovered and glorified traditional heroes and values and expressed them in a modern aesthetics to mobilize the masses and cultivate a new generation of national leaders. Dontsov's revolutionary aesthetics at first consisted of expressionism and modernism, but by the 1930s it had turned to a more restrained literary classicism.

Stalinist terror and the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–33 vindicated Dontsov's conviction that Bolshevik Russia had to be destroyed with Nazi Germany's help. Dontsov's anti-Semitism, first expressed after the 1926 assassination of his erstwhile colleague Symon Petliura, intensified with Hitler's rise to power in 1933. Dontsov expressed anti-Semitism in racial terms. Ukrainians were to model themselves on Hitler and the Nazis. Young writers gathered around Dontsov and his wife, Mariika Bachyns'ka-Dontsova, espoused these views, though some of them later split with Dontsov due to conflicts over the Dontsovs' journal, *Vistnyk*. Like the Nazis, the *Vistnyk* cohort praised modern women who asserted their sexuality, physical vitality, and intellect, yet were disciplined soldiers of the nation who did not question men's privileges. Dontsov avoided political action. Yet the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), and especially its younger activists in eastern Galicia, embraced Dontsov's nationalism and collaborated with the Third Reich.

With the outbreak of World War II, writers devoted to Dontsov led the OUN and faced torture and death at the hands of the Nazis. Dontsov, though, made no such sacrifices. From the safety of Bucharest and Prague, Dontsov adopted a mystical form of nationalism supporting a new race of Ukrainian leaders based on those of medieval Kyivan Rus. The Nazis defended European nations against the Bolshevik threat. Dontsov fled to North America after World War II, settling down in Montreal, Canada. His Canadian residency provoked a national scandal in 1948. Public defense of Dontsov highlighted the transformation of wartime collaborators and Nazi apologists like him into propaganda soldiers in the Cold War. Dontsov failed to apologize for his wartime behavior and continued to share racist and anti-Semitic views. He retreated into Christian prophecies of a worldwide struggle with a Satanic Russia that would end the world yet bring about a new one with a free Ukraine. Erlacher concludes by highlighting the relevance of Dontsov's rhetoric about nationalism, Europe, and Russia to today's independent Ukraine.

Erlacher draws extensively from materials in Dontsov's personal archive in Warsaw and archives in Ukraine and Canada. He offers insightful criticism of Dontsov's understanding of Nietzsche, one of Dontsov's role models, demonstrating that, over the course of his life, Dontsov embodied the slave mentality of the herd and mistakenly took Nietzsche's praise of war and ruling castes at face value. Erlacher's book is a welcome contribution to European intellectual history as well as Russian, East European, and Ukrainian history.

William Risch, Georgia College

Romaniello, Matthew P., Alison K. Smith, and Tricia Starks, eds. *The Life Cycle of Russian Things: From Fish Guts to Fabergé, 1600–Present*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. ix + 248 pp. $115.00. ISBN 978-1-350-18602-6.

The twelve chapters in this edited collection exemplify the rich possibilities that research into material culture offers to scholars of the Slavic world. The editors neatly balance the contributions into four even sections so as to reveal the "life cycle" of Russian objects, meaning the volume addresses how ideas are manifested into things, how those things are then made, how people interact with them, and how some things come to be collected or preserved. Collectively, the chapters also demonstrate how Russia was integrated into all kinds of international networks over several centuries, and how language sometimes constrains analyzes of material objects or categories of them.

The first section, entitled "Transforming Things," begins with Clare Griffin's solid chapter on seventeenth-century apothecary ware. These ceramic vessels were used to produce and store medicines, and an analysis of texts that mention them (no actual pieces of apothecary ware have survived) offers much information concerning the nature of science in the Muscovite era. Griffin is notably able to show that the production of medicines was not only highly dependent on artisanal knowledge and skill, but that many of the experts involved were Russians rather than foreigners. The subsequent chapter—Alison Smith's study of lime and limestone in the eighteenth century—looks at a product that was instrumental in transforming building practices in Russia. Rulers such as Peter the Great associated stone buildings with modernity; hence the Russian state took a keen interest in lime and limestone, to the point where the government eventually issued decrees concerning the identification of deposits of the latter. Smith's chapter explains the technical steps for creating and working with both substances and raises the question of how particular localities became integrated into larger state initiatives. Finally, this section ends with Ann Komaromi's analysis of samizdat texts, which she argues "helped bridge the divides created by Soviet censorship between late Soviet culture, the repressed language of modernism and the avant-garde, and culture in the West" (p. 51).

The second section of the volume considers how things are made. First, readers learn how fish guts are transformed into isinglass (a product that strains particles from beer and wine) and glue. The problems language can pose for historians are much in evidence in this chapter, as its author Matthew Romaniello explains that the term "klei" was used for both on Russian export lists until the end of the eighteenth century. Klei was a significant source of revenue for the government, and isinglass was so important that foreign customers tried for decades to reverse-engineer it. By contrast, Katherine Pickering Antonova's chapter on Chikhachev plaid shifts to a product that had a more localized importance. Textile production was common on Russian estates in regions where it was easier to raise sheep and grow flax than it was to produce cereal grains. Cloth was typically made during breaks in the agricultural year, and output flourished so long as skilled labor was readily and cheaply available, in other words prior to the emancipation of the serfs. Following this chapter, Charles Steinwedel offers a truly fascinating look at how sugar came to be considered a basic necessity in the late Imperial period. By the start of the First World War, Russia was one of the world's largest producers of sugar, but that status had only been achieved after considerable public debate concerning the health benefits of sugar as well as concerted industry efforts to regularize its production.

The three chapters that form the collection's "Touching Things" section consider the ways in which samovars became common in Russian households; how Fabergé tobacco cases evolved into symbols of wealth and social status; and what it felt to be part of a T-34 tank crew during World War II, respectively. To begin, Audra Yoder describes how the spread of British tea culture led the Russian nobility to embrace samovars, but notes that they eventually became part of mass culture owing to uniquely domestic circumstances such as the creation of manufacturing centers (like the one in Tula) and the shape of Russian stoves. Similarly, while smoking was an unremarked habit of daily life at the start of the twentieth century, Tricia Starks's chapter demonstrates that these "accessories to addiction" gradually became important markers of state service, symbols of manliness in miliary milieux, and fashionable accessories for royal women (p. 137). Brandon Schechter's

contribution, in turn, argues that T-34 tanks were quite literally the "physical embodiment of Stalinism," with everything from the simplicity of their design to their emotional and tactile connections with crew members reflecting some aspect of Soviet society at large (p. 153).

The final chapters of the book are grouped under the heading "Preserving Things." Erika Monahan analyzes the first atlas of Siberia, Semen Remezov's *Khorograficheskaia kniga*, which dates from the turn of the eighteenth century. The book, whose maps are arranged around river systems, offers important information concerning the intermingling of people of different faiths and ethnicities in this part of the Russian empire. Marisa Karyl Franz's study of a coat worn by a Siberian shaman that was acquired by Waldemar Bogoras during the Jesup North Pacific Expedition (1897–1902) follows. Her chapter show how presentations of Siberian shamanism in museums has been evolving as curators move away from the idea that ethnographic objects are static. Finally, the volume ends with Ulrike Schmiegelt-Rietig's discussion of a German military art-protection unit that operated in northwest Russia during the Second World War. She shows that even as Nazi leaders publicly denigrated Russian culture, some Germans were forced to reconsider the ideas they had imbibed once they were confronted with tangible artefacts of that culture. This led, for example, to dozens of crates of objects from the Novgorod State Museum being taken to Germany for exhibition before they were returned at the end of the war.

While readers will undoubtedly find some chapters of *The Life Cycle of Russian Things* more engaging than others depending on their individual interests, the volume as a whole is a welcome addition to the growing literature on material culture in Russian history. The editors should be commended for the ways in which they balanced the chapters and for including subjects drawn from the Muscovite, Imperial, and Soviet periods. In the end, my only quibble with the book concerns the illustrations, which would have been much better had they been in color.

Alison Rowley, Concordia University (Montreal)

Halperin, Charles J. *Ivan the Terrible in Russian Historical Memory since 1991*. Studies in Russian and Slavic Literatures, Cultures, and History. Brookline, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2021. 308 pp. $119.00. ISBN 978-1-644-69587-6.

In 2019, Charles Halperin published a successful monograph of Tsar Ivan IV, *Ivan the Terrible: Free to Reward and Free to Punish*. Two years later, Halperin has produced a book that promises "as comprehensive an analysis of everything published in Russia about Ivan since 1991 as possible." In a certain sense Halperin delivers on his promise, collecting indeed almost every non-fiction publication about Tsar Ivan since 1991. Several Appendices at the end of his book, taken together, constitute a comprehensive bibliography of all sorts of publications on Ivan IV in post-Soviet Russia. The book consists of two parts. Part 1 is divided into ten chapters, of which the first and the last five deal with scientific publications, while chapters 2–5 discuss publications by amateurs. Part 2 includes three chapters on film: the first two on Sergei Eisenstein's famous *Ivan Grozny* (1944), which was produced in Stalin's time and doesn't fit the timeframe of the book, and the last one about Pavel Lungin's *The Tsar*, which came to screen in 2008.

Halperin discusses various approaches to Ivan IV—proposals to beatify the tsar, comparisons of Ivan IV with Stalin, approaches to Ivan IV in textbooks and history surveys, Ivan IV as a military strategist, Ivan IV in the perspective of imperial history, and Ivan the Terrible within the perspective of Tatar history. Halperin offers plenty of interesting observations, but the very design and research strategy of this book raise serious questions. If it wants to be a research into the historiography of Ivan IV, then it should not deal with non-scholarly texts and it should include non-Russian scholarly texts about the subject, as Russian history writing in the post-communist period has been part of international scholarship. The author of such a study shouldn't undermine the value of the research by proclaiming that "because my focus is on composite schools of thought about the tsar, I have eschewed direct quotations and specific page references" (p. 5).

Focusing exclusively on Russian texts, both scholarly and non-scholarly, would also be legitimate. But that would require the author to adopt a memory studies-perspective. That would also legitimate the inclusion of part 2, which addresses film. And in such a case, discussing the Eisenstein film as an element of contemporary Russian collective memory would also be appropriate. Halperin actually points in this direction, correctly saying that "the lack of definitive documentary proof of much of what we think we know about Ivan to the utilization of his reign as a political foil onto which current cultural anxieties can be projected" (p. 245). However, this book is not an exercise in memory studies, and the author himself many times declares that memory studies of any kind are far from his intention. In his Introduction he says that he "leaves the resonance of these publications to specialists in contemporary Russian culture and politics" and that he has "no way to measure [the] popularity" of particular texts, and again in the Conclusion that he leaves the task of measuring the impact of these materials on popular conceptions of Ivan IV to other scholars (pp. 5, 4, 250). Halperin rarely discusses the political context and intentions of texts he analyzes, even those of a non-scholarly nature, and he tells us very little about the political profiles of those whose works he discusses.

In conclusion, Halperin claims that since 1991 Ivan has remained at the center of attention and is the fulcrum around which every conceivable interpretation of Russian history rotates (p. 247). This is, of course, a huge exaggeration. Closer to truth is Marielle Wejermars, whom Halperin cites in the Introduction, when she writes that "the memory of Ivan [is] so volatile that only those on the margins of political debate dare to employ it" (p. xi).

Alexey Miller, European University at St. Petersburg

Herzberg, Julia, Andreas Renner, and Ingrid Schierle, eds. *The Russian Cold: Histories of Ice, Frost, and Snow*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2021. 348 pp. $120.00. ISBN 978-1-80073-127-1.

Can Russian identity be defined by the experience of cold? This question underlies the diverse essays comprising *The Russian Cold: Histories of Ice, Frost, and Snow*. The answer has implications beyond the realm of scholarship. In our epoch of global warming, the centrality of cold to ways of life has inspired people to frame mitigating climate change as a matter of cultural freedom. Given the reliance of their hunting cultures upon sea ice, Arctic peoples have laid claim to "the right to be cold," as Inuit activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier put it. Does a similar identification with cold characterize Russian culture, potentially providing a basis for international action on reducing emissions of greenhouse gases that warm the planet? Collectively, the essays in *The Russian Cold* suggest not: rather, in analyzing perceptions of cold since the eighteenth century, the authors reveal ambivalence, opportunism, and flux.

Consisting of ten essays, plus the editors' introduction and conclusion, *The Russian Cold* explores histories of science, media, and everyday life in the Russian Empire, Soviet Union, and Germany. The special inclusion of Germany partly reflects the orientation of the institutions—the German Historical Institute Moscow and the Munich-based Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society—that sponsored the conference from which the volume emerges. But it also enhances the book's investigation of Russian identity.

The essays find that outsiders, including Germans recruited to the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, played a prominent role in making cold part of the "cliché of 'Russian'" (p. 134). Julia Herzberg, tracing the history of ideas about climate and cold, demonstrates that Europeans' association of Russia with cold coalesced specifically during the eighteenth century. She highlights the reports by naturalist Johann Georg Gmelin of mercury freezing in Iakutsk that put Russia on people's "mental map of the coldest regions of the world" (p. 64). But she also reveals the efforts of another Tübingen-trained academician, Georg Wolfgang Kraft, at "domesticating" cold during the exhibition of Tsarina Anna's ice palace in 1740 (p. 59). By showing the usefulness of ice and the measurability and predictability of cold weather, Kraft enabled the cultural perception of cold to "lose more and more

of its terror" (p. 55). Fast-forwarding to the twentieth century, essays by Roman Mauer and Aleksandr Kuzminykh examine the resurgence of fearful views of the Russian cold during and after World War II. In German soldiers' experiences and war films about the Eastern Front, the cold evoked trauma, failure, death, and abandonment. External attitudes toward Russia's climate—from wariness to fascination to terror—variously constructed an image of the country as severe and its peoples as uniquely adapted to cold.

Other essays explore the role of cold in internal constructions of identity. One strand of inquiry focuses on how Russia's political regimes and scientific elites embraced the idea of mastering the cold in order to demonstrate legitimacy and expertise. As Denis J. B. Shaw argues in his essay about Soviet geographer Andrei Grigor'ev, scientists in Russia developed genuinely innovative perspectives about the cold. But Erki Tammiksaar and Alexander Ananyev show that the self-image of having a special relationship with the cold was also heavily politicized. Tammiksaar details the Soviet attempt to rewrite the history of Antarctic exploration to advance the claim that the continent was discovered in 1820 by an Imperial Russian expedition. During the Cold War, Tammiksaar argues, "being 'the first' was an important political tool in proving one's supremacy in the world" (p. 74); the USSR pursued this ideological goal by amplifying its continuity with a tradition of navigating icy seas. For Ananyev, Russian identification with the cold was embodied by the celebration of polar explorers and ice hockey players in Soviet times. Promoted by state propaganda, these men and their accomplishments on the ice represented officially sanctioned values of heroic masculinity, solidarity, and technical skill. Their popularity forged a bond between state and society that continued to resonate in post-Soviet Russia. As Ananyev observes, "both sports and polar motifs of male heroism figure in the masculine image of the leader of the country that is personified in the figure of V. V. Putin" (p. 243). In 2022, Putin's invasion of Ukraine has highlighted the devastating consequences of this toxic identity—fashioned in part through cold—built upon distorting history and worshipping manliness.

Juxtaposed with essays analyzing political regimes' uses of the cold are essays tracing broader social reflections, which sometimes ran orthogonally to ruling messages. In her overview of portrayals of ice and snow in Soviet and post-Soviet Russian cinema, for example, Oksana Bulgakowa notes a shift during the Khrushchev Thaw. In contrast to the Russian mastery of cold promoted by Soviet authorities and reinforced by outsiders, films of the Thaw used ice and snow to represent "radical inhumanity" (p. 151). As Bulgakowa observes, works about the Gulag depicted cold "not as a healthy, inalienable part of the national identity but as a life-threatening climatic condition" symbolizing political repression (p. 149). Similarly, Aleksei Popov shows that, in a departure from the Stalin-era idea of "tourism as a school of courage," skiing after the Thaw centered on personal enjoyment with family (p. 205). Rather than controlled opportunities to cultivate military skills, winter recreation became "independent, autonomous, and apolitical" (p. 218). Finally, Nataliia Rodigina examines assessments of Siberia's climate as debated in the thick journals of late Imperial Russia. She argues that whether Siberia was described as inhospitably cold or agriculturally accommodating depended on writers' views of peasant migration beyond the Urals; those who opposed resettlement tended toward the former, while those who supported it asserted the latter. Her essay attests to what Bulgakowa describes as an "individual, differentiated perception that does not coincide with the national cliché" about the cold (p. 153). And yet, while highlighting counterpoints to pro-regime tropes, the essays reveal the instability of cold in Russian identity, casting doubt on its power to spur action on global warming.

The Russian Cold achieves its goal of "historicizing cold in Russia," examining changes in ideas about the cold across time (p. 249). Notably, Herzberg's analysis of eighteenth-century developments illuminates an understudied period of Russia's environmental history, while Bulgakowa's essay includes a valuable, seemingly comprehensive annotated list of Russian films featuring cold. It is also worth acknowledging that five out of nine essays were translated by Jacqueline Friedlander, who deserves credit for making German- and Russian-language scholarship more widely accessible. Judged by the criterion of cohesiveness, however, the essays seem scattershot; the editors themselves acknowledge the collection to be "somewhat arbitrary" (p. 251). Moreover, the volume

focuses nearly exclusively on ideational rather than physical aspects of cold. Despite the aspiration to explore "the active role of the environment and nature," the editors concede that "this is not a volume about climate history" in the material sense (pp. 6, 249). Cold as a physical phenomenon appears uniform and static. Indeed, one essay tellingly refers to "climate—the unchanging cold, snow, winter"—as "the only constant" (p. 219). But neither climate nor cold have historically remained unchanging—the Arctic, for example, experienced warming in the 1930s. It remains for future volumes to take up Russia's climatic diversity and fluidity and its peoples' adaptations to a changing environment.

Pey-Yi Chu, Pomona College

Jenks, Andrew L. *Collaboration in Space and the Search for Peace on Earth*. Anthem Series on Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. London: Anthem Press, 2021. 180 pp. $125.00. ISBN 978-1-83998-042-8.

This short book is a study of the Apollo-Soiuz Test Project (ASTP) between 1970 and 1975, when the United States and the Soviet Union planned and executed a rendezvous and docking of their two spacecraft in earth orbit. The Soviets called it Soiuz-Apollo, of course, and even created a popular brand of cigarettes in its honor, with the docking scene featured on the front cover. Soiuz was the Soviet version of America's Gemini program, just at the beginning of its many hurrahs over the years. As for Apollo, America's victory program to the moon, this was its last.

Andrew Jenks explores the details of the ASTP as a chapter in what he calls the "search for peace," a momentum for "peaceful coexistence" and international cooperation (p. 9). This was a topic pioneered by Phyllis Conn in her dissertation, "Cooperation in Space: The Soviet Space Program and International Science, 1957–1972" (1994). Jenks takes up the story just about where Conn concluded. He also proposes a new and surprising historical timeline for the history of spaceflight: with the ASTP as a dramatic turning point between the intense superpower competition before, in the Space Race of the 1960s; and a new golden era of spaceflight cooperation after, something even approaching a new worldwide web for outer space.

Chapter 1 offers a political history of international cooperation, with a nod to President Richard Nixon's policy of detente, and to the role of the ASTP as a means to lessen the horrors of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), though Jenks did not include the related Strategic Arms Limitations Talks. Chapter 2 is more of an intellectual history, including the contributions of Russian visionaries and American New Age thinkers. There is also a discussion of cooperative moon mapping, and of the establishment of the peace-loving and green-friendly Association of Space Explorers. Jenks discusses how Apollo 8's "Earthrise" photograph, and media stars like Jacques Cousteau and Carl Sagan, promoted a new imagery and consciousness of planet Earth.

Chapter 3 is an excursion into the engineering of ASTP, especially in the docking module, the Androgynous Peripheral Assembly System, meant to be the product of a cooperative design and neutral interface, and featured here as a metaphor for how peace ought to work on earth. Neither side was privileged. The two craft docked and interfolded as equals. This was a spirit represented by the two lead engineers, Vladimir Syromiatnikov and Caldwell Johnson. Jenks also tells the colorful story of the actual mission as it folded and unfolded in July 1975. Chapter 4 explores security and secrecy issues in the spaceflight realm through the ASTP years and afterward. To align with the title of his book, Jenks makes the provocative argument that the United States was the closed society, beholden to its National Security State and "Fortress America" (p. 150), especially in the era of Ronald Reagan, while the Soviet Union was the more open society in international cooperation and information exchange, personified in the peacemaker Mikhail Gorbachev.

These kinds of comparisons need critical fine-tuning. With its failing economy and repressive political system, the USSR certainly had more to gain from Western technology and expertise. That was one meaning of its openness. There is no discussion of how the United States initiated and financed the Shuttle-Mir program and the International Space Station, both of which helped revive

the Russian Space Program after the overthrow of the USSR in 1991, a collapse partly resulting from President Reagan's Cold War escalations. Jenks also offers some quick and easy equivalences, as for example between the Baikonur Launch Complex and Cape Canaveral. Yet Baikonur was an island of Russian imperial domination in Soviet Kazakhstan. Jenks offers praise for the Soviet Interkosmos program, an effort to expand spaceflight collaboration with its bloc of satellite states and allies, yet the foreign cosmonauts who participated in it later complained of poor treatment by their chauvinistic Russian hosts.

In a welcome approach, one pioneered by historian Slava Gerovitch, Jenks gives voice to both American and Russian spacefarers, administrators, and engineers, drawing from a variety of Russian and English-language sources. Jenks did not use any official Soviet party-state or Roskosmos archives. But he did include interviews, materials from presidential libraries, the NASA Historical Reference Collection, and items from the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Michael G. Smith, Purdue University

Ro'i, Yaacov. *The Bleeding Wound: The Soviet-Afghan War and the Collapse of the Soviet System*. Cold War International History Project. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022. xiii + 411 pp. $65.00. ISBN 978-1-503-62874-8.

It is something of a received truth about the Soviet-Afghan War (1979-89) that it contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, outside of Mark Galeotti's 1992 Ph.D. thesis (later abridged into a book) and the odd journal article, there has been little systematic scholarly attention devoted to this issue.

It is therefore more than welcome that Yaacov Ro'i, Professor Emeritus at the Cummings Center for Russian and East European Studies at Tel Aviv University, has produced a meticulous study of the manner in which the Soviet-Afghan War became entangled with processes that transformed Soviet society in its final years. The war's effects on the Soviet military, public opinion, political decision-making, the trajectories of the war's veterans, and social and political developments in the Soviet Central Asian republics are among the many topics examined in a volume that is broad in scope and thorough in its empirical treatment.

The first thing that is likely to strike the reader's eye is indeed the book's empirical richness. Bringing together much of the recent scholarship on the Soviet-Afghan War (although leaving out some, like Antonio Giustozzi's, that focuses on the Afghan side of the conflict), it also draws on a wide range of earlier primary and secondary sources. In addition, it makes illuminating use of interviews and surveys that Ro'i and a team of assistant researchers had the foresight to conduct with veterans and civilians in the immediate years after the Soviet collapse. This lays the groundwork for a book that accounts for developments with impressive nuance and chronological detail.

Some of the book's sections synthesize and flesh out what is already quite well known. The turns and positions in the discussions of the war among the Soviet political and military elites have been extensively discussed in Artemy Kalinovsky's *The Long Goodbye* and Sarah E. Mendelson's *Changing Course*, and Ro'i's account mainly provides interesting additional detail. In a similar vein, the comprehensive and nuanced account of the war's effects on Islamist groupings, cultural reformists, war veterans, the KGB, and others in Central Asia, mostly brings together and reinforces existing scholarship on the topic.

However, elsewhere the detailed account that Ro'i puts forth upturns certain received ideas. The discussion of the Soviet media's coverage of the war, for instance, compellingly argues that the official censorship on the war began to be gradually—if very cautiously—recalibrated even before Gorbachev's glasnost brought a watershed in Soviet media policy. Ro'i puts this down in part to the pre-Gorbachev leadership's difficulties in trying to hide the realities of the war from a Soviet public increasingly exposed to alternative sources of information (not least returning soldiers).

Similarly, one of the book's sections torpedoes the claim that the Soviet military leadership was loath to learn the lessons of the Afghan War. In fact, as Ro'i demonstrates, senior officers were

mindful of the utility of the Afghan War for the onward tactical and operational development of the Soviet armed forces. Indeed, some officers who served in Afghanistan were promoted to senior positions, in which they were able to influence military decision-making and training programs drawing on their experiences in Afghanistan.

Not all claims left me equally convinced, for instance, that hazing increased in Afghanistan as compared to peacetime service (p. 59), or that Central Asian soldiers were particularly bitter about the treatment they received at the hands of their commanding officers (p. 65). Yet these are minor points in an account distinguished by its empirical scrupulousness.

Ro'i contends that ultimately the war had a series of effects on the Soviet system—from bringing about the Soviet Union's growing international isolation and undermining the prestige of its armed forces, to weakening the authority of the political leadership, damaging the credibility of the country's superpower status, and providing fuel to Gorbachev's perestroika reforms. While the book thankfully stops short of trying to gauge the relative contribution of the war to the Soviet Union's demise as compared to other factors (for example, national mobilization and economic decline), its thorough narrative yields ample evidence that the war was implicated in key developments at the end of the Soviet era.

Ro'i has done students of the Soviet-Afghan War a great service in synthesizing a wealth of sources and setting out a highly detailed account of the effects of the war, and has done so in a readable style that makes the book accessible for novice and expert alike. This thorough book is a very welcome addition to the field and is set to become a standard work.

Markus Balázs Göransson, Swedish Defense University

Social Sciences, Contemporary Russia, and Other

Arkhipova, Aleksandra, and Anna Kirziuk. *Opasnye sovetskie veshchi: Gorodskie legendy i strakhi v SSSR*. 2d ed. Kul'tura povsednevnosti. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2021. 536 pp. R600.00. ISBN 978-5-4448-1598-4.

This volume proved so popular after its initial publication in 2020 that an additional print run was required within the same year, and when Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie released the second edition, with minor revisions, in 2021, it made digital and audio versions available as well. The reasons for this popularity are obvious: *Opasnye sovetskie veshchi* (Dangerous Soviet Things) is the first book-length study of Soviet urban legends, and it is co-authored by two of Russia's leading anthropologists and folklorists, who wrote in an accessible and entertaining style. The book's conceptual framework is rooted in the Western (primarily American) scholarship of urban folklore (chap. 1) as well as in Vladimir Propp's morphological approach to the folktale. Propp's analysis also informs Arkhipova and Kirziuk's classification of motifs in Soviet and post-Soviet urban legends provided in the Appendix.

The structure of *Opasnye sovetskie veshchi* combines two approaches to the study of Soviet urban folklore: historical and structural-morphological, although the former clearly dominates as the authors seek to trace the origins of urban legends in Soviet society to certain historical phenomena. Chapters 2 and 3, in particular, deal with the ideological roots of many Soviet urban legends and fears, tracing them back to the Stalinist campaigns against "enemies of the people" and post-Stalinist ideological struggles. Here and elsewhere the authors argue that Soviet ideologists often intentionally used rumors (or misinformation in today's gloss) to produce certain social effects, such as control over public behavior in situations involving foreign tourists. At the same time, the tendency to interpret things as messages led to situations where overzealous bureaucrats and common citizens could see anti-Soviet propaganda in school notebook covers, matchboxes, and wall carpets.

However, the power of urban legends is in their virality, which ensures their reproduction without any centralized effort, and in chapters 4–6, Arkhipova and Kirziuk examine major motifs or

Soviet urban folklore and explore the grass-roots circulation of popular rumors and fears throughout the Soviet era. Here, a reader unfamiliar with Soviet daily realities will encounter the most fascinating material, such as stories about processed meat products made of human flesh or rats, poisoned Western jeans and bubble gum, the Colorado potato beetle as a CIA-developed bioweapon, and many others. Chapter 5, which deals with xenophobic narratives, is particularly powerful, as the authors show how public sentiment produced by the widespread circulations of such narratives as, for example, rumors about Jewish physician-murderers, informed and at times even defined the political agenda in the Soviet Union.

While urban folklore is in no way a specifically Soviet phenomenon, Arkhipova and Kirziuk claim that there was, indeed, something specific about Soviet urban legends: namely, a deep involvement of state actors in its circulation and at times production. This claim still needs to be tested by and, perhaps, adjusted *vis-à-vis* comparative evidence: for example, the involvement of American and British state structures in the investigation and dissemination of stories about extraterrestrial visitations is well-documented. At the same time, the keen attention paid to urban legends by Soviet authorities is undeniable, and it prompts an important observation: in the Soviet context, urban legends represented oral forms of conspiracy theories, hence their mobilizing but also potentially disruptive and subversive effect, which Soviet officials could not leave unattended. In this sense, *Opasnye sovetskie veshchi* is a valuable contribution to our understanding of conspiratorial narratives in Russian society during and after the Soviet period, a burgeoning field that includes Ilya Yablokov's *Fortress Russia* (2018), Eliot Borenstein's *Plots against Russia* (2019), and many other works. While the existing scholarship is predominantly focused on written conspiratorial narratives, Arkhipova and Kirziuk study their oral transmission: the condition in which conspiracies became emplotted in folklore genres, acquired new audiences, and produced social concerns and fears, such as public distrust in the Soviet health care system. As such, it represents an important addition to our understanding of the Soviet public sphere and will appeal to a wide range of scholars and students of Soviet culture and history.

Alexey Golubev, University of Houston

Makarov, I. A., et al. *Povorot k prirode: Novaia ekologicheskaia politika Rossii v usloviiakh "zelenoi" transformatsii mirovoi ekonomiki i politiki*. Doklad po itogam serii situatsionnykh analizov. Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 2021. 97 pp. ISBN 978-5-7133-1691-4.

This policy-oriented book takes on Russia's unpreparedness for the worldwide energy transition, as its leaders continue to invest the nation's wealth into oil and gas while failing to harness the promise of post-carbon technologies. It emphasizes that the time is ripe for change as the effects of COVID-19 amplify and accelerate trends toward decarbonization, especially in Europe, Russia's main fossil fuel export market. The authors' purpose, however, is not to offer an exhaustive guide to the state of Russia's actions and positions on climate issues but to ensure—through proposed foreign policy measures—that Russia's input is taken into account in any international efforts to curb emissions and shift to renewable energy.

The study argues that environmental concerns remain on the periphery of Russian discourse and that a new and more active policy in the context of global energy transition processes is needed. The reasons the authors cite for this new urgency, however, have more to do with economic and reputational risks that the country may suffer abroad than with environmental crisis at home. Key among those is the cascade of "net-zero" emission pledges made by a number of countries in 2020 which will inevitably have adverse effects on Russia's hydrocarbon business; Europe's proposed border carbon taxation; and the reputational cost of being seen as a latecomer to the net-zero policy turn. The book calls for a "new environmental policy," but economic and status-related foreign policy concerns, rather than the recognition of Russia as one of the countries most affected by climate change, drive the proposal.

The book acknowledges that Russia's commitment to the climate debate has thus far been insufficient and argues that it is time for the country to turn from a perennial laggard in climate policy to a more proactive role. It cites a turning point in the government's thinking, as recent steps have been taken, including the designation of climate change as a priority issue. It also engages some important outstanding issues, such as a serious shortage of climate experts and issues of inequality, by proposing "elements of progressive taxation" to offset the disproportional environmental damage caused by the wealthy. While a lack of expertise is lamented, the book takes pains to highlight that Russian environmental policy should not be influenced by Western consultants unfamiliar with the country's peculiar socioeconomic setting (perhaps an implicit reference to Yeltsin's Russia). Russia does not want to join international efforts to eradicate climate change where the agenda is set by the West, but instead looks to approach the problem through the lens of its own interests. Regrettably, however, the manuscript proposes very few new concrete measures for Russia to address climate change in its "own way." As such, it comes across as more of a political declaration than a practical policy book.

Russia is warming more than twice as rapidly as the world's average rate and is experiencing a full range of climate change-connected calamities. Climate-related environmental disasters, such as melting permafrost in the Arctic, drought and floods to Russia's south, and large scale fires and floods in Siberia, are mentioned only in passing.

The authors advocate for more leadership by Russia within the SCO and BRICS groupings, and beyond. However, only if climate change assumes a more prominent place on Russia's national agenda will the country have more concrete ideas to offer. The book's underspecified calls for a "golden mean" approach that reconciles economic growth and "respect for nature" hardly dispels the notion that Russia has shown an incapacity to comprehensively address the threat of climate change. The challenge for Russia is in devising a reform strategy whereby energy security and climate ambition do not come into conflict with one another. It would have been useful to get a deeper sense of what pragmatic policies the authors propose, for instance, for the development of hydrogen, so that Russia can position itself as a supplier of energy that would benefit not just the climate but also the energy security of fossil fuel consuming countries.

A key green value of the book is that of "staying close to nature" or conservation. However, endorsing an approach which tries in some sense to "return to nature" has no direct relevance to climate change. In line with conservationism, the book supports national and global social justice: for the former it argues that actors with a higher "impact on nature" should be subject to a higher tax rate; for the latter it argues that poorer countries must be given the opportunity to develop economically. As in previous Russian pronouncements on this issue, the book is torn between "developing country" and "great power" rhetoric.

The book contends that poorer countries have the right to develop economically despite the growth in emissions that this implies. At the same time, it makes clear that Russia does not seek aid and financial assistance from richer countries in its struggle with climate change; thus, while still facing some of the problems of transition economies, the authors claim that Russia could set itself up as "a bridge" to overcome north-south divisions via collaborations on several dimensions of policy, including low-carbon technologies and carbon pricing structures. Here again, however, the emphasis is more on the opportunity to enhance its own reputation as an emerging power on the world stage by heading "coalitions of the willing" that push against overly ambitious Western climate goals.

The authors note that the EU's proposed carbon tariffs are particularly damaging to Russia and, like other EU trading partners, dispute the EU's plans to project its environmental values abroad through trade. As Russia's economy tends to be relatively carbon-intensive, an EU-wide carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM) would make its exports less competitive, with potentially severe consequences for people's livelihoods. Unsurprisingly, along with some other key EU trading partners—not least the United States—Russia has criticized both the CBAM and the EU's emerging trade-climate linkages as "green protectionism." The book offers a solid overview and consideration of these issues.

The authors then call for the development of a "new resource economy," an "innovative resource economy," and a "new environmental agenda." Much more order needs to be brought into this jumble of ideas and concepts. The book skips a discussion about what should be done about climate change *in Russia* and what the resulting policy options are at home (and what might impede them), focusing instead on foreign policy proposals that "offer a joint environmental agenda to developing countries and then to the whole world, which is broader and fairer than the one proposed today by the West" (p. 63). The core argument appears to be that Western environmental norms should not be exported to countries that don't look at the climate problem with the same urgency or in the same way.

The book reaffirms Russia's determination to use the regional groupings to which it belongs to push back against the West's—and in particular the EU's—export of its more stringent standards to the rest of the developing world. In this respect, the final sections argue that a grand bargain could be struck with the United States and China to push back against the EU's inherently protectionist approach. This section recommends that a triangular diplomacy be pursued with the United States and China to counter the EU's border carbon regulations and hints that if the United States and China were to reach a grand bargain with Russia on these issues, then the latter could take measures to reinforce its commitment to the global climate agenda, and in effect a grand bargain—a "Global Green Deal"—could be struck.

As a consequence, the book is much more focused on discussing the global climate debate as related to "relative gains" for Russia, rather than as an environmental issue. This represents a missed opportunity to provide more clarity on what concrete steps the state should take to offset the direct damage that climate change will do *inside* the country, offering thus, a genuine sense on Russia's own positions on climate issues. In a world of tensions between regional powers, the book, however, sees green climate cooperation as one of the last remaining opportunities for partnership between Russia and the West. In this respect, it is regrettable that the war in Ukraine, another epochal shift in this political landscape, will now certainly forestall such potential.

Morena Skalamera, Leiden University

Michlin-Shapir, Vera. *Fluid Russia: Between the Global and the National in the Post-Soviet Era*. NIU Series in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, 2021. 264 pp. $49.95. ISBN 978-1-5017-6054-9.

Over the last three decades Russian society and state have been engaged in a search for a new identity and a place in the world. It has been a process of changing approaches, values, and preferences, as Russia exhibited different degrees of sensitivity or vulnerability to global processes such that patterns of domestic adjustment varied in terms of their scale and duration. Russia's views of itself, its identity, and its standing in the world, especially in relation to the driving forces and actors of globalization, displayed the elements of both change and continuity. Vera Michlin-Shapir's book demonstrates the development of these elements in the formation of Russian post-Soviet identity under the impacts of "globalization and late modernity" (p. 3). The author argues that notwithstanding unique experiences that Russians went through, especially those "acute shocks to their identity following the collapse of the Soviet Union," the process of Russian identity development is not distinctive from that of a "large number of people around the world" because "in the late modern globalized world, institutions and identities have become fragmented and flexible" (p. 4). The temporal nature and framework created by late modernity, makes identity development more adaptable, changeable, and malleable, thus, in the context of Russia, resulting in "fluid Russianness" (p. 4). Michlin-Shapir also explains the purposeful use of the term "national in-group identification" instead of "national identity" because of the frail and unstable character of national identity in late modernity, suggesting "intuitive, phenomenological interpretation of belonging" (p. 10).

The book explores Russian post-Soviet national identification from three different angles. The extremely well researched Part One analyzes identification through the establishment and

implementation of the citizenship legislation in Russia both in the turbulent 1990s, and during the first two decades of the twenty-first century, when the regime of Vladimir Putin was stabilizing the legislation and controlling migration. Michlin-Shapir presents a comprehensive picture of the piecemeal development and pitfalls of the citizenship law. The author also discusses the difficulties of migration at length, however, significantly downplaying the grave consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union and attributing increasing migration from former Soviet republics to Russia almost solely to the opening of borders and freedom of movement, instead of discussing the rationales that drove people to migrate. Michlin-Shapir constructs an almost joyful view of the post-Soviet transition in Russia, with open borders, destroyed Soviet ideology, freedom of travel and expression; however, hope, enthusiasm, and fascination in Russian society were intermixed with disillusionment, Soviet nostalgia, and resentment.

In Part Two, Michlin-Shapir examines the discourse on national identification in a few select media outlets and one television program right after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when newspapers had more flexibility, and in the 2000s, when media started to be more controlled by the state. She discusses such major themes and ideas as the search for a national idea, the discourse on the war, the conversation on the national anthem, the notion of stability, and the emergence of "authorial voice" (p. 90). While the author addresses some of the most dramatic discussions and sensational persons in media and TV, as well as opposition views, societal perceptions and assessments of the media are lacking, along with any discussion on the influence of the Internet and the role of late modernity and globalization on media development.

Many readers will likely find Part Three, which explores the evolution of the Russian national calendar, especially national holidays, most interesting, yet challenging. Michlin-Shapir discusses "which holidays individuals in Russia preferred to celebrate and how they celebrated them" (p. 11). The author demonstrates how contested holidays in Russia reflected both the increased degrees of freedom as well as a certain sense of discomfort as alternative visions upset the continuity of identity in the 1990s. Discussing the national calendar alterations designed to bring religious and military themes back to prominence in the 2000s, Michlin-Shapir gives a lot of weight to the political technologies of the state, instead of focusing on social viewpoints and attitudes, including nostalgia and the rebuilding of faith. The discussion of Victory Day, one of the most deeply cherished holidays in Russia, is the most disappointing, as the author unfortunately presents the novel, bottom-up practices of groups such as the Immortal Regiment as banal, mundane performance and propaganda. Additionally, Michlin-Shapir relies exclusively on opinion polls from the well-known Levada Center, at the expense of other legitimate sources of public opinion.

Overall, the book is a timely and relevant contribution to the literature, mostly due to its focus on the distinctive historical and developmental circumstances in Russia, rather than the causal linkages between the domestic and global.

Lada V. Kochtcheeva, North Carolina State University

Logvinenko, Igor O. *Global Finance, Local Control: Corruption and Wealth in Contemporary Russia*. Cornell Studies in Money. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021. 246 pp. $49.95. ISBN 978-1-5017-5960-4.

Scholars of Russia have long seen how the country's path has been fundamentally shaped by factors emerging from the nexus of political and economic power that is Russia's political economy. Communist-era legacies of state control over the economy, corrupt state-centered kleptocracy under President Vladimir Putin, miserably weak institutions of democratic governance, and Russia's longstanding reliance on natural resource extraction form a toxic soup that pervades all aspects of Russian politics, society, and economics. Yet rarely has scholarly work been able to clearly and incisively show how the various components of that toxic soup interact with each other and thereby reinforce one another. In *Global Finance, Local Control*, Igor Logvinenko has succeeded in doing

just that. The book deftly mixes rich historical detail with a sharply focused big-picture analysis of Russia's political economy since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Logvinenko persuasively shows how, when those with control of important economic assets in Russia were faced with the double-edged sword of "rule of clout" rather than rule of law, a feature that enables self-enriching corruption but also imbues ownership with an unpleasant level of risk, they shrewdly established financial connections abroad. These connections produce a delightful trifecta for these asset owners: they secure ownership rights at home despite the lack of domestic property rights protections, they open the door to legitimizing and appetizing flows of foreign capital, and they foreclose any need to push for improved governance or institutional reform at home which could rock the boat of kleptocratic authoritarianism that underpins the entire system.

Using three case studies of episodes of Russian economic reconfiguration—each accompanied by a boom-and-bust cycle—Logvinenko demonstrates that economic and political elites have performed a careful, always-morphing dance over the last three decades in order to maintain this arrangement of "local control and global access" (LCGA) in different circumstances. Following a strong introduction chapter and a groundwork-laying theory chapter, chapter 2 describes how enterprise managers who had seized control of assets in the waning days of the Soviet Union and the early period of post-Soviet Russia navigated rocky waters to secure their "local control" of those assets. As Yeltsin and his reformers were faced with political constraints on what they could achieve, so too were enterprise bosses dodging political threats and rapidly reacting to changing market institutions. Logvinenko grippingly recounts how these managers realized almost overnight that "you can get much richer by selling stock than by stealing directly from the company" and started to globalize portions of their assets in order to secure their own minority shareholder rights (p. 47).

Chapter 3 continues the narrative with a lively, deeply researched description of how private oligarchs adapted the same mechanisms that enterprise managers used around voucher privatization to their own purposes during the loans-for-shares fiasco of the mid-1990s. Logvinenko highlights how American and other international advisors of Yeltsin's reform efforts pushed for the establishment of proper stock markets precisely as a weapon against the ugly battles for asset control that marred the early 1990s in Russia. Ultimately, Logvinenko concludes that the resulting market bust and sovereign default of 1998 "was not a mere market sell-off but a government default that ultimately created the conditions for Vladimir Putin to take the reins of the Russian state" (p. 66).

The final episode in those considered in *Global Finance, Local Control* brings us forward to the 2003–6 Putin-engineered reconfiguration away from independent, private oligarchs to the state oligarchs we still see today. Here, it is the Kremlin understanding the value of the "local control and global access" arrangement. They consolidated control of the commanding heights of the Russian economy to Putin-friendly "stoligarchs" while welcoming foreign capital. This capital allowed Putin and others in the regime to pay off elite supporters, entice investors with a newly cleaned-up image of the country's economy, and once again ensure that no one really demanded improved rule of law.

Logvinenko's book offers a concise examination of the broad features linking the Russian economy with Russian political realities from Gorbachev to the late Putin era. It includes detail and analysis that should make it of interest to scholars of Russian political economy, while also remaining engaging and accessible enough for lay readers and students. The book concludes with a convincing description of how the latest incarnation of the LCGA system is now hardwired in to Russian politics—it helps everyone mediate conflicts. The economic openness that scholars often assume can help push countries to liberalization or even democratization can actually promote the stability of authoritarian regimes.

While this book was published well before the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, one cannot help but wonder whether this new era of autarky and deglobalization conclusively marks the end of the "global access" linchpin of the regime's stability. How will property rights be protected in Russia without the ability to "import" them from abroad? To what extent is this putative destruction of the LCGA setup an intentional step in Putin's effort to undo some aspects of the Soviet collapse? Or is this merely another episode in Russian economic elites' efforts to have their cake and eat it too

by maintaining local control of assets while taking advantage of the West's willingness to enrich themselves in Russian markets? In this book, Logvinenko provides us the tools to begin rigorously thinking about such questions as Russia sets itself and Europe on a new path.

Noah Buckley, Trinity College Dublin

Weiss-Wendt, Anton. *Putin's Russia and the Falsification of History: Reasserting Control over the Past*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2020. 336 pp. $115.00. ISBN 978-1-35-013053-1.

This book is an important investigation into how the Kremlin under Vladimir Putin uses the control and interpretation of Soviet and post-Soviet history primarily as a cultural weapon in geopolitical combat. Perhaps the greatest strength of the book is the vast amount of information it marshals to support this perspective. The author skillfully organizes the study into chapters that cover how the Russian state institutionalizes the production of "historical truth"; the political centrality of the mythology of Great Patriotic War; the use of history in the mobilization of patriotism; the deployment of the Holocaust as a foreign-policy tool; and the steady, repressive exclusion of alternative, critical viewpoints about the past.

The central arguments of the book, addressed in seven chapters, are highly relevant to understanding a crucial context of Russia's contemporary aggression against Ukraine. Yet the presentation of the viewpoint of the author would be more effective if the language of the book was less strident and condemnatory. Much of the book's language is strident and condemnatory, weakening claims to objectivity. Another issue is the work's focus on top-down politics in Russia that ignores or minimizes domestic political struggles, the roles of Russian society, and the pressures of other states in shaping historical narratives in Russia. For example, the book does not adequately explore the failed political and civic initiatives under Dmitry Medvedev when he was president to develop a more open and critical perspective on Stalinism. Nor does the book explore, even if only briefly, the reasons why different demographic segments of Russian society might support or resist the simplification and distortion of official historical narratives under Putin.

The author's evaluation of the origins of the Kremlin's discourse on the Second World War, or Great Patriotic War, may also seem incomplete. Anton Weiss-Wendt dismisses the Kremlin's premise that "certain malignant forces have been trying to erase the memory of the Soviet contribution to victory" (p. 90). Yet scholars often maintain that several of the states in post-Soviet and post-communist space have long advanced policies that reflect the Kremlin's fears. Here Weiss-Wendt might have examined how the politicization of history, and particularly the condemnation of the Soviet Union, by these governments occurred in the interest of state- and nation-building or simply intra-state combat among warring domestic political factions and parties. Open, and often objective, historical research in these countries is also feared by the Kremlin as it sheds light on the how the Soviet victory in World War II led to the political enslavement or re-enslavement of the region. The combination of these factors works to "blacken" much of the Kremlin's narrative about the heroic and moral victory of the Red Army in its existential struggle against the evil of Nazi Germany.

Weiss-Wendt does recognize that Russia actually came late to the efforts of regional states at "institutionalizing history-making" (p. 44). Yet this complex interplay between Russia and hostile external forces is not stressed sufficiently in the book and recedes quickly to the background. It is also worth mentioning other contextual factors that have motivated post-Soviet Russia, particularly under Putin, to underscore the sacred status of the Great Patriotic War and to control "history" much more completely than the adversarial states in Eastern Europe. Given its loss of the institutional capacity of the Soviet state for societal regimentation and socialization, the Kremlin under Putin was more dependent than its Soviet predecessor on an uplifting myth of the war that worked to unite Russian society (at the elite and mass levels) and generate political legitimacy for the regime. Also, unlike Soviet leaders who traced their authority in large measure to the core myth of the October Revolution, Putin found little to celebrate or emulate in the Bolshevik uprising against Russia's

regime and state, further motivating him to depend on the Great Patriotic War as a primary source of symbolic power.

The reliance of the Kremlin on the memory and imagery of the Great Patriotic War as a source of regime and state legitimacy, including as a justification for domestic and foreign policy, reached a crescendo with the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. One official purpose of the invasion, or "special military operation," was the "denazification" of Ukraine, which had purportedly been captured by extreme right-wing forces in league with the United States and NATO with the intent of threatening Russia. The Kremlin now freely applied fascism, Nazism, and genocide as the conceptual frames for the legitimation of the war.

Published over a year before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Weiss-Wendt's valuable book makes two crucial points by way of conclusion: that the Kremlin suffers from a poverty of ideas on how to purchase political legitimacy at home, and that it faces, as of now, no significant domestic checks on its manipulation of history. Both conditions largely explain the unbending reliance of the regime on invocations of the Great Patriotic War to justify its invasion of Ukraine and mobilize political support at home. The dimensions of the threat that Russia's invasion ultimately poses will depend in large measure on the extent to which Russia's elites and society embrace Putin's narrative, appropriated from the Great Patriotic War, of an existential struggle between good and evil in twenty-first century Europe. It is possible that cracks in the Kremlin's grotesque propaganda will slowly spread and deepen as more facts about the human toll of the invasion become known to the Russian population, thereby stripping the regime of vital normative supports for continued aggression.

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Frye, Timothy. *Weak Strongman: The Limits of Power in Putin's Russia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021. 228 pp. $24.95. ISBN 978-0-691-21246-3.

Timothy Frye takes on the challenging task of making thirty years' worth of social science findings on Russia accessible to a broad audience. His main argument is that, to understand contemporary Russia, we must avoid the temptation to focus solely on Vladimir Putin's personal characteristics or preferences, or to attribute Russian political development to a history and culture that is doomed to authoritarianism. Instead, he posits, we can best understand Russia by seeing it as a "normal" personalist autocracy facing problems common to that regime type, albeit one with a larger-than-average military and an extensive nuclear arsenal. In this view, autocrats face "inherent tensions and constraints" stemming from three sources (pp. 11–12). First are weak political institutions that allow them to come to power but create challenges in ruling. Second, they must make are difficult policy trade-offs to avoid losing power, most importantly maintaining elite loyalty while also satisfying the mass public. Finally, the options in an autocrat's policy toolbox apart from repression—personal popularity, economic performance, manipulated elections, anti-Westernism, foreign policy success—are limited, blunt, and can lead to higher expectations of rights and goods to be provided by the state.

The first several chapters of *Weak Strongman* use existing social science research to examine and test the "common wisdom" found in the Putinology and exceptional Russia approaches, and show how placing Russia in the company of other autocracies (for example, Turkey, Venezuela, Hungary, and Kazakhstan) can balance out shortcomings in these other perspectives. Frye then turns to the scholarly research that illuminates some of the most pressing questions in Russian domestic politics: Putin's popularity, elections, the economy, repression, and media manipulation. In each chapter, he shows that, like most personalist autocracies, the Kremlin must constantly walk a tightrope of trade-offs: manipulating or repressing just enough to prevent popular discontent, but not too much to lose legitimacy and/or seem non-credible; and choosing which groups to please and at what level of detriment to other groups. In the final two chapters, Frye discusses foreign policy (traditional and digital), a realm where Russia differs quite significantly in power, reach, and ambition

from its autocratic peers. Nevertheless, Frye shows that foreign policy also comes with tradeoffs—more military spending means less domestic spending, to take a simple example—and that attention to the underlying logic of personalist autocracies can illuminate why "Russia's reach often exceeds its grasp on the international stage" (p. 153).

One of the greatest strengths of this book is its readability. It makes for an excellent classroom text—my students could not stop raving about it—and has become the text I recommend most frequently to people wanting to know more about Russia. Throughout the book, Frye weaves in stories of his own time in Russia starting in the Soviet period as an "information warrior" for the U.S. government, through his long-standing (now suspended) collaboration with the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, which bring a welcome personal touch to the narrative. For the expert audience, Frye draws on a wide range of social science studies, many by Russian scholars, with a range of methodologies and compelling findings.

Of course, the real test for any book on Russia published before February 24, 2022, is how well it helps us to understand the war in Ukraine and what has happened in Russia since. On this count, more than three months into the war, Frye's book stands up well. For example, the spectacular failure of the first part of the Russian military campaign in Ukraine was a product of the types of information deficits that frequently emerge in personalist autocracies—no one wants to tell the autocrat bad news, so he ends up with bad information. Loyalty is privileged over competence at all levels of the state bureaucracy, including the military. Likewise, when the tools of personal popularity, foreign policy victory, and economic performance failed, like most autocrats, Russia took an even sharper turn towards repression, coercion, and censorship. Elections continue to be "surprisingly important" in Putin's Russia—anticipating that they might become a point of coordination for expressing opposition opinion, the Russian government postponed some elections and widened the use of electronic voting, which is easier to manipulate. Finally, the media manipulation techniques perfected after the Crimean invasion in 2014, which combined "great distortions in reporting without reducing the credibility of the message" served as a model for Russian mainstream media's coverage of the 2022 war (p. 146). In short, Frye's book continues to offer timely and relevant perspectives on Russia even under the direst of new circumstances. In the paperback edition, he provides an early take on the war with a new preface dated March 17, 2022.

On the other hand, the war in Ukraine is an area where the preferences and desires of one man, Vladimir Putin, have indeed ruled the day. Understanding the emotional resonance of Ukraine in his worldview and its connection to his beliefs about history and empire have become increasingly important in making sense of recent events. This moment has lent heavy credence to an approach that puts Putin at the center of thinking about Russian politics, particularly as he appears to have become surrounded by an increasingly small group of trusted advisors who share his beliefs. As Russia grows increasingly inaccessible to scholars both foreign and Russian, social science research like surveys and interviews will become more challenging, likely leading to a return to Putinology as the dominant narrative of Russian politics. Frye's book reminds us that we should pay equal attention to how the pathologies of personalist autocracies will continue to play out in Russia in the future.

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Balzer, Marjorie Mandelstam. *Galvanizing Nostalgia? Indigeneity and Sovereignty in Siberia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021. xvi + 254 pp. $31.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-5017-6131-7.

Comparative ethnography is hard to pull off, because it requires facility with a large range of sources, a depth of experience that is rarely achieved across multiple sites, and enough writerly confidence to generalize when necessary. But *Galvanizing Nostalgia?* shows the unique political insights that comparative ethnography can grant. Marjorie Balzer marshals her unparalleled knowledge of Siberian political activism across thirty-five years of field research and anthropological engagement to examine

possibilities for indigenous self-determination in the Republic of Tyva (Tuva), the Republic of Buryatia, and the Sakha Republic (Iakutia). In her inimitable style, Balzer shows how native Siberians struggle for "cultural dignity," mainly by protesting, building spiritual awareness, and pursuing environmental protections.

The book is two things at once. First, it is a detailed description of indigenous activism over several decades, comparing indigenous politics across three ethnic republics of Russia and culminating in the current state of affairs. There was a window of time, between the late 1980s and early 2010s, when foreign researchers could conduct relatively unfettered ethnographic fieldwork in Siberia. *Galvanizing Nostalgia?* capitalizes on this moment, drawing together experiences from Balzer's fieldwork and pulling it into the current moment by incorporating insights from her personal networks. For Russianists, this project is invaluable. It was undertaken over a period in which many Russian citizens have been reimagining their relationships to the state, and many Russianists have been questioning the extent to which federalism remains operative in any real sense. Balzer centers her analysis around the political potential of nostalgia, and the whole book is animated by Siberians' relationships with temporality, their orientations to the past as well as their hopes and conceptualizations of the future.

Second, *Galvanizing Nostalgia?* is an appeal to give Siberia the attention it deserves—in environmental, political, and human terms. The epigraph of the book, "What happens in Siberia matters to the rest of the world," is taken from a 2020 editorial in the *Financial Times* arguing that Siberia's warming climate should be a warning to the rest of us to do more on climate policy. Environmental degradation haunts every chapter of this book. The nested sovereignties that Balzer describes are in some ways particular to post-Soviet institutional forms, but the book will also be relevant to scholars of cultural politics and indigeneity elsewhere in the world, especially regarding the intersections of spiritual revitalization and environmentalism. The author takes up perennial concerns in anthropology, including ethnic belonging, indigenous sovereignty, charismatic leadership, and social movements, in a well-researched and accessibly written single source on Siberian activism. A hallmark of Balzer's work has always been incorporating native scholarship, and that is on full display here; the notes and bibliography are a model of how to integrate regional and international scholarship.

To wit, some of the best moments in the ethnography recount interactions at academic conferences, such as between an anthropologist and a young Sakha scholar arguing about authenticity and tradition at a conference in Alaska. In the introduction, Balzer deftly uses such moments to introduce the book's key concepts and to place Siberia clearly within the scope of Indigenous Studies. Chapters 1–3 examine the state of indigenous self-determination in the three republics in turn. Any of these chapters could be read alone for information on one particular republic, though Balzer's own field experience is deepest in the Sakha Republic, and that shows here. The Sakha Republic emerges as "resource rich and pivotal," the Republic of Buryatia as "gerrymandered and struggling," and the Republic of Tyva as "a borderline state with demographic advantages" (pp. 24, 61, 95). Chapter 4, focused on the Sakha "warrior shaman" Alexander Gabyshev, discusses those aspects of indigenous politics that are similar across the three republics. The conclusion is a summary statement on illusory federalism, cultural dignity, and the galvanizing potential of nostalgia. The book as a whole is appropriate for undergraduate classrooms as well as graduate. Balzer's experience at the intersection of academia and policy communities shines: she so straightforwardly addresses the kinds of questions that politicians and policymakers ask, this otherwise academic book should prove useful in policy contexts as well.

Above all, *Galvanizing Nostalgia?* is a work of political advocacy. Balzer wears her heart on her sleeve: she explicitly identifies closely with the activists that she describes, continually reminding her reader that these are her friends and colleagues, and you see her take up their arguments. Balzer's stance is one with which I personally sympathize, but I must point out the tradeoffs involved here. Being a self-proclaimed ally makes her uncritical of some of her interlocutors' claims. At the same time, as an advocate for the people she describes, she frequently reaches beyond their own arguments to make the claims that they will not. Most notably, Balzer (intentionally) uses the term "Indigenous"

to describe members of ethnonational groups that are not considered such by the Russian state or by the people themselves, and she assumes that Russian citizens have "rights" that are more capacious than what the state grants. Some—but certainly not all or even most—native Siberians appeal to the framework of international human rights that Balzer employs. It is sometimes lost in the text that the opinions and political positions Balzer describes Indigenous Siberians writ large as taking represent those of only *some* native Siberians, particularly activists and cosmopolitan elites. But there are significant pedagogical and rhetorical advantages to Balzer's style. The same eclecticism and generalizations that will exasperate some scholars make her account highly personal and compelling. Balzer beseeches her reader to identify with native Siberian activists, as she does. *How would you feel*, Balzer asks, *if these things happened to you*? The reader is invited into the arena of activism to see (some) native Siberians' own interpretations of events that most readers will otherwise never hear of. I look forward to teaching with this book.

It is difficult to read *Galvanizing Nostalgia?* on the far side of Putin's war in Ukraine and not see the precursors of this major geopolitical event. The extent to which romantic nostalgia has driven Russian military action heartbreakingly underscores the author's point that nostalgia can become the basis for political action—and that we must therefore better understand how it works. Balzer describes Russian leaders' "purposeful ... manipulation" of history and activist brain-drain from the regions she covers, both long-term trends that have shaped Russian citizens' domestic response to the war. This perceptive book also hints at what is to come: instability, polarization, and also, maybe, "creative recoveries."

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