BOOK REVIEWS

Literature and Fine Arts

Dement, Sidney Eric. *Pushkin's Monument and Allusion: Poem, Statue, Performance*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019. xii + 275 pp. $75.00. ISBN 978-1-4875-0552-3.

Sidney Dement's new book expands the poetics of allusion and demonstrates the advantages of such expansion. Centering on a dynamic interplay of literary texts and sculptural monuments that stimulates performativity, Dement studies the formation of cultural and political memory and the threat of deformation that stalks this process. A judicious choice of scrupulously contextualized test cases opens the way for insightful new readings of individual works and a deeper understanding of the sociopolitical and cultural forces that affect how they signify.

Taking Pushkin's "Monument" as a point of departure, Dement's opening chapter credits the poet with a unique vision of allusion. The poem's ties to classical verbal monuments are used to lay the groundwork for the subsequent exploration of allusion, the future poet, and the naïve reader. Essential to this project is the connection between the iconic and the ekphrastic in Pushkin's poem, which Dement links with the lifelike statue of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and with the sculptural metaphors of Incarnation and *theosis* of Eastern Orthodoxy to generate two paradigms that inform his study—the Ovidian and the Cappadocian.

Chapter 2 presents Opekushin's Pushkin Monument as "literalizing and visualizing Pushkin's poem" (p. 29). The lines cited on the monument in Zhukovsky's censored version are shown to flatten the poem's allusive potential by disrupting its balance between a projected future poet who draws creative sustenance from the poem and a collective of naïve readers who consume it. The 1880 dedication of Opekushin's monument ushers in the performative aspect of allusion. Delivering his famous speech at the dedication, Dostoevsky assumes the role of Pushkin's future poet, counterbalancing the *narod* privileged by Zhukovsky's version and marking the monument as a space for future performances.

The third chapter moves into the twentieth century to center on *The Master and Margarita*, whose drafts show Bulgakov responding with increasing intensity to the 1937 Centennial Celebration—its politics, its sanctioned Pushkin myth, and a memorialization that subjects the poet to another sort of death. The novel, as Dement shows, reflects a growing doubt in the future of poetry and the allusive practices on which its creative momentum relies as the naïve reader and the future poet become indistinguishable.

Chapter 4 turns to the semiotics of literature and urban space of Vladimir Toporov's *Petersburg Text*, with Toporov's theory itself figured as a monument to Pushkin. Seen as analogous to the future poet and naïve reader in "Monument," the creative viewer and the naïve viewer of Toporov's articles on Falconet's *Peter the Great* and Montferrand's *Alexander Column* offer a way out of the stultifying clichés of the Pushkin myth.

The final chapter features Tatiana Tolstaia's responses to the Pushkin Monument in three stories—"Night," "Limpopo," "Siuzhet"—and the novel *Slynx*. The officially sanctioned cult of Pushkin, which Tolstaia subverts, is now celebrated at the two hundredth anniversary of his birth, by which time the revivifying gesture of bringing the statue to life is itself clichéd. In the post-apocalyptic Russia of *Slynx*, efforts to connect with an eradicated culture are doomed to ignoble failure, and allusion to what is irretrievably lost is as ludicrous as "the pushkin" that Benedikt carves in his efforts to reconstruct the Pushkin Monument.

The Introduction and the Conclusion flanking these chapters highlight the multifaceted poetics of allusion and the productive triad poem-statue-performance that informs the study. *Pushkin's Monument and Allusion* is a valuable cultural history rooted in extensive research animated

by creative thinking. A boon to the specialist, it promises to benefit students, and to engage the general reader.

Olga Peters Hasty, Princeton University

Guay, Robert E., ed. *Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment: Philosophical Perspectives*. Oxford Studies in Philosophy and Literature. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. xv + 220 pp. $24.95 (paper). ISBN: 978-0-19-046402-8

Philosophy and literature engage in all kinds of conversations. They avoid quite a few conversations too, as Richard Eldridge suggests in his foreword to the series that includes this book. Modern philosophy tends not to like "cultural entanglements and literary devices" (p. ix), while literary study has "set itself against the idea that major literary texts productively and originally address philosophical problems" (p. x).

Other, more intimate points of difference are intelligently explored in the book under review. If there is, as Sebastian Gardner says in the most provocative essay in the volume, a "distinctive class of philosophical propositions which exert a distinctive fascination while lying on the cusp of nonsensicality" (p. 114), then a literary work might well take one or more of such propositions off the cusp into full-blown nonsense without any apology, and Dostoevsky, we may think, would definitely enjoy such a project. The word "pathological" recurs in the volume (pp. 78, 186), in one case framed in a relation of continuity with the supposedly normal. Raskolnikov 'stands out by holding extreme, pathological versions of familiar views" (p. 77). This could be a way of saying that pathology is itself normal, but usually quieter in its expression.

And if literature may seem like nonsense to philosophers, the possibility has its exact mirror in the chance that philosophy may seem to literary scholars like a statement of the obvious. Some essays in the volume court this risk by being a little too clear ("Love is ... a condition of vulnerability" [p. 53], "Confession is ... a performative act" [p. 164]), but then they quickly find their way back to adequate complexity, writing, in the first case, of "a joyless pleasure" (p. 50), and in the second, of understanding a concept "grammatically" (p. 163) as distinct from logically or polemically.

The book opens with a lucid introduction that carefully describes the seven essays to come: Gary L. Hagberg's "Portrayals of Mind," Rick Anthony Furtak's "Love, Suffering and Gratitude for Existence," Robert Guay's "Crime and Expression," Sebastian Gardner's "Metaphysical Motivation," Susan Fusso's "The Family in *Crime and Punishment*," Randall Havas's "Raskolnikov beyond Good and Evil," and Caryl Emerson's "Bakhtin's Radiant Polyphonic Novel, Raskolnikov's Perverse Dialogic World." Questions of agency return in different essays, as do those of social philosophy and the limitations of some forms of psychology—I kept thinking of Proust's wonderful, untranslatable phrase about suffering going further in psychology than psychology ("Comme la souffrance va plus loin en psychologie que la psychologie"), and of how much Proust learned from the conjuncture of literature and philosophy in Dostoevsky. Wittgenstein haunts the volume in various ways: in the use of the notion of grammar cited above, in a phrase about the spade turning (p. 165, the allusion is to a moment in *Philosophical Investigations*, where the philosopher says, "If I have exhausted the justifications, I have reached bedrock and my spade is turned"), and in Hagberg's remarkable reading of privacy as being in many contexts a deluded denial of a shared world. "We can indeed recede into privacy, but only of a kind that depends for its very intelligibility on a fundamental public interconnectedness" (p. 19).

I cannot give even an abbreviated account of all seven essays in this space, so I shall concentrate on two which seem to me to represent the range and the force of the whole volume very well. They are the chapter by Gardner that I have already mentioned, and the concluding chapter by Emerson. Gardner argues that Raskolnikov's motive for murder "lies neither in self-interest nor ideology," and that "the only accounts of his motive that have the faintest ring of truth are ... the emptiest, most cryptic, and perplexing" (pp. 96, 97). "Everything points ... to Raskolnikov's ignorance of his own motivation at the level at which people are ordinarily considered to know what they are doing"

(p. 98). So what did he want? He wanted knowledge, Gardner suggests. He wanted to know that freedom of action exists, and he felt that only the wildness of what would later be called an *acte gratuit* could prove this. Was he right? Perhaps not, but he was close to the philosopher Schelling and his interest in "real, non-formal freedom" (p. 102). Schelling's "metaphysics are strange," Gardner says, "because, in his view, human freedom itself is strange"(p. 117). Too strange, perhaps? Not really coherent in these terms? Whom better to consult than Dostoevsky the novelist?

Emerson revisits Bakhtin's readings of Dostoevsky—and many readings of Bakhtin—elegantly showing not only that the novelist was "more ecstatic and transfigurational, and meaner, darker and more desperate" (p. 175) than Bakhtin's vision allowed, but that dialogue in Dostoevsky is often a brilliant manic monologue in many voices, and that the true counterpoint in his work would be "a liberating polyphony" (p. 196) of the kind we hear in Raskolnikov's conversation with Sonya at the end of *Crime and Punishment*. "There are voices here, not mouths" (p. 199). "Here" would be the place where Bakhtin, and Dostoevsky, would be revealed as the most spiritual of materialists (or vice-versa), sufferers of reality who knew that it never should have the last word.

Michael Wood, Princeton University

Shkandrij, Myroslav. *Avant-garde Art in Ukraine, 1910–1930: Contested Memory*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018. 202 pp. $99.00. ISBN 978-1-6181-1975-9.

Myroslav Shkandrij, primarily trained as a literary scholar, has particularly focused a significant amount of his research on Ukrainian Modernism and the Jewish-Ukrainian encounter. He also has made extensive forays into Ukrainian Modernist art with several articles on the subject, his 2002 book *The Phenomenon of the Ukrainian Avant-Garde 1910–1935*, and now with this compilation of previously published articles combined with new materials that creates a cogent discussion of a fascinating period in Ukrainian art from 1910 to 1930. In many ways his is a restorative history, one that decolonizes Ukrainian art and artists from the Soviet-period culturo-political domination that swallowed "smaller" non-Russian cultures, and also broadens the understanding of what a Ukrainian artist was in those times. Shkandrij rightly points out that "celebrated artists from Ukraine seldom have their roots and sense of identity acknowledged" (p. xii). That turns out to be true even today, particularly with some Russian art critics who, as Shkandrij observes in his final brief chapter, "Remembering the Avant-Garde," chauvinistically continue to appropriate and fail to recognize or even ignore, such as is the case of Malevich, othered identity (p. 168).

The book begins with a brief introduction, "The 'Historic' Avant-Garde of 1930," that lays out the book's structure. A chapter under the rubric "Forging the European Connection" follows and examines the place of Ukrainian art in the European avant-garde from 1910 to 1930. Four additional chapters follow under the rubric of "Politics and Painting." The first half of the book primarily deals with artistic movements in the context of the European avant-garde and comprises mostly adapted previous writings of the author on the topics of the avant-garde vis-à-vis Europe; political posters and the Boichuk School; Jewish contributions to the arts and culture of Ukraine in the early twentieth century; and the Ukrainian cultural renaissance of the 1920s as well as the Jewish cultural revival of roughly the same time period. The second half of the book consists of newly minted essays with chapters on five individual artists: David Burliuk (chap. 6), Kazimir Malevich (chap. 7), Vadym Meller (chap. 8), Ivan Kavaleridze (chap. 9), and Dziga Vertov (chap. 10). These chapters focus on the visual arts, especially the painting of Burliuk and Malevich, the propaganda posters of Boichuk, Meller's art for theatrical productions, the sculpture of Kavaleridze, and the early Soviet cinema (Kaveralidze and Vertov).

The book is well researched and articulately written, and its clarity of presentation makes it accessible to both specialists and a general audience. It is well edited with very few typos. It has a lengthy and useful bibliography (pp. 169–77) as well as an extensive index (pp. 178–87) that will make life easier for researchers seeking information on specific artists or topics. The twenty-six black-and-white illustrations, several of them archival photos, serve to illuminate the artwork of the

artists under discussion. The book is handsomely produced in an eminently readable type on bright white paper on the inside, and with a reproduction on the cover of a striking Mykola Boichuk Shevchenko Day poster of a youthful Taras Shevchenko riding a steed at full gallop on a tan background bearing a red flag and containing the title of the book. The actual Boichuk poster from 1920 is reproduced in black and white on page 41, including a rather patriotic Ukrainian quotation from Shevchenko's perhaps most famous poem known to most as "Zapovit" (My Testament) emblazoned on the flag.

The book will become a standard for those interested in Ukrainian art of the avant-garde. It is important for a number of reasons. First, it identifies the nature of and the major figures of the Ukrainian avant-garde. It also places that avant-garde in the European context in which it rightfully belongs and with which Ukrainian figures interacted. Additionally, it restores several of those figures to Ukrainian culture despite persistent Russian efforts to appropriate them. Besides indicating similarities between members and movements of the avant-garde across national borders, the book shows differences intrinsic to artists from Ukraine. Thus it offers a richer picture of the era via its more inclusive and diverse approach, along with reasoned historical correctives.

Michael M. Naydan, The Pennsylvania State University

Ament, Suzanne. *Sing to Victory! Song in Soviet Society during World War II*. Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2019. xxii + 301 pp. $109.00. ISBN 978-1-61811-839-4.

Of the many ways in which the Soviet experience of World War II was institutionalized, both at the time and thereafter, music was one of the most powerful. Suzanne Ament's new monograph adds considerably to our understanding of this process, as well as filling a significant gap in our understanding of the history of Soviet music more generally. As Ament suggests in her introduction, considerable attention has been paid to popular song in the 1920s and early 1930s, on the one hand, and to the revival—both official and unofficial—of lyricism in the post-Stalin period, on the other. Yet for all its cultural significance (and, indeed, its continued popularity), the song repertoire of the war years seems to have been largely overlooked, underestimated, or simply taken for granted.

Ament's approach is rich, multifaceted, and interdisciplinary in focus, offering both a sweeping synoptic account of the period, and some occasional instances of more detailed analysis and interpretation. Her argument moves logically and persuasively from the songs themselves, through to their dissemination and performance, to their eventual reception. Thus, an opening trio of chapters maps the themes evoked in the wartime song repertoire, traces the work of its principal poets and composers, and explores aspects of its interaction with the official institutions of Soviet cultural and political life. Two chapters then consider the principal means by which song permeated daily life (print, broadcast media, recordings, film), and detail the experiences of performers, whether professional and amateur. A concluding pair of chapters asks how song was perceived by its audiences, and what the cultural and emotional legacy of this particular historical moment has been since.

Ament's sources are wide and varied, from anthologies and published collections, to selected archival transcripts and a number of oral histories dating from the early 1990s. A particular achievement of *Sing to Victory!* is the way it explores not just the top-down transmission of cultural production, but the ways in which politics and ideology interacted—not always straightforwardly or coherently—with more spontaneous expressions of popular feeling. How artistic unions, institutions of government, and party functionaries both capitalized on patriotic sentiment and sought to direct it is a theme running throughout the book, meaning that its ideas will be of interest to social and cultural historians, as well as musicologists and literary scholars. The lack of engagement with studies of lyric poetry during and around the Great Patriotic War (say, for example, Katherine Hodgson's *Written with the Bayonet: Soviet Russian Poetry of World War Two*, 1996), or with scholarship on Soviet film of the period, means that readers will simply have to pursue potential parallels independently. Similarly, Ament's exclusive focus on Russian song certainly reflects the ways in which Russia served as the "first among equals" in subsequent interpretations of the war,

yet other scholars will want to pick up her explicit invitation to chart "non-Russian publications and broader participation of ethnic minorities in the area of song production and performance" (p. xxi).

Ament's book is to be welcomed for the light it sheds on cultural life during the Great Patriotic War and for taking us back to a much mythologized moment in *Soviet* history. That this moment has been so extensively revisited as a foundational moment in *Russian* national identity is a topic for another study, which would seek to understand the continued popularity—whether genuine or encouraged through the modern state—of the repertoire Ament describes.

Philip Ross Bullock, Wadham College, University of Oxford

Fairclough, Pauline. *Critical Lives of Dmitri Shostakovich*. London: Reaktion Books, 2019. 190 pp. £11.99 (paper). ISBN 978-1-78914-127-4.

Pauline Fairclough's elegantly written and richly documented biography of the twentieth-century cultural icon Dmitri Shostakovich offers a fair-minded view of the myriad personal and musical political issues that challenged the composer from his student days at the Leningrad Conservatory until his death in Moscow in 1975. The author acknowledges that Shostakovich's Western image was largely shaped by the politics of the Cold War and closely linked to anti-Soviet sentiment—and she sets out to prove or disprove earlier views of the composer and his era. Fairclough challenges the preconceived notions about the composer's life and his relationship to his country, and dispels the notion that he was a "persecuted composer trapped in the frightening and repressive world of Soviet Russia" (p. 10). The narrative is riveting and immensely enjoyable as Fairclough takes the reader through the relentless twists and turns of Shostakovich's life before and after the Stalin years.

Building on the pioneering work of Laurel Fay, Elizabeth Wilson, and Olga Digonskaya, Fairclough effectively puts an end to the mistaken belief that Shostakovich was a suffering and tragic figure. She points out that the composer was in tune with the political events that defined his era and that he was deeply committed to exploring all aspects of Russian culture, especially in the literary arena, where he was revered and honored by the iconic poets Anna Akhmatova and Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Fairclough's even-handed treatment of the composer is apparent throughout, as in her detailed examination of a previously unpublished letter from Shostakovich to Stalin expressing the composer's reservations about joining a delegation traveling to New York for the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace. Fairclough delves into the reasons why, despite deep reservations, Shostakovich was compelled to attend the event and address "hostile and insensitive questions" about the recent condemnation of his music in Russia (p. 97). Fairclough continues her even-handed approach concerning Shostakovich's alliance with the party, pointing out that his status as a composer in Soviet Russia relied on party membership and remained consistent with those who received acclaim in the public concert hall. Although Shostakovich had serious reservations about joining the party, Fairclough concludes that he necessarily had to "fulfil his obligations as a Party member" (p. 122). The author forthrightly addresses the controversy surrounding the letter attacking the dissident and Nobel laureate Andrei Sakharov, which was published in *Pravda* and signed by twelve Soviet musicians, including Shostakovich. Based on the available evidence—and the fact that the composer was terminally ill at this time—Fairclough contends that the validity of his signature remains uncertain and is difficult to confirm one way or the other (p. 160). Reaching beyond the turbulent political landscape, the author looks to Shostakovich's music and his contributions to Russia's cultural life in the twentieth century.

Shostakovich was an extraordinary human being and enormously talented composer and pianist who lived for his music and for those he loved. Fairclough examines all aspects of the composer's life with deep emotion and conviction, and wisely concludes that it does not bring honor to Shostakovich to "airbrush out the inconvenient facts" or to see him as a "one-dimensional resistor to Soviet power" (pp. 176–77). Pauline Fairclough's biography makes an important contribution to Shostakovich scholarship and Russian historical and cultural studies. The discussion of selected musical works interspersed throughout Shostakovich's compositional life and the incorporation of

illustrations from the Shostakovich archives in Moscow contribute substantially to the richness of this book. It serves as an essential point of reference for future studies on Shostakovich and the musical culture of Soviet Russia.

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Morse, Ainsley, Maria Vassileva, and Maya Vinokur, eds. *Linor Goralik: Found Life: Poems, Stories, Comics, a Play, and an Interview*. Russian Library. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017. xvii + 377 pp. $14.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-2311-8351-2.

Linor Goralik (b. 1975) is a prolific, singular writer of flash fiction, short stories, poetry, children's literature, translations (between English, Russian, and Hebrew), comics, fashion and costume theory, marketing, essays, and much more. An early adopter of all the possibilities of the Russophone literary internet, Goralik remains a key figure in post-Soviet literature and culture due to her omnivorous referentiality and intertextuality, her deployment of detail, her absurdist, jarring wit, and her ability to construct tiny, perfect vignettes out of everyday scraps of language.

Although Goralik was well known in Russophone circles by the turn of the twenty-first century, only a few translations made it through into English until Columbia University Press's 2017 publication of *Found Life* in the prestigious Russian Library series. The book provides a broad overview of Goralik's literary oeuvre thanks to the curatorial efforts of editors and primary translators Ainsley Morse, Maria Vassileva, and Maya Vinokour, who divided the book into six sections: short prose, longer prose, a theater piece, comics, poetry, and Olga Breininger's interview of Goralik. Stephanie Sandler's introduction starts the volume off on an excellent note, equipping readers to appreciate key aspects of Goralik's art, such as her fluid play with labels and genres, her mash-ups of elite and popular culture, and her use of *skaz*.

Given how obscene, elliptical, and paronomastic Goralik's writing is, the efforts of the volume's translators deserve lavish praise. The original's copious and colorful slang is matched by equally juicy American English equivalents: "bro," "jeez," "dumbass," "lookit," an entire plague of "like," and even a "ginormous," all of which ring absolutely true. "Govorit," the title of one of the short prose cycles, was translated as "They Talk" by Mikhail Iossel in 2009; this is a necessary alteration of the source text, required due to the inadvisability of retaining the impersonal singular of *govorit*. But Morse and Vinokur's "He Said, She Said," on the other hand, invokes connotations of competing stories told by partners/opponents in intimate relationships. Their rendering works better, I would argue, because it translates with attention to what the words *do*, not just to what they *mean*. Or take the lapidary "The signature taste of a gun barrel" for *kharakternyi vkus pistoletnogo stvola*, from the "Found Life" short prose cycle which gave the book its name. Many translators would have settled for "characteristic" or even "typical," but "signature" adds that sardonic whiff of pseudo-sophistication (think of anything called "signature blend").

The one place where the collection falters is the poetry. In a small but irskome error, some of the poems are attributed to one book when, on Goralik's website, https://linorgoralik.com/, they appear in a different book. There are small misunderstandings—or unnecessary cultural substitutions—throughout, such as "lustrous captain" for *liustrinovyi kapitan* (given Goralik's interest in costume, the metonymic description of the captain by way of the French fabric lustrine is probably worth retaining) or "one for the road" for *prisazhivatsia na dorozhku*. There are many missed opportunities to revel in Goralik's insistent, incantatory end rhymes. Finally, it is very strange that each individual poem is presented as a single, left-justified stanza, instead of replicating Goralik's own stanza breaks and indentations; this choice severely detracts from the poems. Still, there are inspired lines here: "Only the escalator attendant scents something,/ nervously fidgets, claws grazing the lever" (Geordie Kenyon Sinclair); "[Time] does not gobble brutishly/ but delectates each chunk" (Michael Weinstein); "what will the Lord pick:/ Snow White off Rose-Red/ or Rose-Red whacks

Snow White?" (Emily Kanner). In sum, *Found Life* is a strong introduction to a writer representing an important thread of contemporary Russophone literature and culture.

Anne O. Fisher, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

Salys, Rimgaila, ed. *The Contemporary Russian Cinema Reader, 2005–2016*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2019. 402 pages. $29.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-6181-1964-3.

This heavy volume might have been the third volume to *The Russian Cinema Reader*, which appeared in 2013. Yet six years separate it from the two-volume edition, and so does the approach. If the first two volumes offer introductions to the various periods covered, this single tome has one general introduction, and no sub-divisions. Moreover, if for the previous volumes the selected films are all widely taught, this book deals with a range of films, not all of which would find a place in a film course. An explanation in the preface would have helped explain the choices, as well as the emphasis on arthouse films. No doubt every editor chooses different films, but the neglect, with one exception, of blockbusters paints a somewhat distorted picture of Russian cinema.

Vlad Strukov's ambitious introduction positions Russia in a global film market and is generally successful in accomplishing that task. His focus on arthouse fare rather than mainstream cinema corresponds to the focus of the volume. Therefore, such things as Timur Bekmambetov's screen-capture technique Screenlife, which has made him hot property in the industry, are not discussed. Similarly, the discussion of the role of the Ministry of Culture echoes (often biased) media views rather than providing an analysis of legislation, but once again such detail may muddy the waters in a textbook approach.

All the films covered in the volume are discussed competently and with expert knowledge. The chapters follow a template with a general introduction and contextualization, a close reading, and some critical context. The film selection follows a chronological order, with some films covered by two reviews. The films chosen include Aleksei Balabanov's *Dead Man's Bluff* (2005), covered in a fine reading of the film's neo-noire genre by Alexander Prokhorov; Aleksandr Sokurov's *The Sun* (2005), a film on the Japanese Emperor Hirohito, unlikely to be a top choice for film or history courses, which receives an expert reading by Denise Youngblood; Balabanov's *Cargo 200* (2007), thoroughly studied by Anthony Anemone, with a particularly interesting focus on music; and Anna Melikian's *The Mermaid* (2007), read in a range of contexts, including the fairy tale, by Helena Goscilo.

From here onward the chapters tend to draw on material published elsewhere, to a large extent in the open-access online journal *KinoKultura*, of which this reviewer happens to be the editor. Therefore, a number of contributions have previously passed through my hands as editor or translator.

There follows Rimgaila Salys's own reading of Valerii Todorovskii's *Hipsters* (2008), partly published in *KinoKultura*, which compares the film to its predecessors in the musical genre of the 1930s. Aleksei Fedorchenko's *Silent Souls* (2010) is addressed in two reviews, both previously published in *KinoKultura*: one on the mockumentary tradition by Serguei Oushakine, and one about body and sexuality in the (invented) Mari ritual by Tatiana Mikhailova. Justin Wilmes's chapter on Sergei Loznitsa's *My Joy* (2010) offers a competent analysis, developing a reading of wartime trauma. Julian Graffy has contributed two chapters, both on Andrei Zviagintsev: on the film *Elena* (2011), which receives a second review from Elena Prokhorova, who focuses on the film genre; and on *Leviathan* (2014), reprinted from *KinoKultura*. The fine analysis of Aleksandr Zeldovich's *The Target* (2011) is a shortened version of an article by Ilya Kukulin.

The renewal of Putin's presidency in 2012, and with it changes in film production, may well have served as a dividing line. This period is represented in a discussion by Tom Roberts of the historical film (and, by the way, the only historical film) *The Horde* (2012) by Andrei Proshkin; Roberts here also pays attention to the scriptwriting tradition of Iurii Arabov. Two reviews deal with *Short Stories* (2012) by Mikhail Segal, a film unlikely to feature on curricula; both texts are revised from Mark Lipovetsky's and Liliia Nemchenko's reviews for *KinoKultura*. Greg Dolgopolov

competently contextualizes Nikolai Lebedev's *Legend #17* (2013) within the representation of sports in Soviet culture. Aleksei German's *Hard to be a God* (2013), surely a landmark film that is, however, rarely studied, is reviewed by Anton Dolin (in a reprint from *Film Comment*) and contextualized by a fine piece of writing by Elena Stishova. A more balanced approach to the choice of authors from different cultures may have been a welcome consideration in selecting the double-view approach here.

Subject specialists discuss the last three films: Vasilii Sigarev's *Land of Oz* (2015) is analyzed by Liliia Nemchenko from Yekaterinburg, while Stephen Norris offers a subtle reading and contextualization of the image of the war in Aleksandr Mindadze's *My Good Hans* (2015), a film I would also not expect on curricula. Jeremy Hicks concludes the volume with a chapter on Andrei Konchalovsky's *Paradise* (2016), addressing the representation of war and trauma.

Overall, this is a welcome addition to a range of publications on contemporary cinema. The individual entries are all very competent, and attention has been paid to cater for a student audience through consistent contextual information. The contributors have done a great job in extending their often previously published reviews to follow that template. However, for a textbook to accompany a course on contemporary Russian cinema, it would be useful to guide the reader in the motivation for the choice of films beyond a statement of their availability, to reflect curriculum selections, and address the continuity of diversity reflected in this selection from 2005 to 2016. As it stands, the selection reflects a predilection for arthouse films by neo-liberal filmmakers, where a textbook could do with a broader picture and wider set of foci.

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Tihanov, Galin. *The Birth and Death of Literary Theory: Regimes of Relevance in Russia and Beyond*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. xiv + 258 pp. $60.00. ISBN 978-0-8047-8522-8.

In 2004, in the humanities journal *Common Knowledge* (10:1), Galin Tihanov published an essay whose title was a provocative two-pronged question: "Why Did Modern Literary Theory Originate in Central and Eastern Europe? (And Why Is It Now Dead?)." Among its organizing terms was the phrase "regimes of relevance," that is, context-specific modes for justifying and consuming a given cultural value (here, literature) in a particular time and place. The book under review is a luxuriant exfoliation of the issues laid out in that essay. We call these modes of justification "theory," a word that invokes a scientistic aura of quantifiability and universality—but Tihanov reminds us that theorizing about creative art has little in common with progressive objective theories like gravity or relativity. The rise and fall of literary theory does have objective causes, however. In his Introduction, Tihanov notes three factors that shaped its life cycle within European thought (1910s–1970s). The first was the new emergent states of Eastern and Central Europe (Soviet Russia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland) in the interwar period. Second was the natural polyglossia (or overlapping speech zones) in this part of Europe, which both weaned intellectuals off "the presumed naturalness of native tongues and traditions" and eased the shock of exile. Finally this region did not have "a strong domestic tradition of philosophy," which enabled its thinkers to modify established Continental philosophical discourse "into tools of literary theory" (p. 24). This life cycle, which began with a positivist quest for autonomy, specificity, and self-sufficiency, is now over, replaced by a commodified regime where literature is valued "for the (largely individual) entertainment and therapy it can provide" (p. 23). Eastern Europe (and its émigré outposts in Prague, Paris, and Berlin) had been its domain; Russian Formalism was its generative source, lodestar, linchpin, and whipping boy.

Context is always incomplete and potentially endless. Thus one senses that Tihanov, whose own intellectual range is staggering, could have chosen any number of examples to demonstrate his thesis. His argument accretes gradually, its abstract ideology grounded with haunting personal stories. His heroes include both famous figures (Viktor Shklovsky, Georg Lukács, Mikhail Bakhtin, Roman Jakobson) and lesser-known cultural hybrids such as Emiliia Litauer (b. 1904, shot 1941), a

convert to Eurasianism who attempted to reconcile Marxism and Formalism (pp. 59–67). Most are unclassifiable outliers or ingenious (if failed) mediators; none are quitters or cynics. Chapter 1 is devoted to Russian Formalism. Similar to its rival positivist ideologies Marxism and Freudianism, Formalism launched its regime of relevance with "a new understanding of human agency" (p. 32), namely: we cannot govern our own psychic lives, but we can discover the laws that do. The mechanical concepts of device and estrangement were compatible with such a legislating appetite. However, Tihanov dwells not on the Petrograd Formalists in their stable institutional phase (Opoiaz in the 1920s), but on the writings of a very young, impressionable Shklovsky in the trenches of the Great War (1914–16). It was the War, Tihanov argues, and not the Revolution, that formed Shklovsky as a theorist by foregrounding matter, sensation, pain, and the obligation to re-sensitize life dulled by routine.

Chapter 2 focuses on the Russian Husserlian Gustav Shpet (b. 1879, shot 1937), a thinker as pan-European as Shklovsky is home grown. Shpet's advocacy of literal translation over utilitarian (worker-friendly) solutions in the global literature projects of Academia Publishers—Shpet knew thirteen languages—coexisted with his actor-centered phenomenology of theater and his insistence on an organic, contextual view of language, both of which distanced him from the more impersonal Formalists. Chapter 3 is on Mikhail Bakhtin. It is our most persuasive hypothesis to date on how the Bakhtin of dialogism (the double-voiced word) might be synthesized with the Bakhtin of carnival (the double-bodied image). Tihanov argues that Bakhtin became interested in genre theory only in the 1930s, possibly inspired by the German sociologist Hans Freyer's idea of heteroglossia (*Verschiedensprachigkeit*), the residue of collapsed organic community (pp. 114–15). With his trademark exuberance, throwing everything that caught his attention into the "melting pot" of his synthesizing style of argument (p. 104), Bakhtin then moved "from ethics and aesthetics to philosophy of culture," that is, from a Kantian-based moral worldview to "a wry and difficult—decentered—humanism" (p. 96). It was as cultural theorist that Bakhtin eventually redefined both novel and epic, bringing them together in Rabelais. There he bestows the novelistic values of openness and self-ironizing laughter on epic-sized, depersonalized folkloric heroes from a mythic past. Did this synthesis serve Stalinism? "Bakhtin," Tihanov remarks, "was no wiser than his time" (p. 124). Chapter 4 continues this materialist sociology with the undersung "semantic paleontologists," those para-Marxist followers of Nikolai Marr in the 1930s (Olga Friedenberg, Ieremeia Ioffe) who, like Bakhtin, insisted on the relevance of studying "the multitude of semantic deposits over the *longue durée* of prehistory and history proper" (p. 147). Although Tihanov does not mention this parallel, the paleontologists (like Bakhtin) were rebuked for creating ambitious theory—indeed, for fabricating whole literary movements—from minuscule fragments and obscure distant traces.

Chapter 5 takes up the interwar émigré scene. Its anxieties are palpable. When, around 1928, the status of exile was redefined as emigration, Russian literary activity in Prague, Paris, Berlin, and Shanghai had to confront its looming regime of irrelevance: did it even have an addressee and a readership? Could it write anything but its own past? Its "painfully closed—and oppressively intimate—mode of literary exchange" (p. 161) was challenged by the new generation of "Young Literature," writers who had matured in emigration and felt as close to Marcel Proust as to the Russian classics. Tihanov notes the fault lines (Khodasevich against Adamovich) and also the need for more attention to the impact of émigré literary activity on the new Soviet state (p. 154). Developments at home were feverishly followed abroad—and to the displaced, they became mantras of behavior and identity. The "Pushkin versus Lermontov" debates of the late 1930s, peaking in two jubilees, came to stand for two poles: the perfect, serenely cold classical poet and the warm, Romantic, indulgent personal friend (p. 173). In his brief Epilogue, Tihanov "fast-forwards" to world literature. If the Russian émigré felt displaced from a single native land and tradition, then today our instant accessibility to one another and our presumption of unrestricted rights to compare anything with everything have displaced us all.

Throughout his story, Tihanov emphasizes the importance of the canon and the classic. To this reviewer, the most instructive (and surprising) refrain of his featured theorists is their abiding conservatism. With the exception of Jakobson's prolific cutting-edge career, "theory" does not

especially serve the radical avant-garde. Shklovsky's estrangement is presented as a nostalgic idea, a past-friendly "euphoric conservatism" (p. 41) that believes in the healing potentials of art and in the traditional essentialist idea that we can "release and invigorate the core of a thing through form" (p. 51). Shpet, with his utterly Western mind, made everything he touched (theater performances as well as Russian translations of the classics) more cautious, mimetic, realistic. Bakhtin is outside every box. But overall he remains a product of German Romantic philosophy, eventually developing a "humanism without subjectivity (or at least without subjectivity understood in the classical identitarian sense)" (p. 107), which with time became ever more backward-looking, cosmic, and arraigned on medieval grids. The myth-and-folklore paleontologists push everything still further back. As regards the émigrés: conserving was their obsession, their mission—the question was only which classical poet and which style.

Tihanov ends, as he begins, on Viktor Shklovsky. It was the only part of this rich and generous book that gave me pause. Tihanov is very protective of Shklovsky, enthusiastically glossing his earliest wartime writings and, in the Epilogue, positioning him as a patron of the current scene. Why? Shklovsky conforms to "the current Anglo-Saxon discourse of world literature, in which the legitimization of reading and analyzing literature in and though translation plays a pivotal role" (p. 180). Among the Petrograd Formalists, he was the first who "believed that the effects of literariness are ... produced on levels above and beyond language"; unlike the polyglot Jakobson, Shklovsky "chose to analyze prose rather than poetry, and to do this in translation" (p. 181). Tihanov makes this sound like it was Shklovsky's choice. But of course it was Shklovsky's default. Only parenthetically is the reader reminded that Shklovsky was "blissfully monolingual" (p. 182)—which means he did not choose at all, but brought to the task the only equipment he had. And the problem I have with Shklovsky is the same one I have with Maksim Gorky, another hero-activist of world literature: were these monolinguals ever embarrassed that perhaps they had missed something? Even on monolingual turf, it is one thing to sponsor, as did Gorky, a world-literature publishing project staffed with competent translators, and quite another to generate a theory off someone else's work (the translator's) that you cannot confirm, and then proclaim this theory authoritatively. This is not to disparage Shklovsky's enormous creativity and global influence. But it is to sound a darker note about the "Anglo-Saxon discourse of world literature," which legitimates analyzing literature in translation because—let us say straight out what Milan Kundera was saying in the 1960s—until a text gets into an imperial language, which increasingly nowadays is English, it does not exist. For us native speakers of that language, this is great. We can proceed as Shklovsky proceeded, blissfully monolingual but provided with all manner of magnificent equivalents that offer themselves up to our analysis. For the other languages of the world, the news is less good. Even today we can leaf through pages of raves in the front matter of globally bestselling novels in English translation without encountering a single mention of the co-creating author. If our current regime of relevance endorses Shklovsky's mantra that "literariness is in the end portable" (from Tihanov's closing paragraph, p. 185), thus rendering invisible or disposable the material out of which the art was made, it could be because we are Shklovskys to the Shpets, Bakhtins, and Jakobsons of the past. This feels lucky but is probably our loss.

Caryl Emerson, Princeton University

Kostetskaya, Anastasia. *Russian Symbolism in Search of Transcendental Liquescence: Iconizing Emotion by Blending Time, Media, and the Senses*. Crosscurrents: Russia's Literature in Context. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019. xxviii + 156 pp. $90.00. ISBN 978-1-4985-9182-9.

In this innovative study of Russian Symbolism, Anastasia Kostetskaya blends cognitive psychology with literary analysis to offer a new framework for analyzing aesthetic links across a range of artistic media. "Symbolist *cognitive* aesthetics," she argues, "governs links between poetic, painterly, cinematic, and other artistic forms and the sensory-emotional imagery they evoke" and "maps a mystical transcendence to a spiritual world" (p. xiii). She premises this core claim upon conceptual

metaphor theory, which asserts that human reason is shaped by embodied experience (p. xvii). Specifically, Kostetskaya highlights the importance of *liquescence*—a "cognitive focus on common embodied experiences with fluids" which "lets the reader share in Symbolist perceptions of transcendence" (p. xiii). In other words, water emerges as an iconic representation of sublime emotional experiences due to its ability to evoke "a fluid movement beyond artificially set boundaries." Indeed, Kostetskaya argues that "conceptual liquescence became the primary metaphor" through which boundaries between different artistic genres were blurred by Russian Symbolists, enabling them to evoke an emotional sense of transcendence (p. xiv).

By placing her understanding of metaphor on this cognitive level, Kostetskaya is able to compare how select Symbolists employed the iconicity of water to evoke the emotional experience of transcendence. Chapter 1 thus explores liquescence as the "crucial link between sublime emotion and its iconic forms across Symbolist arts" (p. xxiv). Folklore images blending humans and water are placed alongside the liquescent aspects found in the artistic works of Konstantin Bal'mont, Viktor Borisov-Musatov, and Evgenii Bauer to demonstrate the ubiquity of water in Symbolist art (pp. 3–15).

Subsequent chapters offer in-depth analyses of poetry by Bal'mont (chap. 2), paintings by Borisov-Musatov (chap. 3) and silent films by Bauer (chap. 4). A close reading of Bal'mont's poetic cycle *In Boundlessness* highlights the themes of emotional boundlessness, natural cyclicality, and an eternal return to origins, all of which are evoked through linguistic metaphors linking water to human emotion. Borisov-Musatov's paintings are shown to blend techniques from music and poetry to evoke intense emotion through visual reference to liquescence—either through the deliberate inclusion of water in the painting, or through the evocation of fluid movement rather than stasis. Similarly, Bauer's use of long close-up shots is found to imitate the static quality of painting, while the incorporation of physical motion provides fluid continuity. Finally, the afterword highlights the importance of artistic blending in the ballet solo *The Dying Swan* in Bauer's film of the same name. As a parallel thread elegantly linking these chapters, Kostetskaya weaves in a series of comparative analyses of the "female apparition" that "comes to express a transcendental experience in the love for an earthly woman" (p. 17), which she connects both with liquescence and with the better-known Symbolist concept of the Eternal Feminine.

The result is a dense yet daring analysis that offers a potential future model for comparison across artistic genres. Nonetheless, the full ramifications that Kosetskaya envisions for her study would benefit from further clarification. Is "transcendental liquescence" to be understood as *the* defining conceptual metaphor for Symbolism as a whole, or does it co-exist alongside other possible conceptual metaphors? Is this analysis ultimately an explication of how artists themselves sought to aesthetically evoke transcendence through appealing to a shared cognitive metaphor of liquescence (p. xx), or a claim that readers and viewers of the time actually experienced this transcendence (p. 138)? Or is it arguing that the cognitive metaphor of liquescence employed by Symbolists still resonates among audiences today (p. xx)? Most persuasive is the framing of liquescence as an inherent part of artistic intent at a particular historical juncture in Russian cultural history. As a pioneering attempt to meld distinctive theoretical approaches and artistic genres, it will be of interest to scholars of Russian literature, art and film, as well as analysts of the broader cultural-intellectual history of the Silver Age.

Rebecca Mitchell, Middlebury College

Reese, Kevin. *Celestial Hellscapes: Cosmology as the Key to the Strugatskiis' Science Fictions*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2019. 278 pp. $109.00. ISBN 978-1-6181-1979-7.

This book is a first-rate contribution to scholarship on the Strugatskys. The brotherly duo of Arkady and Boris Strugatsky combine the best of the sciences and the humanities—what the late Soviet intelligentsia called "physicist" and "lyricist." As a literary scholar and an amateur astronomer, Kevin Reese is well-positioned to explore their universes.

Reese's central claim is that the Strugatskys' works contain "cosmologies of hell"—universes in which the laws are changed such that certain parameters mark them as different from the assumed consensus cosmology. These skewed cosmologies create a disconnect experienced by characters and readers that he terms "cosmological disorientation." The texts often feature astronomer characters who are unable to explain the structures of the universes they find themselves trapped in. Reese's other crucial term is *otkaz*—a refusal on the part of the authors to explain their cosmologies.

The monograph's first chapter outlines the Strugatskys' biographic connections to astronomy. As Reese suggests, Boris Strugatsky's experiences working at Pulkovo Obsevatory (an institution with a grim recent history) colored the way the Strugatskys depict astronomers in their oeuvre. The second chapter surveys the Strugatskys' early texts, which contain their first hints of cosmological disorientation. The third chapter analyses *The Second Martian Invasion* and its first true astronomer-protagonist, Apollo, whose scientific reasoning proves useless in the aftermath of the invasion. The focus of the fourth chapter is *The Inhabited Island*, in which the Sarakshians form a flawed cosmology due to concave atmospheric refraction. The fifth and sixth chapters examine *Roadside Picnic* and *A Billion Years until the End of the World*, respectively. In the former novel, cosmological inconsistencies are introduced by an alien Visitation, while in the latter the Universe observes human scientists with malevolent intent. The seventh chapter analyses the Hadean cosmology of *The Doomed City*, and the eighth chapter examines *Those Burdened by Evil*, where physical laws can be casually altered. Finally, Reese's "Coda" wraps up with a consideration of the Strugatskys' final work, *The Yids of the City of Peter*, which portrays humans as experimental subjects.

It is perhaps no surprise that the Strugatskys' mature and more complex works elicit the most rewarding readings. The analysis of *The Doomed City* is the high point of the monograph. The universe of the City is the most detailed as well as the most nightmarish, and the City's physical and cultural cosmologies combine to form the Strugatskys' ultimate cosmological experiment. The monograph's discussion of the star Vega's position in the sky in the early spring—leading Reese to conclude that Andrei (the novel's protagonist) remains in hell rather than returning to his native Leningrad at the novel's finale—is a vivid example of how astronomical knowledge can productively illuminate the texts. The reading of the City as a permutation of the Petersburg myth, linking it to Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman* and the myth of the destructive statue, is equally compelling. The arc of cosmological experimentation in the Strugatskys thus progresses from milder instances of discarded cosmologies and warped physical laws as manifestations of ideological emptiness through more bewildering worlds where cosmological inconsistencies are relatively contained to the full-blown terrifying and incomprehensible universes where "elements of hell are woven into the fabric of nature itself" (p. 58).

The monograph draws carefully on the Strugatskys' biographies, letters, and interviews, as well as on extant scholarship, especially Yvonne Howell's seminal study, *Apocalyptic Realism: The Science Fiction of Arkady and Boris Strugatsky* (1994). Like Howell, Reese engages in close intertextual analyses. Poetic epigraphs to chapters, all from Pushkin, are a fine touch.

There are a few minor issues. As the terms "cosmological disorientation" and "*otkaz*" are introduced, one wonders *why they are implemented* in the Strugatskys' fictions. If, as gathered from the rest of the study, the Strugatskys, especially in their later work, come to perceive our world as threatening and incomprehensible (à la Kafka), the monograph would have benefitted from stating as much at the outset. By the same token, I would have added Kafka to the monograph's multiple intertextual references (as embodying cosmological disorientation par excellence) and would have liked to hear more about Lem and his critique of anthropocentrism. And while it makes sense to confine discussion to works where astronomer characters play a prominent role, the warped/hellish cosmologies extend into texts with no such characters, sometimes in significant ways—*The Snail on the Slope* comes to mind as an example. This might deserve a mention.

These points aside, Reese has written an intelligent and enjoyable study that will speak to scholars, students, and fans of the worlds of the Strugatsky brothers.

Sofya Khagi, University of Michigan

History

Lenkhoff, Geil [Gail Lenhoff]. *Kniaz' Feodor Chernyi v russkoi istorii i kul'ture: Issledovanie i teksty*. Moscow: Al'ian-Arkheo, 2019. 350 pp. R750.00. ISBN 978-5-98874-168-8.

Feodor Rostislavich ("The Black") was a younger prince of the Smolensk dynasty who, in the second half of the thirteenth century, secured the throne of Yaroslavl by marriage and later married a Chingisid princess, by whom he became the progenitor of a new Yaroslavl princely dynasty. In 1463 his relics were exhumed and found to have miraculous powers, which eventually led to his rise to the position of Yaroslavl's most distinguished saint. This book, legitimately presented as the first multifaceted study (*kompleksnoe issledovanie*) of the prince, includes two lengthy sections, preceded by an introduction and followed by a bibliography, a list of cited manuscripts, indexes, and table of contents. Also included are reproductions of icons and frescoes, and a photograph of the Yaroslavl Monastery of the Savior (currently the Yaroslavl Museum-Preserve). The first section contains five chapters (three by Gail Lenhoff, one by V. F. Efimenkov, and one by B. M. Kloss). The second provides editions of hagiographic and liturgical texts relating to the saint.

The first chapter constitutes a self-contained, thoroughly documented, twenty-eight-page-biography of the prince against a complex background of political and economic history in a region stretching from the Baltic to the Mongol Empire. In it, Lenhoff strives to counterbalance Yaroslavl-centric presentations of the prince found in standard historiography. Without ignoring Feodor's close ties to the Mongols or his significance for Yaroslavl, she draws attention to his connections with Smolensk, which he appears to have ruled very capably (largely in absentia) between the death of his brother Michael in 1280 and his nephew's seizure of power in the city in 1297.

In the second chapter, Lenhoff dates the origins of Feodor's cult to 1463 and links its origins to the prestige that accrued to Yaroslavl's Monastery of the Savior as the location of the saint's relics. She polemicizes against scholars who have associated the cult with attempts to maintain Yaroslavl's political independence from Moscow, traces the growth of the cult in and beyond Yaroslavl (culminating in a 600-year commemoration of the saint's death in 1899), discusses Russian secular evaluations of Feodor from the eighteenth century through the twentieth, and follows the story of the saint's relics to the present day.

The third chapter places the various redactions of Feodor's Lives into hagiographical and social contexts, discussing their chronology, sources, structures, and relationships to one another. Lenhoff's detailed discussions of the Lives' relationships to biblical texts, other East Slavic hagiographic texts, and chronicles, gives a sense of the complex textual environment within which East Slavic hagiographical works arose and evolved. The fourth chapter, by Efimenkov, places liturgical texts relating to Feodor and his two sons into a context of other liturgical texts. The third and fourth chapters are supplemented by the fifth, an archaeographic survey by Kloss of all known manuscripts of all redactions of the Lives as well as of the liturgical manuscripts discussed by Efimenkov, and by the textual editions that comprise the second section of the book.

While there is some overlap between the present book and Lenhoff's 1997 monograph on Feodor's Lives and cult, the two books differ in focus, and each contains significant material that the other lacks. The two books also reach differing conclusions regarding the history of the Lives.

This book is of interest to anyone interested in the politics of northeastern and northwestern Rus' in the thirteenth century or in the contexts, development, and structures of East Slavic regional hagiographic and liturgical works. It will be essential for anyone interested in anything connected with Feodor the Black's career, veneration, or image.

Francis Butler, Santa Barbara

Halperin, Charles J. *Ivan the Terrible: Free to Reward and Free to Punish.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019. 360 pp. $45.00. ISBN 978-0-8229-4591-8.

Although he has not included a bibliography, his extensive endnotes suggest that as he composed this book, Charles Halperin consulted virtually every available primary and secondary source relating to the Muscovite tsar and his reign. The volume is, nonetheless, difficult to categorize. It is not a biography, nor is it a comprehensive narrative history of Muscovy during Ivan's reign. Comments about unidentified persons and events, tangential judgments on unexplained issues, and repeated scolding asides directed at scholars reduce the text's accessibility to readers unfamiliar with Ivan. Yet with its imprecise translated terms and eschewal of analyses of the evidence supporting Halperin's arguments and rejections of alternate interpretations, among other factors, it is not a typical monograph aimed primarily at specialists. Halperin himself describes his work as a study of Ivan IV and his reign. It may, perhaps, best be understood as Halperin's well-informed views on Ivan, the man and the tsar, and his impact on the historical development of Muscovy.

Ivan's influence on events guides the mixed chronological and thematic structure of the book, which is divided into four sections. Following an introduction to the Muscovite state, society, and institutions circa 1533, when Ivan's father died, it covers the period of Ivan's minority, when he had no political role; mid-century domestic and foreign policies, culture, and economy, in which Ivan's personal role cannot be determined; and, finally, the period, beginning in 1564, when Ivan's role was visibly dominant. The centerpiece of the fourth section is the Oprichnina, decidedly Ivan's creation, and Halperin's explanations for its initiation and its devolution into uncontrolled mass terror.

The attentive reader will note omissions, imprecision, and inconsistencies in Halperin's coverage of the main events and developments in Muscovy. They do not, however, prevent the accomplishment of his primary objective: a reappraisal of Ivan. Sifting through commonly accepted depictions of Ivan, weighing their sources against his knowledge of Muscovy's political system, culture, and social norms, and judging their plausibility, Halperin is able to cast aside clichéd accounts for Ivan's behavior. He dismisses the notion that Ivan was a psychologically damaged product of an abused and neglected childhood, for example, because he regards its source, Ivan's first letter to Prince Kurbskii, as a deliberate fabrication. Drawing upon his insights into the Muscovite political system and the court during Ivan's minority, Halperin contends that the child Ivan would have been carefully attended and protected and perceives in the adult Ivan a capacity for mendacity.

Halperin uses this approach to piece together a fresh portrait of Ivan. His observations on the Orthodox Church and court culture yield a vision of a pious, literate Ivan who was well aware of the dread responsibility he bore as the protector of his Orthodox realm. His descriptions of Muscovite institutions and political reforms display an Ivan inclined toward reason and careful planning, while his coverage of foreign affairs and the Oprichnina reveals that Ivan could also make costly errors in judgment and unleash policies whose disastrous outcomes he could not control. Halperin's Ivan was a charismatic figure, erudite, and witty with a penchant for theatrics. Yet he was also temperamental, sacrilegious, and ruthlessly cruel. Ivan's paradoxical qualities were evident throughout his reign, which, in Halperin's view, cannot be divided into "good" and "bad" periods.

Ivan's actions altered the course of Muscovite history. The institutional, legal, and military reforms he adopted survived long after his death while territories he conquered remain part of modern Russia. But he was also a product of his time. Muscovy's political system, culture, and social norms influenced his decisions and affected their consequences, and even his excesses, with the exception of the mass terror of the Oprichnina, were not extraordinary when compared to those undertaken by contemporary European monarchs. *Ivan the Terrible* leaves many questions about Ivan open to further investigation; its strength is Halperin's discovery and description of the tsar's complex, contradictory, and very human qualities, which have been obscured by myths rooted in propaganda and perpetuated in legend.

Janet Martin, University of Miami

Berelovich, Vladimir, Vladislav Rzheutskii, and Igor' Fediukin, eds. *Ideal vospitaniia dvorianstva v Evrope, XVII–XIX veka*. Historia Rossica. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2018. 492 pp. R320.00. ISBN 978-5-444-80780-4.

Recent decades have seen a welcome growth in studies of the Russian nobility in various languages, some of which have resulted from sizeable research projects. The book under review has emerged from one such project on noble society from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries that has already produced volumes on ruling elites during and after the Petrine reforms, and on nobility, power, and society in provincial Russia during the eighteenth century. This latest volume on the education of nobilities across Europe brings together some of the papers presented at a conference in Moscow in 2014. The original presentations (including some that did not make this volume) could still be viewed in their entirety as of February 2020 at https://edunob.hypotheses.org/.

All these recent studies are characterized by a greater breadth of interests than many earlier works, with their focus ranging beyond "high" politics and economic concerns to address local politics, cultural networks and practices, the role of noblewomen and families, and numerous elements of "everyday life." Many have also paid attention not only to the "Europeanization" of the nobility, but also to Russian nobles in their European context, drawing comparisons and contrasts across the continent, and in doing so they have raised the historiography on Russian nobles closer to the levels of complexity and sophistication seen in studies of the nobility in other countries. This edited volume builds on both of these trends by placing articles on aspects of the education of Russian nobles alongside articles on similar themes for their Austrian, French, German, Hungarian, Neapolitan, and Sicilian counterparts. The result is a fascinating exploration of what the editors suggest is, despite significant differences, a recognizable, pan-European noble understanding of the nature and importance of education during this period that forms an "indispensable" element of their corporate identity.

The editors summarize debates over the nature of the Russian nobility in their introduction before outlining the key themes that emerge from the chapters: growing conformity in legal and public discourse over the importance of education for noble identity, "civilizing" the nobility and building cultural capital; increasingly "modern" theories and practices, not least the greater emphasis on "living" languages; the role of education in securing, maintaining, and advancing power and privilege; and the influence of new practices, such as the Grand Tour. Of the following sixteen chapters, eight focus on Russia and Ukraine. Mikhail Kiselev and Anastasiia Lystsova examine public and official discourse during the 1750–60s through debates in journals and the partial reforms of I. I. Shuvalov that sought to "enlighten" nobles and better prepare them for state service. Vladislav Rzheutskii discusses the actual practices of noble families, from home education and tutors to schools and travel. Liudmila Posokhova focuses on Ukraine as it became integrated into the Russian Empire, demonstrating how "western" educational practices (from institutions to subjects) helped consolidate a "Ukrainian" nobility and facilitated their advancement and influence in the empire. Victoria Frede explores the enlightenment ideal of friendship in the relations between nobles and foreign tutors, and the importance of educating the "heart" as well as the mind. Igor' Fediukin describes the early Kadet corps and its role in not just forming a military elite, but also forging a broader noble culture. Maiia Lavrinovich highlights the creation of a school to train governesses for the provincial nobility in the 1810–20s, and the process of finding them posts and managing their employment. Vladimir Berelovich charts the emergence of the Grand Tour for Russian nobles in the eighteenth century as a means of expanding horizons and broadening educations. Finally, Dmitrii Redin uses V. A. Sollogub's novel, *The Tarantas: Travel Impressions* (1845), to examine fictional portrayals of educational practices, particularly the ideal (or often "anti-ideal") stereotypes of the tutor.

The variety of these articles and their use of other recent research is the great strength of this book. They showcase the range of sources available, intriguing ways of using them, and some fascinating results. The nobility emerge as much more proactive than might be expected in shaping educational practices to fulfil their ambitions and in recognizing the importance of education to their identity beyond its practical uses. The chapters also have much to say for the historian of the

Russian nobility generally, whether on politics and wealth or culture and everyday life. To be sure, there is more on the higher echelons of the nobility than the lesser, provincial nobility; there is also far more on male education than female; and the sources tell us much more about some issues than others, not least the provision of education over its effectiveness. It is also a shame that this book, like so many, focuses on the pre-1861 nobility: so many of the issues—not least education as a source of identity—became even more pertinent after 1861. Nonetheless, the editors' arguments for a pan-European noble understanding of the nature and importance of education during this period are convincing, while claims that education formed an "indispensable" element of the nobility's corporate identity seem incontestable on the basis of these chapters.

Matthew Rendle, University of Exeter

Libbey, James K. *Foundations of Russian Military Flight, 1885–1925*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2019. xii,+ 244 pp. $38.00. ISBN 978-1-68247-423-5.

This book offers readers interested in aviation history an essential primer that reveals the origins, development, and, in a most beneficial fashion, the embedding of air-mindedness in both the Imperial and Soviet periods of Russian history. James K. Libbey, using his lifetime of research and masterful prose, recounts how air power became a part of Russian and Soviet thinking by focusing on the key themes of technology (both in its acquisition from abroad and development of a national industry): creation, adoption, and acceptance of a new military service branch by the Imperial army and navy; pilot training; political support; and, ultimately, the use of air power both in peace and in wartime. Using secondary and memoir sources, Libbey reveals that while Russia's adoption of air power and its development was at first wholly dependent on European (mainly French and British) ideas and largely lagged behind the West, it always enjoyed support, beginning with the royal family and a visionary cohort of officers and engineers.

Russia first used aviation assets on the battlefield with the deployment of aerostatic balloons for observation during the Russo-Japanese War. After the 1909 flight across the English channel of the French aviator Louis Bleriot caught the attention of Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich (Nicholas II's cousin and brother-in-law), aviation-minded Russians had the support of the crown in their efforts to get the Tsarist military establishment to take air power seriously. Not surprisingly because of their alliance, Russia entered World War I with an air fleet composed largely of Nieuports that were built either in France or by Russian companies under French licenses. Libbey demonstrates how the navy did a much better job than the army of accepting the value of air power to operations in August 1914. Indeed, the author does a splendid job demonstrating that General Samsonov might have survived his trial by fire in East Prussia had he taken the information gathered by Russian aerial scouts seriously. Even better, Libbey demonstrates that, over the course of World War I, the Russian air arm advanced from being a service that could at first only perform reconnaissance duties to one that had adopted the idea of deploying heavy bombers and, by the war's end, was using light, nimble fighters to engage in aerial combat. Nonetheless, the Tsarist air service never had the industrial capability to build and maintain itself on the scale demanded by World War I; according to Libbey, the result of this shortcoming meant Russian pilots, no matter how well trained, were always using outdated equipment. Indeed, he concludes that at the end of World War I Russia had only two aircraft types, the flying boats designed by Dimitrii Grigorovich, and large reconnaissance-bombers created by Igor Sikorsky that met the technological requirements of the age yet could not be produced in numbers needed to sustain their operational capabilities during the war.

An important aspect of this book is learning that, although most military operations came to a jarring halt in February 1917, Russian aviators kept flying, maintaining constant surveillance on the disposition(s) of the Central Powers' forces. Libbey also provides an informative survey of the use of air power assets by both sides in the Civil War, with special emphasis on the challenges the Reds and the Whites encountered in their efforts to acquire airplanes and keep them operational in an environment where everything from pilots to spare parts were in short supply. Most important,

however, is the author's explanation that the lessons learned between 1918 and 1924 defined how the Soviets created and built their aviation assets throughout the twentieth century. According to Libbey, the Soviet inheritance from the multiple crises of their early period were threefold. The first was the 1918 creation by Nikolai Egorovich Zhukovskii of the Central Aero-Hydrodynamic Institute (TsAGI), which became the technical research institute for the development of all things related to aviation. The second was the establishment of the Zhukovski Military Air Academy, which trained future aeronautical engineers and ultimately provided the Soviet Union with such significant aircraft designers as Andrei Tupolev, Nikolai Polikarpov, and Sergei Il'yushin. And the third aspect was a direct result of the short-sightedness of the Versailles Treaty. After the November 1920 signing of the Treaty of Rapallo, the Germans set up shop in the Soviet Union and taught them how to manufacture all-metal military aircraft and train pilots.

Libbey does a thorough job of informing his readers how air power came to Russia and then became a permanent part of the defense establishment before the Revolution. Most importantly, he continues the story through the revolutionary period into the Soviet period, thereby demonstrating that air-mindedness had become completely embedded in the thinking and operations of the Russian military, regardless of who was in power. The book is well thought out and engagingly written. It can and should be read by anyone interested in the story of how air power came to Russia at the beginning of the twenteith century.

John W. Steinberg, Austin Peay State University

Lomb, Samantha. *Stalin's Constitution: Soviet Participatory Politics and the Discussion of the 1936 Draft Constitution*. London: Routledge, 2018. xiii + 178 pp. $101.47. ISBN 978-1-138-72184-5.

The first book by this young author addresses an understudied topic. This investigation into the introduction and popular discussion of the 1936 Constitution, which granted universal suffrage and liberal freedoms to the Soviet people, is based on the Kirov region to the northeast of Moscow. Utilizing mostly local archives it describes Kirov officials' perspective on the nationwide campaign and examines reactions of the specific population of a non-industrial area embodied in 3,203 suggestions for amending draft. While providing intriguing details of everyday and political life in the region, the source base does not include available NKVD reports, memoirs, or diaries, which would have balanced and triangulated the perspective of soviet and party bureaucrats on the constitution. Such diversification would have allowed for a more critical approach to the sources, especially when the author claims without arguments that people's "suggestions ... were not consciously edited to fit the prevailing political narrative" (p. 143). A young author cannot always resist the influence of the embedded ideological discourse, and sometimes takes at face value people's letters published in newspapers and their praise of Soviet achievements.

The valuable part of this study is its analysis of the preparation of the draft by the Constitutional Commission. The scrupulous work that commission had done leads the author to the important conclusion that "these rights were so carefully crafted because they were not simply propaganda but real programs the state sought to implement" (p. 22). Interestingly, it was Stalin who personally excluded peasants from state social benefits. The dictator neither calculated the cost of benefits nor consulted the commissar of social security. This exclusion elicited the most protest in the popular discussion.

The discussion was carefully managed by the instructions, inspectors, and prescribed lesson plans that directed local cadres and ensured politically correct opinions. But, as Samantha Lomb points out, the poorly prepared and overworked cadres mostly failed to organize the grassroots discussion to meet Moscow's expectations either in totality of participation, in providing statistics about comments, or framing responses. However, another reason for cadres' apathy might be considered. Because Moscow encouraged participants to outvote ineffective officials, the latter felt

the campaign was directed against them and sabotaged the democratic impulse or redirected critiques to lower levels of the apparatus. Thus, the position of the local organizers was much more complicated.

The book presents popular voices as they negotiated the social contract between the state and society. Lomb demonstrates that the population was not passive and obedient, but was ready to defend their interests, often in opposition to state interests. But majority of the comments in Kirov reflected parochial interests. Lomb shows that residents in Kirov overwhelmingly rejected the enfranchisement of former kulaks and priests (83 percent of comments on Article 135), relied on the state for welfare benefits, and demanded tighter control, though little explanation is given.

The most bold and original idea of the book is the link between popular responses to the constitution that local officials submitted to the center and Stalin's turn to mass repressions in 1937. "The leadership had indeed believed that [after destruction of all class enemies] it was safe to make the USSR more participatory" (p. 124). The reports from localities, which Stalin interpreted as a revival of anti-Soviet attitudes, amplified anxieties at the top that, emboldened by freedoms, enemies could enter the organs of power. However, this heuristic idea came out of thin air, as the book does not discuss in detail the opinions that were interpreted as anti-Soviet, nor does it explore the reasons for the constitutional renewal (except for noting concern about stability and legality). We see no evidence from Stalin's texts, nor from intraparty exchanges, such as those that occurred at the February-March Plenum of 1937. The limited context and source base probably prevented the author from developing this thesis as an additional factor in the historiographical debate on Stalin's turn to Great Terror, which deserves full attention from the students of Stalinism.

Olga Velikanova, University of North Texas

Waterlow, Jonathan. *It's Only a Joke, Comrade! Humour, Trust and Everyday Life under Stalin*. Oxford: n.p., 2018. xxii + 285 pp. £14.99 (paper). ISBN 978-1-9856-3582-1.

In her memoir *Only One Year*, Stalin's daughter recalls how her father used to joke with his closest Politburo colleagues at late-night dinner parties, often in startlingly irreverent ways. One frequent jibe, directed toward NKVD Chief Lavrenti Beria, featured an ignorant NKVD officer who, humiliated when a professor mocked him for not knowing the authorship of *Evgeny Onegin*, had the teacher arrested. Later, the officer boasted that he had finally discovered the truth: the professor had confessed to having written the poem himself.

As such an account suggests, the issue of humor in the Stalinist dictatorship is a fascinating one, particularly as so many jokes—like this one from the leader himself—suggest an awareness of government policies or practices gone awry. This is precisely the kind of issue focused on by Jonathan Waterlow in this original and lively work. Waterlow, in his conclusion, says his book is fundamentally "an argument against dualism" and for, instead, a vision of Soviet society where citizens could *both* believe and mock, conform and critique (p. 263).

Waterlow explains his theory of humor in Stalinist society through the metaphor of "crosshatching," the weaving together of government ideology and lived experience or, as Waterlow puts it, the "mixing of official and unofficial discourses, values and assumptions, the intersections between which continuously generated new understandings of life and how to live it" (pp. 5–6). He perceptively argues that most jokes were not statements of resistance but, rather, part of continuous efforts on the part of individuals to make sense of an ever-changing and confusing world.

Waterlow's manuscript has a number of strengths. It is full of jokes, for a start, and written in an engaging, casual style with occasional first-person explanations of thought processes and research methods. (It is the first scholarly work I have read in a long time that includes "Stalin" and "bonk" in the same sentence [p. 130]) The author is well versed in the historiography of the 1930s and beyond, and he perceptively engages with key debates about Soviet subjectivity, "speaking Bolshevik," and social trust. In so doing, Waterlow challenges established ideas about the atomization of society under Stalin and focuses attention on the importance of personal networks as means for communicating not only jokes but also news and information (in the form of gossip or rumor). He

also suggests that Stalin-era policing—and the boundary in Soviet humor between funny and treasonous that officials so diligently strove to police—was not something fixed or uniformly repressive, but fluid, arbitrary, and shifting.

While Waterlow's big-picture arguments are well articulated and persuasive, his manuscript can also be challenged on a number of particulars. Although the author claims in his introduction that he wishes to look at jokes in context, the book is largely a mixture of jokes and discussion of how and why they work. The actual social context of the jests—to whom they were told, when, how they were reported, and what the consequences were for the tellers—is often missing.

Waterlow is open about the fact that his sources can be loosely divided into two camps: the records of those who were not arrested for their humor, and the records of those who were. However, his reliance on the latter category raises issues that, despite a chapter on "Who's Laughing Now? Persecution and Prosecution," could arguably be explored in greater detail. For example, in an opening chapter on "Kirov's Carnival," Waterlow recounts jokes recorded in police and judicial records around the time of the assassination of Leningrad Communist Party Chief Sergei Kirov. These include all manner of crude jibes advocating violence against Stalin or portraying the general secretary as the target of anal rape, leading Waterlow to conclude that most Soviet citizens were not wholeheartedly devoted to their leader, but in fact "singled out" Stalin as a "particular target for this kind of abuse" (p. 44). What Waterlow neglects to mention is that after the Kirov attack, NKVD units across the Soviet Union were tasked with reporting on community reactions to the assassination, amid dire top-down warnings of previously undetected but widespread anti-Soviet sentiment. Police and Communist party observers were pressured to "discover" signs of counterrevolution, which undoubtedly led to an enormous number of exaggerated or wholly fabricated claims.

This is not to say that Waterlow is incorrect in highlighting the fascinating paradox that Soviet citizens made countless jokes during the Stalin era, even when doing so involved a high degree of risk. But in taking certain comments (like those contained in reports on Kirov) at face value and assuming such a relatively small sample to be reflective of a widespread social "norm," Waterlow arguably misses another layer of complexity. Soviet citizens in the 1930s might not have known exactly what could get them into trouble when the boundaries of acceptable humor were constantly in flux; nevertheless, they were certainly aware that jests about the humiliation of Stalin were of a whole different order of magnitude more serious than quips about, say, the necessity of waiting in line.

Similarly, Waterlow dedicates a whole chapter to trust and sociability without discussing denunciation and the pressures put on individual Communist party members to expose alleged wrongdoing within their own networks of trust during the late 1930s. He states that in telling jokes, "knowing who and how to trust made all the difference" (p. 227). However, he does not delve into the particulars of his case documents in order to explore how trust could be and was betrayed, or to consider the late 1930s as a moment when personal relationships among party members were subjected to continual scrutiny. This is, again, not to say that Waterlow is wrong to challenge ideas of the USSR as a place where everyone lived in fear and trust was absent. However, perhaps he should consider the 1930s as a time when people were constantly struggling with the issue of trust and regularly surprised by the actions of their fellow citizens, friends, and family members.

All told, Waterlow's book adds to our understanding of the 1930s Soviet Union as a highly diverse place, full of wry and wise citizens who certainly had to ability to appreciate propaganda *qua* propaganda and to recognize hypocrisy. The USSR, *per* Waterlow, could be a place of great humor as well as of great suffering and injustice, and humor, suffering, and injustice could mingle in a variety of disconcerting ways.

Cynthia Hooper, College of the Holy Cross

Rimmington, Anthony. *Stalin's Secret Weapon: The Origins of Soviet Biological Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. xiv + 262 pp. $45.00. ISBN 978-0-19-092885-8.

The Soviet Union's highly ambitious offensive biological weapons program, the largest one of any nation in history, was implemented at the beginning of the twentieth century in Imperial Russia and imploded with the collapse of the USSR at the end of 1991. From the very beginning, the program was highly clandestine. Information about the program acquired by foreign intelligence services was thought to be miniscule, and public deductions about scope or accomplishments were impossible or highly erroneous. Due to the heightened secrecy, general knowledge of the program's specifics is still extremely limited today. The most important scholarly work on the program to date, Leitenberg and Zilinskas's *The Soviet Biological Weapons Program – A History* (2012), sheds light on the "modern" offensive program that began in the early 1970s shortly after the USSR signed the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention that prohibited exactly this type of program. However, the very early stages of the program remained murky. In his new book, Anthony Rimmington closes up a considerable portion of this knowledge gap. Rimmington, who already contributed significantly to the understanding of the general program in several seminal articles published in, for instance, *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, gained access to a plethora of newly declassified British intelligence reports and other, including extensive Russian, sources. With these documents, he outlines the development of the program during the 1920s–1950s. Rimmington concludes that even the early stages of the program include far more institutes and personnel than previously assumed. He convincingly traces the program's origins back to the authorities' strong fears of naturally imported pathogens (for instance, *Bacillus anthracis*, the etiologic agent of anthrax; *Burkholderia mallei*, the causative agent of glanders; and especially *Yersinia pestis*, which causes plague). Certain strong-minded individuals within the Soviet public health system and veterinary services became advocates for evaluating the very same zoonotic pathogens as potential weapons against enemy soldiers and their horses. The push for offensive work was fueled additionally by offensive biological activities by Imperial Germany against Imperial Russia during World War I and by Imperial Japan against China during World War II. The major activities that ramped up the program were pursued with Stalin's explicit support (or totalitarian direction). Rimmington further describes how key scientists who helped build the program were later executed on Stalin's command during the Great Terror for reasons that are still unclear today. Other scientists died after accidental laboratory-acquired infections that could possibly have been avoided had the program been expanded less rapidly and with more attention to human safety. Rimmington makes a clear case that Stalin himself appears to have been behind the consolidation of disparate biological weapons research activities into one highly coordinated program.

Rimmington's book is an important contribution and, together with Leitenberg and Zilinskas's work, builds a coherent scaffold of the Soviet bioweapons program that can now be used by historians and political analysts for further refinement. The book can be read without the need for biological or other technical expertise and only assumes a basic knowledge of Soviet/Russian history. Refreshingly, Rimmington largely abstains from Western-infused moral judgment about the activities of "the Russians" during the early stage of the program, which, in contrast to the "modern" phase, was unfortunately not illegal based on international law. Indeed, these activities were mirrored also by similar, albeit less extensive, activities in several Western nations (for example, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Rimmington also emphasizes that the Soviet offensive program resulted in the development of numerous vaccines and other medical countermeasures against genuine public health threats. Whether the development of these countermeasures was a truly positive contribution of an otherwise nefarious program remains unclear. Strategically, such countermeasures of course could have been developed for the Soviet population to protect them from agents deployed in biological weaponry during an armed conflict.

Rimmington uses careful language, openly addresses the potential problems always associated with trying to construct history from individual sources that often cannot be otherwise verified, and he is meticulous in his citations. This book leaves me with only one major complaint. Because I, or

other scholars, may want to verify and elaborate on individual aspects of Rimmington's work, information for the specialist should have been included. At the very least, a map of the distribution of all mentioned institutes with their original Russian names and abbreviations (in Cyrillic or transliterated), and a chart of how these names have changed over time, should have been added in an Appendix. Similarly, a table showing outdated pathogen names and their current designations would have been helpful. Aside from these shortcomings, Rimmington's book is a fascinating and at times horrifying read that is highly recommended to anybody interested in arms control or the excesses of totalitarian regimes.

Jens H. Kuhn, National Institutes of Health

Launius, Roger D. *Reaching for the Moon: A Short History of the Space Race.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019. viii + 248 pp. $30.00. ISBN 978-0-300-23046-8.

Roger Launius, one of the United States' leading space historians, has published a cogent, well-written short history of the space race between the two superpowers during the Cold War. This book, edited without cumbersome footnote citations, is stylistically geared to the broader educated public; however, it manages to develop broad political and cultural themes and is thus analytically sophisticated for an academic audience as well. What is most impressive is, besides Launius's deep understanding of the technological aspects of space history, he not only makes those technical details easy to follow, but also provides a very balanced understanding of both Soviet and U.S. space accomplishments. Furthermore, this is more than a chronological, linear account of the progress toward the moon landing: it is also a thematic meditation on the cultural meaning of space exploration in the late twentieth century.

The beginning of the book makes a very convincing case that the Soviets had an early lead in the space race, and Launius neatly delineates for the reader how the Soviets achieved numerous "firsts" both before and after Yuri Gagarin's historic April 1961 circumnavigation of the globe. The reader also learns much about the administrative aspects of the early Soviet space program under famed rocket scientist Sergei Korolev and his subsequent team of cosmonauts training in Star City outside of Moscow.

However, from its inception in July 1958, we realize that NASA would also develop a highly skilled administrative team beginning with T. Keith Glennan, its first leader during the Eisenhower administration. America too had able and willing astronauts, and Launius takes us from the Mercury Seven to the eventual Apollo teams. Launius' political analysis of both Kennedy and Khrushchev, and their competition, is presented in both an insightful and even revisionist manner. Kennedy is presented, at least early on in the book, as more of a cold warrior ready to engage in competitive battle. Apollo is thus seen as a vehicle, or prism, for Kennedy to overcome initial Soviet successes. Launius thus skillfully presents the moon project, as envisioned by Kennedy and subsequent presidents, as a symbol of U.S. global strength. Eventually, the American success would be an application of what Joseph Nye describes as "soft power" in the international contest to win over third world nations in the Cold War between capitalism and communism.

In the final chapters, Launius leaves us with some very interesting revelations about the space program. To begin, he paints the Apollo successes as a triumph of management, particularly in meeting difficult systems engineering, technological, and organizational integration requirements. This success was partly due to James E. Webb, NASA's administrator at the height of the program from 1961 to 1968. Apollo also left humans with a new ecologically centered view of the planet, and spawned the field of earth system science. He thus argues it led indirectly to a more environmentally conscious U.S. public. Yet for all these great strides, and the national pride that was engendered by the program, Launius argues that the triumph of Apollo was more of an anomaly

than the norm. He leaves us with a tragic note that the so-called golden age of space flight did not serve catalytically as a new beginning to continue to explore the cosmos with such determined resolution. One issue comparatively Launius might have explored more is that historians of technology have made similar arguments about large-scale projects with display value, such as the Manhattan Project, that also served imminently certain political cultures engaged in fierce races with their global opponents. Thus one looming question is whether the space race of the 1960s was an extension of those overall Cold War competitive paradigms.

With that minor query aside, this accessible work by an eminent space historian should be read widely by the educated layperson interested in the cosmos, historians of technology, and cultural historians of the Cold War. Launius challenges our preconceptions of the myth of Apollo, broadens our horizons by looking into the Soviet successes initially, and forces us to see space exploration as more than just the triumph of human will. In fact, it involved complex technological advances, managerial acumen, and huge financial expenditures and determination on both sides of the iron curtain. This superb book adds greatly to our understanding of the meaning of space exploration in a broader geo political context.

James T. Andrews, Iowa State University

Pazderka, Josef, ed. *The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968: The Russian Perspective*. Harvard Cold War Studies. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019. xvi + 288 pp. $95.00. ISBN 978-1-7936-0292-3.

Of all the anniversaries of the 1968 events in Czechoslovakia, it was only for the fortieth that Russians contributed meaningfully, as witnesses and scholars. This collection makes available in English articles and interviews that were previously published in Russian, Czech, and German in or shortly after 2008. The resulting combination is, in the words of editor Josef Pazderka, a "psychogram" that puts a human face on the forces of occupation.

The interviews fall into three sets, opening with soldiers who took part in the invasion. As the interviewer, Pazderka steadfastly challenges their unreliable versions of events, which are full of unsubstantiated claims of "counter-revolutionary" aggression while downplaying the casualties inflicted by the invading forces; since those victims—estimated at 137—are now sacred to how Czech and Slovak societies commemorate the invasion, Russian refusal to even acknowledge their fate is especially grating. (This issue arose again in late 2019 when the Russian government objected to the Czech legislature's motion to declare August 21 a day of remembrance for the dead.) The first conversation in the book, with Maj. Gen. Pavel Kosenko, is a case study of a remorseless Stalinist servant of state power. General Eduard Vorob'ev and paratrooper Boris Shmelev are more circumspect and admit that over time they came to view the invasion skeptically; the latter notes that veterans took little pride in their involvement and did not form any associations or gather on the anniversary. But even Shmelev tells a lurid tale of East German soldiers opening fire on civilians, for which there is no evidence, rather than fully confront his own army's culpability.

The second set of interviews is with Soviet establishment figures who sympathized with Czechoslovakia's attempt at reform socialism and objected to its interruption, such as Vladimir Lukin, who at the time was on the staff of the *World Marxist Review* in Prague, and Vladlen Krivosheev, a journalist at *Izvestiia*. Leonid Shinkarev, who wrote extensively about 1968 for *Izvestiia* in the 1990s, recounts both the lack of enthusiasm for the invasion in the "backwoods" of Siberia, and the experience of one of the approximately one hundred Soviet citizens who were working in Czechoslovak firms (in this case, AERO Vodochody aviation) and were more in touch with reality than the diplomats in the Soviet embassy and consulate (the subject of Ol'ga Pavlenko's chapter). The overall picture is of Czechs and Russians able to maintain correct, even cordial personal relations, and of educated Russians angered or at least embarrassed by their country's actions. A fascinating chapter by Tomáš Glanc likewise retrieves August 1968 as a powerful motif of disgrace (*pozor*) in contemporary Russian poetry.

The third set of interviews is with the courageous dissidents Liudmila Alexeeva and Natal'ia Gorbanevskaia, who felt compelled to find some way, however fleeting and marginal, to denounce the invasion outside the safety of the dacha or kitchen. They are the polar opposite of the unthinking General Kosenko, but similarly claim that they had no choice: while he felt obliged to obey orders from above, they felt obliged to obey their consciences. They suffered terribly for their bravery, and Gorbanevskaia was understandably despondent about the organized amnesia in Russian society under Putin, a sentiment echoed in Petr Pithart's lament that "my now foggy memories lead me to conclude that Czechs and Russians do not really understand each other even today, that they are almost not interested in each other" (p. 173).

As the Russian "Thaw generation" passes—several of the interviewees have since died—it is good to have obtained their testimonies, no matter how problematic some may be. At the heart of the story, however, a black box still lurks—the exact process by which the decision to invade was taken, an act that Glanc describes as being as momentous for parts of Soviet society as was 1941 or 1953 (p. 183). We have had almost three decades of teasing hints at the existence of Politburo transcripts or detailed minutes seen by a select few Russian archivists or historians, but the full import of those sources remains unknown so long as they are off limits to the wider community. The chapters by Pavlenko on the diplomats and by Nikita Petrov on the KGB do help us understand the information flowing toward the Central Committee, a fair amount of which was supplied by Czech and Slovak *apparatchiki* embittered by the downfall of Antonín Novotný. Yet it is typical that we get a tantalizing reference to a work by Vladimir K. Volkov that is apparently based on access to Politburo records, but judging by the lack of bibliographic details does not appear to have been published anywhere (p. 109). Russian scholars also seem to be unfamiliar with standard Western studies of Soviet decision-making, such as Karen Dawisha's outstanding *The Kremlin and the Prague Spring* (1984), which still deserves to be read as a model of rigorous analysis, at least until Russian historians come up with a better way to understand Brezhnevite politics.

Kieran Williams, Drake University

Bykova, Marina F., and Vladislav A. Lektorsky, eds. *Philosophical Thought in Russia in the Second Half of the 20th Century: A Contemporary View from Russia and Abroad*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. xii + 430 pp. $176.00. ISBN 978-1-3500-4058-8.

This useful and ambitious book is in large part an edited translation of a compilation of articles published in Russian in 2014 (*Problemy i diskussii v filosofii Rossii vtoroi poloviny 20-go veka: Sovremennyi vzgliad)*. Edited and introduced by Marina Bykova and Vladislav Lektorsky, the book is comprised of twenty-five articles and twenty-two authors, divided into six parts: "Russian Philosophy of the Second Half of the 20th Century in the Context of Culture and Science"; "Philosophy of Science"; "Philosophy as the History of Philosophy"; "The Problem of Activity in Philosophy, Methodology, and Human Sciences"; "Dialogue and Communication"; and "Philosophical Anthropology," along with a Chronology of Key Events, and a Selected Bibliography. Broadly speaking, the Introduction and Part I attempt to describe the sociopolitical and philosophical context in which Soviet Russian philosophy of the period developed, while the rest of the book focuses on specific areas of philosophy in a roughly chronological order.

This is not say that *Philosophical Thought in Russia in the Second Half of the 20th Century* aspires to be an exhaustive survey of Soviet-Russian philosophy during these five decades. As the editors note, "the aim of this volume is not to provide a comprehensive survey of Soviet philosophical thought in the post-Stalin period, but rather to focus on those areas of philosophy which produced the most ingenious results, and on those thinkers who offered the most original contributions to the discipline" (p. 10). Moreover, the volume is hybrid in form, containing Western-style scholarly articles, polemical arguments, personal recollections, and philosophical reflection proper.

The starting point for what Vladislav Lektorsky somewhat hyperbolically calls a "Renaissance movement of the second half of the 20th century" (p. 28) is the work of the young Alexander Zinoviev

and especially of Evald Ilyenkov (1924–79), both of whom brought intellectual rigor—rather than ideological conformity—to the development of an authentic Marxian philosophy (Ilyenkov being more concerned with thought and being, Zinoviev with philosophical logic.) As Abdusalam Gusyenov sees it, underlying this "Sixtier" (*shestidesiatnik*) project was the attempt to create a philosophical foundation for "socialism with a human face." This meant justifying "Reason's sovereign right to Truth and its role as the universal, i.e. democratic way to it" (pp. 99, 96). The brilliant Ilyenkov, the Thaw's first philosophical hero and martyr (see below), is depicted as seeking to awake Soviet philosophy from its dogmatic slumber. His important work receives detailed treatment from several authors in the volume, most notably by the British philosopher David Bakhurst, and the American Tom Rockmore. The former provides two separate articles and a very important new translation of a text previously believed lost. The first of the articles describes the implications and ramifications of the 1954 scandal associated with the (non)publication—but wide distribution in Moscow philosophical circles—of Ilyenkov's (fifteen) "Theses on the Question of the Interconnection of Philosophy and Knowledge of Nature and Society in the Process of their Historical Development," when Ilyenkov was a junior professor. (His career as a Soviet philosopher never recovered and he committed suicide in 1979.) Bakhurst's second contribution places Ilyenkov within a broad twentieth-century philosophical context (Marxian and non-Marxian) and gives a sympathetic account of two of Ilyenkov's concepts that have current philosophical relevance: activity, and the ideal. Rockmore looks at the Hegelian inheritance in Ilyenkov's Marxism and connects it to philosophical constructivism.

Activity theory, whose Soviet roots go back Lev Vygotsky and Sergei Rubinstein but also Ilyenkov, is another major philosophical stream investigated in this volume. Its popularity is associated with bringing back into play the human person, consciousness, and embodied creativity. Shchedrovitsky and Batischev, and even Mamardashvili are shown to have undergone its influence on their way to other places: systems theory, phenomenology, religious thought. The important subject of philosophy of science is also explored in some depth. Along with Rubinstein and Vygostsky, the influential "forgotten" figures of Bakhtin and Losev, who became "contemporaries" with their rediscovery in the 1970s, receive detailed treatment, as does Lotman. In other words, the volume touches on a wide array of philosophical subjects and schools, creating an impressive picture of philosophical life in Russia in the second half of the twentieth century.

This volume has its inadequacies. The articles tend to be too short (almost uniformly so), schematic overviews that often make unsupported claims. Given the ambition of the book, the Introduction especially suffers from this weakness; that is, given the pluralism of the authors and their subjects, the Introduction needed to provide a broader framework and more nuance. The editors do try to compensate for this shortcoming in Part 1, with its several "Philosophical Reflections" (a recurring rubric); and while this does help, the authors of the Reflections present such utterly opposed views of Russian philosophy (and so schematically) as to leave the reader more baffled than enlightened. (The one-two punch of Lektorsky and Mikhail Epstein is an example [chaps. 1 and 2]): the former insisting on the traditionally Russian and Soviet-Marxist dimension, the latter on both the broader Platonic heritage and on more "unofficial" currents of Soviet-Russian philosophical life after 1968, such as Christian, post-structuralist, Conceptualist, personalist, and culturological. Finally, as has become epidemic in our era of underfunded book projects (with understaffed editorial teams), the quality of the translated texts (including titles) ranges from decent to quite bad. Nevertheless, this is a highly professional, stimulating, and in some sense epoch-marking work. In this regard, the brilliant intervention by the recently deceased philosopher Vadim Mezhyuev, with its call for a more consciously historicist, progressive, and political outlook, must be mentioned.

Thomas Epstein, Boston College

Hudson, Jennifer M. *Iron Curtain Twitchers: Russo-American Cold War Relations*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019. xxx + 338 pp. $115.00. ISBN 978-1-4985-5926-3.

Iron Curtain Twitchers is not just another book on the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. The conflict has been examined from every possible angle, so it is a testament to the author that she is able to view the conflict from a different perspective. Jennifer Hudson's approach seeks to understand the Cold War through the interaction between diplomatic rhetoric, official propaganda, travel accounts, and Cold War cinema, among other sources. As she puts it, "[this book examines] the complex relationship between ... culture and politics." Noting their interconnectedness, she writes, "The literal and proverbial boundaries between politics and culture became increasingly blurred throughout the Cold War; culture grew more politicized as politics became acculturated" (p. xxi). In other words, the author is trying to explore the intricate relationship between culture and politics during arguably the most challenging period in U.S.-Russia relations.

The book is structured chronologically, beginning with the nineteenth century and going deep into the Putin years. Each chapter opens up with a light overview of the geopolitical situation of the period in question, followed by a discussion of its relationship with the cultural sphere, specifically focusing on the elements that the author felt most influenced cultural discourse of the period. For example, when talking about the 1920s, the author focused on travelogues that in her opinion played a vital role in shaping U.S.-Russian perceptions of each other. Starting in the 1930s, her focus shifts to movies as primary drivers of cultural Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union.

At times, the complexity of the topic gets in the way of clarity, as the sheer number and diversity of sources obscure the point the author is trying to make. While providing convincing narrative on the importance of cultural media such as travelogues and films, the author's overreliance on these materials takes away from other valuable sources used to measure public opinion during the Cold War. The author is correct in pointing out the difficulty of studying Cold War public opinion, especially in the Soviet Union. However, there are a number of sources that do provide some clarity on the subject. For instance, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty conducted a number of listener surveys on their East European and Soviet audiences. Soviet public opinion studies by Soviet sociologist Boris Grushin, as well as Soviet citizens' letters to the government available in Russian archives, also add to our understanding of Soviet public opinion about the United States during the Cold War. The book would have benefited from the inclusion and discussion of these sources.

The book is a good overview of the often complicated interactions between political and cultural aspects of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. The author does a particularly admirable job of pointing out how diverse cultural elements served as breaks on each other, preventing the narrative from going too far to the official propaganda side, or depicting the Cold War enemy in too positive a light. In the end, Hudson notes, "the rhetorics posited by citizens, journalists, politicians, travelers, and films rarely coalesced. The differing renditions complicated mutual understanding during the ideological conflict" (p. 269). In other words—It's complicated! This book, however, serves it purpose by making the Cold War less so. Overall, the book can serve as a valuable reading for advanced undergraduate courses on the Cold War.

Konstantin Avramov, Arlington, VA

Lakhtikova, Anastasia, Angela Brintlinger and Irina Glushchenko. *Seasoned Socialism: Gender and Food in Late Soviet Everyday Life*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019. xvii + 373 pp. $35.00 (paper). ISBN 978-0-253-04096-1.

My grandmother used to tell me: "I was the only woman in a family of four. And men had to be constantly fed. And men need meat. And very often, as I was feeding them, I would forget, whether I had eaten myself, or not, and ask them." All of us who lived under late Socialism can think of dozens of similar anecdotal phrases connecting gender and food at various stages of its "life trajectory," from "procuring" foodstuffs to the moment when prepared dishes were served and consumed.

My grandmother's phrase can be read in many different ways. It is a "litany" about the "home slavery" she had to endure for decades, and thus yet another example of the proverbial "double burden" that working women were carrying on their shoulders. It might serve as proof of the "patriarchal" mind-set, internalized by women, within which this condition was seen as "natural." Or it might indicate that Soviet modernization project, of which emancipation of women was part, did not really "happen," at least not in full. It also is an expression of feminine pride in being able to take care of so many "heavy eaters," as well as an implicit indication of a family's status and access to (alternative) food distribution channels that allowed them to always have meat on their plates. And, finally, it can be read as a nostalgic reminiscence about the time when the family was all together, and her husband was still alive, or perhaps even as a humorous and simultaneously didactic commentary to my own awkward attempts to "fix" something to eat in the early 1990s, when the word "meat" became quite rare in the family vocabulary.

The merit of *Seasoned Socialism* consists precisely in that it presents readers with a broad interpretative template that allows one to look at the late Soviet "food-gender nexus" from multiple and mutually non-exclusive perspectives (p. 40). Below I will briefly mention several overarching themes of the collection that, to me, stand out as particularly important contributions to our more nuanced understanding of how Soviet people navigated the realities of late socialism—as well as open new possibilities of inquiry.

Against "habitual" and largely uncritical assertions about the "lack of choice" under late socialism, the articles in this collection bring testimony to a picture much more subtle and complex. Throughout the book the reader is exposed to a variety of "socialist choices" in how they differently emerged and were utilized by men and women living in late socialist realities, which effectively makes the very notion of the socialist "consumption choice" less "oxymoronic" (p. 321). Such an approach allows us to ask to what degree a closely related concept of "taste," usually seen as a "bourgeois category," is applicable to the socialist context as well, and how "socialist taste" may be theorized in relation to various choices that people made under "developed socialism" (p. 10).

Another key notion, that of "scarcity," likewise gets problematized across a number of articles, whether in relation to how access to foods and commodities differed among various social groups and individuals, or to how "scarcity" varied chronologically, geographically, and even seasonally (pp. 12, 133–35, 140, 157). On the one hand, one cannot deny that "scarcity" is one of the basic categories in the analysis of late Soviet realities (after all, if the socialist "planned economy" produced anything more or less consistently, it was shortages). On the other hand, the notion of "scarcity" generally tends to be taken for granted more than it probably should, especially as part of the dichotomy "scarcity *vs*. abundance" (Western, one would think, or else post-socialist). By questioning this notion through empirical research, the contributors to *Seasoned Socialism* help us depart from the "black-and-white" approach in our understanding of late Soviet realities, thus essentially decolonizing our contemporary (Western) perspective.

Throughout the book, authors explore relations between people and the state and its ideologies through the prism of food. I was particularly intrigued about what may be called "alternative" niches, created through people's self-organization around food consumption, and the way this not only "reinforced an overarching ideology" (including the "neo-traditionalist" turn of Brezhnev's era) but also "signified a rejection of the socialist project" (pp. 271–79, 329). As my own research on ethnic economy after World War II suggests, the Soviet modernization project not only produced but also heavily relied on "traditional," or even "backward" ways of social organization (and in my study, also of production, such as small-scale producer cooperatives that filled the supply "gaps" created by the first socialist economy). It would seem that such "niches," including "clandestine" ones were spaces where people were able to largely evade political control from "above," withdrawing into an "alternative cultural milieu" (p. 105, 132–65). Put differently, one can say that social relations around food and its consumption were one site where the "space of one's own" (or, *prostranstvo svoikh*, to use Alexei Yurchak's concept in *Everything Was Forever*) was formed and sustained. If that be so, what does this perspective add to our interpretation of the role of female cooking in the era of late socialism? Also, wouldn't this warn us against the use of the "totalitarian" framework

that, largely to my surprise, was rather heavily featured in the Introduction—only to be questioned by the rest of the book?

On this last note, there are two additional issues that in my view warrant more cautious treatment. The first is the uncritical use of literary or artistic genres as "unmediated" representations of late socialist reality: after all, V. Sorokin's *Ochered'* or Ilya Kabakov's Communal Kitchen installation are "texts" that abide by their own rules of genre, and—especially in the first case—would probably be better described, as Yurchak does, as "particular aesthetic of absurd irony," or "stiob." The other is the idea that somehow late socialism should necessarily provoke nostalgia (certainly, among those who lived under it, but even among those who visited from elsewhere). Putting aside the question of whether the "prevalence" of nostalgia is a tribute to the current academic fashion, I would note that there are, of course, different types of nostalgia, including the "second-hand" nostalgia Serguei Alex. Oushakine contributes to the discussion in his 2020 article of that name, which makes the "generic" use of the word rather problematic.

By and large, *Seasoned Socialism* rightfully dispels the still lingering assumption that "Soviet life" is ultimately "understandable" in any "objective" way (p. xvi). It shows that late socialism had many "flavors," and the eleven articles composing the book provide their unique ways at "degustation" of this complex "dish." As an important synthesis of oral history, literature, and film studies, *Seasoned Socialism* will undoubtfully be very useful for teaching courses focusing on Soviet culture and society in late socialist years and beyond.

Anna Kushkova, University of Pennsylvania

Siegelbaum, Lewis H. *Stuck on Communism: Memoir of a Russian Historian*. Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, 2019. x + 202 pp. $27.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-5017-4737-3.

One would imagine that a scholar reflecting on his career would focus on his successes and moments when history proved him correct at the expense of his errors and disappointments. Professor Lewis Siegelbaum is too good of a historian for that. He approaches his memoir, *Stuck on Communism*, as he does any other subject—with careful, thorough research and analytical distance.

The memoir grew out of an end-of-career project sorting his papers. As he did, Siegelbaum revisited his earlier self, grant proposal by grant proposal, article by article, perusing, judging, evaluating. It takes courage to reread what you wrote thirty years ago. It's natural to wince.

Reflecting on his fifty-year career as a prominent historian of Soviet labor history, Siegelbaum is disarmingly self-critical. He analyzes his own life as he would a third party's. Referring to debates with other scholars, he condemns himself as "pedantic" (p. 58). He quotes from rejection letters, critics and his own cranky missive to an editor. Siegelbaum describes the projects he started, but abandoned, his unfinished disappointments, and wonders out loud about his lack of follow-through. If a young scholar wants to glimpse a life as a historian, the course of a career unvarnished by nostalgia, if she want to understand the shortfalls, lost paths, and self-doubt, as well as the jet-setting, keynote triumphs, this book is a must-read.

Siegelbaum grew up in suburban Queens, where his family had landed after successive migrations from the Bronx and towns and cities in the Pale of Settlement before that. Each move represented a step up the ladder of social mobility; a rapid path that left members of each generation feeling a bit out of place. Siegelbaum's father, a New York City schoolteacher, joined the American Communist Party in 1939 to support the teacher's union. After the war, the school board fired "communists." Siegelbaum's father supported his family with a series of well-paid, but soulless jobs in the computer industry.

Siegelbaum took his father's allegiance to heart and joined the New Left. He stood at the front lines of antiwar protests at Columbia University in 1968, when a New York City riot cop sent him to ER with a blow to the skull. Siegelbaum confesses to feeling like an outsider at Columbia, and yet

more so at Oxford. While in Oxford, he writes, "I secretly admired the seeming ease with which 'those twits' comported themselves. ... I wanted it both ways—to belong and not to belong" (p. 41).

Siegelbaum earned his Ph.D. from Oxford just as the market had become saturated in the United States with Ph.D.s of all kinds, including in history. Siegelbaum found a job in Australia, where he felt exiled and out of touch. After seven years, he finally landed a position back home at Michigan State University, at the time infamous for hosting the prowar Vietnam Advisory Group. Siegelbaum discovered that the previous two Soviet historians had served occasionally on the CIA payroll. Again he felt an outsider.

Grasping that the Stalinist Soviet Union was no communist idyll, Siegelbaum searched for traces of working-class solidarity and self-activation among workers outside leadership circles. But Siegelbaum had trouble finding heroic, self-empowered workers the likes of which populated E. P. Thompson's histories. Siegelbaum's dissertation and first book focused sympathetically (and, he notes ironically, for a Lefty) on Russian bourgeois in the prerevolutionary period. His second book on Stakhanovites failed to unearth worker-run factories. Instead, he found union leaders aligned with party managers who promoted a few model workers to speed up production schedule. He wrote a history of scabs, in other words.

Siegelbaum confesses that he fought against these conclusions, showing how much Soviet history in the United States had to do with contemporary, political arguments. "At the time," Siegelbaum admits, "I resisted endorsing the view of Bettelheim and others that no genuine transformation of the labor process had occurred in the USSR, but implicitly that is what I argued" (p. 77).

Repeatedly, Siegelbaum encounters subjects that melt in the air as he wrote about them. He researched the working class at a time when global markets were taking apart factories in Midwestern cities all around him. "As factory-based labor withered," he writes, "the instructiveness of looking at Soviet Russian workers' militancy in defense of their control over production lost much of its potency" (p. 78). As Siegelbaum's focus moved to the more hopeful period of late socialism, again he was foiled by the expiration of the Soviet communist party in 1991. "I confess to a certain nostalgia about the Cold War ... the country's unmitigated defeat and dissolution irrevocably changed the reception to the kind of history I and others wrote" (p. 157).

Siegelbaum writes with painful honesty of the labor conflict going on about him that he overlooked. Siegelbaum's wife had to repeatedly uproot and move for his career. She stayed at home working as a librarian with their young children while Siegelbaum raced off for summers in archives, to conferences, and to give talks. Tensions mounted. "Somehow," he notes, "I missed the irony of studying debates among Soviet experts about the quality and quantity of work even while I became embroiled in precisely such debates in my own home" (p. 79).

Dwelling meticulously on his disappointments and shortcomings as well as on his many accomplishments, Siegelbaum does his reader a service. He points to what matters at the end of a career, even if that is difficult to see mid-career: loyalty, friendships, honesty, and political commitment. Times can change. The histories we write can be pulled out from under us, but who a person is, the nature of one's integrity, stands as one final exam. Siegelbaum passes *cum laude*.

Kate Brown, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Social Sciences, Contemporary Russia, and Other

Schechter, Brandon M. *The Stuff of Soldiers: A History of the Red Army in World War II through Objects*. Battlegrounds: Cornell Studies in Military History. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019. xxvi + 315 pp. $36.95. ISBN 978-1-5017-3979-8.

The author's stated aim is to write "an ethnographic sketch of life in the Red Army," along with a "narrative of how the war changed the meaning of the Soviet project and the content of Soviet

citizenship"(p. 3). He succeeds in the first but unfortunately falls short in the second. The author's basic approach to the study of the Soviet soldier is to use an object to introduce a variety of behaviors, emotions, and activities. He starts with the soldiers' bodies as state property to discuss ideas such as desertion, discipline, being wounded, and self-inflicted wounds. He uses uniform articles such as tunics, which he calls "personal banners," the foot wraps (*portianki*) used in lieu of socks, boots, the reintroduction of shoulder straps (*pogony*), underwear, pants, decorations, and the greatcoat (*shineli*) to illustrate daily life, quality of life, and reintroduction of trappings of the tsarist army and the men's attitudes toward them.

The author tries to Sovietize soldiers' relations to objects when such relations are nearly universal in militaries across time and space. Unfortunately, in these cases, comparisons to other armies, which would have distinguished a Soviet aspect of the relation, were lacking. The author consistently refers to the government rather than the army in circumstances where the soldiers' relationship with the army would seem to be more appropriate. Thus, the soldier's experience is presented as a direct relation between the soldier and the state. It is as though the institution of the army was irrelevant to the soldiers' military service and identity. The author presents the Red Army booklet (*Krasnoarmeiskaia knizhka*), the first passport-like document that many peasants had ever received, as a direct link between the peasant soldier and the government, ignoring the army as intermediary. There is no doubt that soldiers saw the army as a government institution, but if they identified as soldiers then their focus would have been directed primarily toward the army and only secondarily to the state. In studies of the tsarist army, scholars invariably focus on the men's identification as soldiers, yet Schechter identifies his men as citizens. It is unclear if the author means to make something of this shift or is even aware of the difference between the two eras.

This book had the potential to show how wartime military service changed the meaning of the Soviet project and the content of Soviet citizenship, but trying to make too much intellectually and culturally of the objects gets in the way. With millions of peasants drafted into the army during the war, making the case that their service in the army served as a modernizing and Sovietizing experience would have been a valuable contribution to the field. The author, however, did not pursue this idea, as he promised in the introduction. Despite the fact that the book does not live up to its potential, it has much to offer those with an affinity for cultural history studied through objects and for others who want a basic introduction to the quotidian of the Red Army during the Second World War. Though it reads like a dissertation and includes the occasional gaffe such as referring to rifle sights as sites, this book is nonetheless worth reading because it takes the reader into the daily life of the Soviet soldier during the war in a way that no other work in the field does.

Roger R. Reese, Texas A&M University

Epstein, Mikhail. *The Phoenix of Philosophy: Russian Thought of the Late Soviet Period (1953–1991)*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. viii + 300 pp. $120.00. ISBN 978-1-5013-1639-5.

To most readers outside a small circle of scholars, the writings surveyed in Mikhail Epstein's wide-ranging and important book will be unfamiliar. Russian studies in the United States generally slights philosophy in favor of literature and other forms of cultural expression while philosophy departments, which might otherwise be expected to take up the slack, tend overwhelmingly to avoid anything looking like "continental" (that is, speculative rather than analytical) thought.

The Phoenix of Philosophy goes a long way toward filling this gap with a survey that foregrounds the resilient energy driving Russian philosophy in the later twentieth century. In keeping with the genre of historical overview, Epstein does not present any singular argument about his material, and to some extent the book reads like a series of encyclopedia articles. But Epstein groups his thinkers from the 1960s–1980s under eight dominant trends (four addressed in the present volume) that in his view constitute a "third philosophical awakening" within Russian culture, following the first

which took place in aristocratic salons in the 1830s and 1840s and the second which arose in in the wake of the failed revolution of 1905 (p. 6).

One of the most surprising trends is taken up in Part One, which brings to light the actual complexity of Marxist thought in the post-Stalin era. In a domain most Western scholars dismiss out of hand, Epstein shows how, as the constraints of doctrinaire materialism relaxed, genuine inquiry resumed. Evald Ilyenkov's reassertion of the Hegelian element in Marxism and Arsenii Gulyga's turn to German idealism stand out as particularly vivid examples. Part Two, which deals with Soviet structuralism (a trend Epstein labels neo-rationalism), is one that will be familiar to many linguists and literary scholars—at least, of a certain generation. In addition to the so-called Moscow-Tartu school's exuberant application of computational and cybernetic models to just about every field of culture, in Epstein's description the trend also adumbrates Vladimir Lefebvre's application of mathematical models to consciousness and self-consciousness and the Georgian philosopher Merab Mamardashvili's phenomenological approach to the same.

Part Three on personalism presents thinkers whose works could not be published openly in the Soviet era and thus appeared either abroad or in the post-Soviet era. Most of this thought can be traced to the influence of Berdiaev and Shestov in the early twentieth century, with additional affinities to the existentialist thought of the West that was otherwise anathema to Soviet orthodoxy. The range is fascinating, from the religious personalism of Iakov Druskin to the notion of planetary consciousness in the work of Mihajlo Mihajlov and the "philosophical extravagance" of Boris Paramonov's sexualized personalism, a continuation of the early twentieth-century legacy of Vasily Rozanov (p. 142).

Some of the work in Part Four on culturology arguably overlaps that of Part Two on structuralism (for example, the work of Olga Freidenberg); but Epstein compellingly argues that the development in works by thinkers like Vladimir Bibler, Sergei Averintsev, and Georgii Grachev of a concept of "culture" as an alternative to Marxism's "society" forms an independent trend with roots in the nineteenth-century precedent of Nikolai Danilevsky's ideas on Russia versus Europe and the earlier twentieth-century theories of Mikhail Bakhtin and Aleksei Losev.

One could take issue with Epstein's claim that the thinkers he surveys had to contend with a "Soviet ideocracy," rather than with an ossified rationalization of authoritarian politics dressed up to resemble an ideology (p. 6). The book is also somewhat thin on references to other scholarship on Russian philosophy. But these are minor quibbles about a volume that otherwise presents a consistently lucid and impressively detailed discussion of its topic.

Epstein's planned companion volume, *Ideas against Autocracy: Non-Marxist Thought in the Soviet Union (1953–1991)*, to be published by Bloomsbury Academic in 2020, will cover the remaining four trends of national spirit, Orthodox thought, cosmism and universalism, and conceptualism and postmodernism. Both will be essential reading for anyone interested in Russian thought in the twentieth century.

Thomas Seifrid, University of Southern California

Reddaway, Peter. *The Dissidents: A Memoir of Working with the Resistance in Russia, 1960–1990*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2019. vii + 316 pp. $29.99. ISBN 978-0-8157-3773-5.

The Peter Reddaway who emerges from this memoir is a careful and thoughtful scholar of Soviet politics and history. He is also, on the evidence of his impressive life, a pragmatist to the core, who believes in the shrewd deployment of individual activism to exert power over states that violate civil and political rights. A well-known analyst of contemporary Russian politics, as well as one of the most committed supporters of the Soviet human rights movement, Reddaway has carefully rendered a unique moment in Soviet history in his new memoir that spans from his first trip to the USSR in the summer of 1961 to his return to the country in the winter of 1988.

The Dissidents is not an autobiography or a treatise on the self. Instead, Reddaway builds a narrative based on his personal participation in events, a memoir that records his engagement with human rights activists, academics, political and state department actors across decades and across continents, and on the lives and achievements of those who served the human rights movement, inside Russia and abroad. It is also an observation, a reflection on postwar history that details the leadership and evolution of Soviet politics from Khrushchev to Gorbachev. With decades of experience in editing, translating, and distributing *samizdat*, as well as his active participation in the campaign to stop the abuse of soviet psychiatry, Reddaway is uniquely positioned to reflect on postwar dissident history.

Indeed, this account of his public life and its achievements and failures is always set against the larger forces of history, whether they be in the form of individual leaders, ideology, or political compromise. Reddaway avoids neatening all the edges of his history or using his genre for personal posterity. Despite all his personal efforts and those around him, he acknowledges, for example, that Western efforts to dismiss the Soviet Union from the World Psychiatric Association "triumphed in 1983, but failed disastrously in 1989."

With candor, he also discredits individuals who sought to belittle individual activists or undermine the principles that drove the Soviet human rights movement. His fiercest contempt is contained in his chapter "Confronting the Naysayers in the West," when writers such as Alexander Dolberg and Nicholas Bethell were writing under the pseudonym of David Burg and pursuing a campaign of disinformation to undermine the credibility of dissidents and their writings. Moreover, Reddaway rightly subjects Soviet doctors such Andrei Snezhnevsky to serious scrutiny. The latter perpetuated the bogus Soviet diagnosis of "sluggish schizophrenia," as well as promoted Andropov's directives from his April 29, 1969, letter in which the chairman of the KGB lay "out a plan to develop a network of psychiatric institutions and his own ideas on how to use them to defend the Soviet ... system" (p. 165).

Yet with this history and memoir combined, we also get endearing anecdotes, such as Reddaway's many conversations with Moscow's taxi drivers who expound on politics and everyday life. We also get sad memories, not only Reddaway's own that naturally stem from working so closely with those who suffered under the Soviet system, but the well-rendered lives of those subjected to psychiatric abuse or sent to isolation cells in remote prisons across Russia.

Retrospection of the sort one might have hoped for is missing in the final pages of Reddaway's otherwise extremely important memoir. Instead, his reflections turn to an intricate narrative of the final death throes of the Soviet Union, and away from the fate of the Soviet human rights movement and its many supporters across the West. Despite this, his memoir cannot help but stimulate reflection on the enduring challenges for human rights activists in Russia and their international supporters. As Lyudmila Alekseyeva wrote in her final speech for Human Rights Day in 2018 just before her death (published in *Moscow Times* in mid-December 2018), "I think we have a challenging time ahead. ... We see very clearly how weak civil society, legal culture and democratic institutions still are in our country. It is naïve to think that only the authorities are to blame for this. Yes, it is our bad fortune to have such leaders, but all of us also bear responsibility for the fact that those authorities are able to rely on the support of most of our fellow citizens with the help of artless propaganda and manipulations."

Emma Gilligan, Indiana University

Kovalev, Andrei. *Russia's Dead End: An Insider's Testimony from Gorbachev to Putin*. Translated by Steven I. Levine. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017. xliv + 347 pp. $24.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-64012-233-8.

This sometimes-fascinating but often-frustrating book belongs to the familiar genre of "vivid eyewitness account swamped by grandiloquent interpretation." The author, a career Soviet diplomat, followed in the footsteps of his father Anatoly renowned as the Foreign Ministry official who fought

for Soviet acceptance of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act guaranteeing basic human rights. Andrei, the son, made his mark under perestroika-era Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze fighting for reformation of Soviet law to conform to international human-rights standards. Both Kovalevs sought to leverage international pressure to advance domestic liberalization in periods when the Soviet leadership promoted greater openness (détente and perestroika). Andrei worked on issues ranging from religious freedom and the death penalty to psychiatry. Some of the book's most interesting sections concern the struggle to expose the abuses of Soviet punitive psychiatry and transform it into a respectable branch of medicine independent of security or law-enforcement organs.

Unfortunately, Kovalev violates his own injunction to speak only of what he knows firsthand and engages in some questionable psychiatry of his own: "Russia is sick. Its illness is complex and psychosomatic in character. This presents itself, among other ways, as manic-depressive psychosis accompanied by acute megalomania, persecution complex, and kleptomania, all compounded by dystrophy" (p. 9). Such sweeping commentary not only dominates the book's introduction and conclusion, but injects itself with annoying frequency into otherwise factual sections covering the origins of perestroika, the sources of the 1991 hardline coup, the "lost decade" of the 1990s, and various aspects of contemporary Russia. Kovalev offers many interesting vignettes and insightful observations, but then returns again and again to his core argument: "The KGB ... controlled every aspect of life" (p. 81). And he means *every* aspect, advancing a convoluted and conspiracy-minded argument that even the apparent failure of the 1991 coup was elaborately staged to serve KGB interests, because it is inconceivable that "the entire coercive apparatus was [so] dysfunctional" (p. 70). Even the stroke his father suffered shortly afterward was *not* in fact a stroke, but some kind of KGB attack, confirmed by an inside source of Kovalev's whose warning about a nefarious mind-control operation he recounts in detail: "A secret, shielded bunker had been constructed in this hospital. People randomly taken off the street were placed in it; their heads were shaved and electrodes with antennas were connected to their brains. Then ... they were subjected to the action of some sort of apparatus. ... After the 'patients' were no longer needed, the antennas were removed and they were simply let go in the city, with some of them in a truly lamentable condition" (p. 75).

Following the above, readers will appreciate that, notwithstanding many insights on Russia's retreat to authoritarianism under Vladimir Putin, Kovalev is so embittered and so given to conspiratorial-monocausal explanation that his analysis of this retreat is deeply unbalanced. Mass immiseration caused by economic collapse, marauding oligarchs and autocratic regional bosses trampling the rights of ordinary Russians while a prostate country is surrounded by the military power of its chief rival—these aspects of 1990s "really existing democracy" matter little in explaining Putin's rise. The opinion of most of the population is irrelevant since their "slave psychology" makes them easy to brainwash and everything is decided by the KGB-*silovik* elite in any event. The same is true of Kovalev's view of foreign policy under Putin, covering events from NATO expansion and the demise of the ABM Treaty to confrontations with Georgia and Ukraine. Despite many valuable details, his story is so relentlessly one-sided in faulting Russia for every problem—and promoting the thesis that Putin has donned "the mantle of Hitler's foreign policy" (p. 285)—that it would make any but the most extreme Russophobes blush.

Robert English, University of Southern California

Grant, Thomas D. *International Law and the Post-Soviet Space I: Essays on Chechnya and the Baltic States*. Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society 199. Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2019. xxxv + 405 pp. $50.00 (paper). ISBN 978-3-83821-279-1.

Grant, Thomas D. *International Law and the Post-Soviet Space II: Essays on Ukraine, Intervention, and Non-Proliferation*. Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society 200. Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2019. xlii + 480 pp. $50.00 (paper). ISBN 978-3-83821-280-7.

Thomas D. Grant is a Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge, senior associate of the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law at Cambridge, long-serving advocate in litigating international legal

disputes, and a self-proclaimed "generalist international lawyer" dealing with issues of international law spanning the globe (1:11). Andreas Umland's Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society series has produced a two-volume compilation of Grant's articles, essays, and conference papers on *International Law and the Post-Soviet Space* authored between the 1990s and 2018, relating to both contemporary developments and those which date from the dissolution of the Soviet Union: an international-legal nightmare in itself. But it is not just geographic proximity that binds the essays in these volumes, but also a theme of legal disputes which go unresolved, creating geopolitical headaches, such as the region's frozen conflicts.

Volume 1 contains five chapters: three on Chechnya, and two on the Baltic States as they relate to international law. Chapters 1 through 3 consider the historical background of Chechnya's legal claims to independence, disputes over human-rights violations, and how to decipher the smattering of international legal recognition for Grozny, especially from the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Chapters 4 and 5 turn to the Baltic States: particularly the 1940 declaration by U.S. Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles refusing to recognize the Soviet Union's annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Grant highlights the peculiarities of the United States's ensuing half-century of non-recognition of Soviet sovereignty over the Baltic States, the political and practical challenges produced by the American position, as well as implications of the precedent of non-recognition for international politics and law.

The thirteen chapters of volume 2 focus more narrowly on recent political developments in Ukraine, Crimea, and the Donbass; though they raise a much wider variety of legal issues. Chapters 6 through 8 deal with challenges to territorial sovereignty and integrity, with specific reference to the annexation of Crimea and other frozen conflicts: Transdnestria, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia. The illegal annexation of Crimea constituted the first forcible re-drawing of state boundaries in Europe since World War II. Accordingly, Grant argues that Crimea should not be lumped in with the region's other frozen conflicts: "It remains an unlawful seizure of territory under foreign military occupation and subject to a general obligation of non-recognition, a conclusion supported by the practice of States and international organisations since 2014" (2:2–3). Chapters 9 through 12 address a core tension of international law. Which is to be supreme—the norm of sovereignty and the non-intervention in the domestic affairs of states, or support for the self-determination of peoples? This theoretical question underlies discussion of the legality of ousted Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych's letter of invitation for the Russian Federation to intervene in Ukraine with military force, which Russia has used as part of an ultimately flimsy legal justification for intervention in Ukraine.

Chapters 13 through 16 address how the international legal community has struggled to develop and utilize legal dispute-settlement mechanisms in response to the unlawful seizure of Crimean territory. The European Court of Human Rights, the International Court of Justice, as well as bilateral investment treaties all offer potential avenues for justice, though the procedural mechanisms for settling such intractable disputes seem woefully underdeveloped. Finally, chapters 17 and 18 consider both the political and legal status of the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, in which Ukraine ceded its Soviet-era nuclear arsenal to Russia in exchange for security guarantees. That the Budapest Memorandum did not forestall Russian aggression and annexation may undercut other diplomatic efforts to similarly bring other states—such as Iran and North Korea—into compliance with the landmark 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Within the academic study of international law in recent decades, the post-Soviet space is something of an afterthought: overshadowed by trade and territorial disputes in East Asia, questions of interventionism and human-rights law in the Middle East, the myriad of overlapping international organizations of Europe (all with their own foundations in international law), proceedings of the International Court of Justice, the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the International Criminal Court all in the Hague, and the persistent recalcitrance of the United States to adhere to even the shallowest international treaty obligations. However, as Grant rightly points out, many of the pressing geopolitical issues of the former Soviet Union deal with classic problems of international law:

recognition of states, state succession, self-determination versus territorial integrity, the establishment of boundaries as well as sovereignty, both *de facto* and *de jure*. Grant's two volumes help fill the gap in the international-law literature in grappling with the pressing legal and political issues in the region.

While Grant is open in his admission that he is not trained as an area-studies expert (1:12), he has nevertheless produced a welcome addition to the literature on the politics of the post-Soviet space. And while the collection of articles are constrained with regards to regional geography, the prose is steeped in the distinctive legalese of the international law community, which suggests that it is far less likely to be broadly assigned in classrooms on post-Soviet politics, and more likely to be found as a vital reference on the bookshelves of experts both in international law and post-Soviet geopolitics.

Mark Lawrence Schrad, Villanova University

Nordenman, Magnus. *The New Battle for the Atlantic: Emerging Competition with Russia in the Far North*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2019. xv + 244 pp. $38.00. ISBN 978-1-68247-285-5.

This book highlights the critical role that naval power has played in global conflicts throughout the twentieth century and makes a strong case for its continued importance in the twenty-first century. The strength of the book is in its ability to paint a coherent picture of the strategic role of the Atlantic as a "maritime superhighway between Europe and North America, a key factor in the ultimate victory in both world wars and the Cold War" (p. 6). In other words, Magnus Nordenman shows that, consistently, the side that was able to dominate the Atlantic emerged victorious from the major global conflicts of the twentieth century.

The book is intended for a general audience and therefore opens with two short introductory chapters that explain the geographic significance of the North Atlantic and the role played in warfare by submarines. With these preliminaries out of the way, the author quickly moves on to the core argument, in which he describes and analyzes the role played by maritime power in the major conflicts of the twentieth century. He draws some key lessons from these three Battles of the Atlantic, including the importance of having forces that can operate across long distances, the usefulness of having access to bases throughout the region, and the critical significance of allies for success. He argues that all of these lessons remain valid in the twenty-first century.

The second part of the book describes the period of peace and cooperation that followed the end of the Cold War and saw the collapse of the Soviet military, a shift in NATO maritime missions to focus on out-of-area counter-piracy and counter-terrorism operations as well as support for NATO ground operations in Afghanistan. At the same time, the North Atlantic region was "characterized by increased economic activity, international cooperation, and the appearance of new players from outside the North Atlantic region" (p. 89).

The book's final major section focuses on renewed great power competition in the North Atlantic that has followed changes in the overall international security environment after the 2014 Ukraine crisis. The focus in this section is on a revanchist Russia that is seeking to restore the maritime power that the Soviet Union lost at the end of the Cold War. Although the author is at times critical of decisions made by Western leaders since the end of the Cold War, what comes out most clearly is that NATO has actually done quite well in the last thirty years—saving its members' limited resources when there was no apparent threat, and then ramping up quickly and correctly when the threat reemerged. Nordenman also highlights geopolitical changes in the twenty-first century, with China playing a greater role in international politics and in the maritime realm, with a particular interest in the Arctic. Technological changes such as the emergence of unmanned and cyber warfare may also play a role in any future North Atlantic conflict.

The book concludes with some principles for how NATO should respond to the renewed maritime challenge it faces in the North Atlantic. They include a call for developing a new NATO maritime

strategy, a reiteration of the critical significance of partners and allies, including a plan for a division of labor between the United States and other NATO member states, and an emphasis on the role of advanced technology in negating the purpose of Russian naval forces operating in the North Atlantic. Altogether, Nordenman makes a compelling case for the continued significance of the maritime realm in any future conflict and the need for a NATO military strategy that takes this realm into account.

Dmitry Gorenburg, CNA and Harvard University

Güney, Nurşin Ateşoğlu, ed. *The New Geopolitical Realities for Russia: From the Black Sea to the Mediterranean*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019. xviii + 143 pp. $90.00. ISBN 978-1-7936-0244-2.

The fate of great empires had often been determined by their ability to dominate the oceans with superior naval force in order to protect their maritime commerce and win naval battles. Great sea powers tend to be insular states, whose geography and the absence of other great powers on their landmass give them a strategic reason for developing strong navies to support their national geopolitical and economic interests. These geographic rules do not apply to Russia. The world's largest country by landmass, Russia endured numerous land assaults and sought to build large land armies for defending its vast territory. However, Moscow has also assembled naval forces capable of conducting operations and solving strategic tasks in various oceans. Russia's recent moves in the Black Sea and Mediterranean regions—the annexation and subsequent militarization of Crimea, the modernization of the Black Sea Fleet, and the deployment of S-400 missiles to Syria—have rekindled debates about Moscow's strategic ends.

The New Geopolitical Realities for Russia: From the Black Sea to the Mediterranean is a collection of studies undertaken by scholars of the Center of Mediterranean Security (CEMES), Bahçeşehir Cyprus University, Turkey, who seek to understand the features and consequences of Russia's resurgence in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, including Moscow's sea-power strategies. The volume's chapters, although addressing distinct aspects of Russia's geopolitics and geo-economics, speak to two topical issues in contemporary policy debates: whether Russia's strategy in the Black Sea has Mackinderist ends of defending the "Heartland," or whether Moscow's maritime and naval ambitions are a stepping-stone for a more assertive Mahanist strategy to rival other sea powers around the world.

Chapter 1, "New Russian Mahanism Failed: Futile Geopolitical Dreams in the Black Sea and Medeterranean," sets the volume's tone by taking a "middle ground" position on these questions. The chapter's authors, Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney and Vişne Korkmaz, describe Russia's strategy as "hedging between Mackinderism and Mahanism" (p. 8). Adopting a mix of Mackinderist and Mahanist tactics is not Russia's first choice but a direct consequence of its limited industrial capacity, the unfinished modernization of its Navy, and insufficient blue-water capabilities. As a result, Russia has been compelled to rely on its anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities, more so than on its fleet, to deny access to certain red-line areas defined by Moscow in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean (p. 22).

Russia's limited success in the Black Sea and Mediterranean regions have been buttressed by the "two friendship axes" (p. 5). The first is between Russia and Iran, discussed in chapter 4 by Gawdat Bahdat, who illustrates the centrality of Moscow-Tehran relations to understanding the ups and downs of Russian influence in the Middle East. The second "friendship axis" is between Moscow and Ankara, examined by Vişne Korkmaz, Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, and Eda Güney. The authors emphasize the complex interdependency logic emerging in Ankara-Moscow relations, in which Ankara's asymmetric position of weakness has been changing toward one favoring Turkey.

Overall, the volume offers a number of smaller analytical gems pertaining to Russia's naval and geopolitical strategies. The individual chapters could be better integrated around the key themes

of geopolitical, naval, and geo-economic strategy. The volume's lack of theory and emphasis on contemporary policy and military debates makes it an accessible read for both an academic and non-academic readership. Its greatest asset is the multinational and interdisciplinary team of authors offering the rare non-Western assessment of Russia's resurgence in the world.

Mariya Y. Omelicheva, National Defense University

Van der Pijl, Kees. *Flight MH17, Ukraine and the New Cold War: Prism of Disaster*. Geopolitical Economy. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018. 208 pp. £18.99. ISBN 978-1-5261-3109-6.

The endorsements on this book's cover are a helpful guide for potential readers. It is "not an investigation into the MH17 catastrophe per se," writes Nicolai Petro, "but rather an explanation for the anti-Russian campaign that unfolded afterwards." And David Lane explains that it "builds a convincing case of collusion ... [and] lying underpinning the actions and policies of Ukrainian leaders and Western interests." A media officer of the UK-based Left Unity, meanwhile, tells us that the book "blasts its way through decades of Western myth-making to expose ... America's drive for global domination ... [and] never-ending US expansionism." In the final sentence of his book, Kees van der Pijl repeats the judgment he earlier had given to the Russian news agency TASS: "I don't know [who was responsible for MH17], that's hidden in the fog of the propaganda war"; but "if it was a deliberate act, it was the work of the West." He follows with the warning, moreover, that the United States and NATO threaten the whole of humanity with the fate they inflicted on the crew and passengers of MH17 (p. 160).

With what Richard Sakwa describes as "meticulous detail" (800 footnotes and an imposing bibliography), the author places MH17 in the context of a what he sees as a struggle between a moribund neo-liberal capitalism and an emerging alternative, a "Eurasian model" of authoritarian state capitalism, or "the BRICs contender bloc." This theory is set out in the first chapter. Another chapter, devoted to debunking the findings of the multinational Joint Investigation Team—and disparaging the team itself—exemplifies the method of deduction based on the principle of *kto kogo/cui bono*: as the beneficiaries of MH17 were anti-Russian forces, the finding that Russia is complicit must be fabricated. This method presumably also explains the author's view that 9/11 was the work of Israel and American Zionists (https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/sussex-university-world-trade-centre-911-professor-kees-van-der-pijl-israel-tweet-jewish-a8620416.html).

A penultimate chapter compiles theories and information to support the main thesis of a conspiracy against Russia. As a rule, throughout, Russian official sources are accepted as credible (a noteworthy exception is in the Introduction, where the author admits that "Moscow too has adopted a strange posture that does not inspire confidence" [p. 6]; one wishes that the author had pursued this line of inquiry). One theory the author did not consider was offered to this reviewer by Dmitry Trenin: Ukrainian intelligence convinced Russian-backed insurgents that a large military aircraft was about to bomb civilian targets in the Donbass, so they attacked it.

Van der Pijl's book joins a body of work devoted to demonstrating that Russia is, yet again, the victim of a gross injustice, Russophobic media, and a U.S.-led conspiracy. Readers may compare it to, for instance, Russian Minister for Culture Medinsky's series under the rubric "Rossiia nikogda ne sdavalas'," Chieso Gulietto's *Putinfobia 2.0* (2016), or Dorothy Horsfield's *Russia in the Wake of the Cold War: Perceptions and Prejudices* (2017).

In his preface, van der Pijl thanks Petro and Sakwa for having encouraged him, so for them to endorse the book so warmly seems questionable. But then the author's approach might suggest that he is not so much seeking to influence a wide readership as to address the converted. Virtually every page contains assertions that many might see as contentious: for example, "the alleged Russian intervention in Ukraine"; "the secession of Crimea" (used throughout); and "the Bush administration encouraged Georgia to try to recapture its breakaway province of South Ossetia by force" (when, as

Fyodor Lukyanov told this reviewer, Condoleezza Rice had tried hard to dissuade the Georgians from reacting to Russian provocations).

In June 2019, Russian journalist Yevgenia Albats, addressing a public forum at the Lowy Institute in Sydney, sought on behalf her compatriots the pardon of Australians for the destruction of MH17. Van der Pijl dismisses the liberal Russian media, represented by figures such as Albats and by broadcasters such as Ekho Moskvy, along with Russian oppositionists in general, as dupes or agents of a baleful George Soros and his ilk (p. 160). This judgment would be doubtless be endorsed by many *siloviki*.

The Russian edition of van der Pijl's book was launched in Moscow on May 19, 2019, by FSB General Viktor Ivanov, who was until 2016 a member of Putin's inner circle—that is, one of Russia's most powerful men. *Novaia gazeta* reported that Ivanov organized the event; that it was given wide coverage by the Russian state-run-or-controlled media; and that copies were on sale for R300.00 ($US4.80).

According to *Novaia gazeta*, Ivanov described van der Pijl as "a leading Western scholar" and "a representative of the European intellectual elite," and they both claimed that the destruction of MH17 was the result of "a conspiracy of anti-Russian forces—above all the U.S.—opposed to any improvement in Russo-European relations and intent on sabotaging Putin's efforts in search of peace." The leading scholar himself "repeated several times that he did not know who was responsible, but was convinced that in our time truth *per se* cannot exist, because it is the product of the influence of dominant political forces." The newspaper's reporter commented, "one wonders whether van der Pijl appreciates how ironical such a statement sounds in Moscow" (https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2019/05/18/80572-konsipirologi-v-pomosch-skuchayuschim-ofitseram).

I should disclose that I was a member of an interdepartmental team set up by the Australian government within hours of the destruction of MH17, and my role was to summarize daily the Russian media's treatment of it; and to interpret for the then Australian Prime Minister in his telephone conversations with the Russian President. But none of this undercuts the fact that readers seeking a dispassionate investigation of the facts of the MH17 case may ignore this book. Those seeking reinforcement of their view that MH17 was and remains an anti-Russian conspiracy designed to prop up U.S. imperialism will enjoy it.

Kyle Wilson, Centre for European Studies, ANU

Rubin, Dominic. *Russia's Muslim Heartlands: Islam in the Putin Era*. London: Hurst and Company, 2018. xi + 345 pp. $29.95. ISBN 978-1-84904-896-5.

Dominic Rubin's new book begins with a refreshingly candid set of confessions: the author admits that the book's blend of "theology, sociology and travelogue" is "absolutely forbidden in modern academia," but also hopes that it nevertheless will help fill the void in contemporary literature about Islam in Russia, namely the near-complete absence of any "sense of how being Muslim and being Russian were being combined at the individual level since the collapse of the Soviet Union" (pp. ix–x). The author spent four years talking to "as many Muslims" as he could across the former Soviet Union, specifically, in Moscow, Tatarstan, Ingushetia, Chechnya, Dagestan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The resulting volume is a dense, demanding, but ultimately very rewarding work that does indeed supplement with a wealth of fascinating microlevel data drawn from personal interviews existing works on Russian Islam that tend to skew heavily towards macrolevel chronological, sociological, or security-oriented narratives of Russia's post-Soviet Islamic renaissance. While best read in conjunction with these other works, Rubin's book is an important contribution to our understanding of how individual Muslims in the former Soviet Union are navigating the human desire to create meaningful spiritual lives amid profoundly transformed political, economic, and social circumstances.

Rubin begins and ends his travels among Muslims of the former Soviet Union in Moscow, specifically at the Cathedral Mosque there, describing Moscow as a "new Eurasian Mecca" and

noting that "bureaucratically, officially, politically, architecturally, and demographically" Muslim power "now seemed concentrated" there (p. 9). As he meets, prays with, talks with, eats with, and describes the lives of Muslims of different ethnicities, occupations, levels of religiosity, and genders across the post-Soviet space, the quest of the "official" Moscow muftiate to define and impose a peaceful, tolerant, non-extremist form of "Russian Islam" among the same remains his lodestar. As he tries to "understand people's narratives" (Rubin would ultimately interview more than one hundred individuals, and the book includes detailed portraits of more than forty of them), he constantly refers back to and ruminates on the Muscovite muftiate's quest to create and mandate a "unified" Russian Islam. Ultimately, Rubin concludes that "to some extent" the Muslim population in the Russian Federation at least (the book's accounts of Central Asia are somewhat awkwardly grafted onto a more central analysis of Russia proper, though still very interesting) is indeed "coalescing," and that an "all-Russian synthesis" of indigenous Russian Muslims in the North Caucasus and the Volga Region with migrants from Central Asia and the South Caucasus is "gradually" occurring, if not to the point that he can conclude that the desired form of persuasive, anti-extremist, united Russian Islam yet exists (pp. 265–66). Instead, Rubin describes Islamic life in post-Soviet Russia as a sort of "multiverse" wherein four different regions (Chechnya, Dagestan, Tatarstan, and Moscow) each see themselves as "the center of the Russian Islamic universe" and compete with one another for leadership of Russia's growing Muslim community (p. 266).

Rubin's conversations with different Muslim men and women across Russia and Central Asia are vibrant and engaging and historically and theologically well informed. He has a respect and appreciation for the individual complexity of each person's religious journey, and is generous in attempting to understand and present each with compassion. Along the way, the reader meets architects and artists who design and decorate Russia's new mosques, imams who teach new generations of Russian Muslims, a nonagenarian artist from Kazan who describes Lenin as a "genius" who could have made even more of a success of the Soviet project had he only recognized Allah's sovereignty, and a mufti's wife who describes polygamy as being "worse than death," despite possibly being in a polygamous marriage herself (Rubin is unable to confirm or deny the rumor). Despite the vibrancy and diversity of Islamic lives and communities in post-Soviet Russia (and beyond) that he describes, Rubin concludes his book with the somewhat somber, if realistic, assertion that, in Vladimir Putin's resurgently nationalist Russia, Islam will continue to have to play "the diminished role of the crescent moon to Russian Orthodoxy's blazing sun" (p. 269). Readers will be grateful that Rubin has taken the time to shine light on that moon and share his impressions of its multifaceted reflections.

Kate Graney, Skidmore College

Adamsky, Dmitry. *Russian Nuclear Orthodoxy: Religion, Politics, and Strategy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. 376 pp. $30.00. ISBN 978-1-5036-0864-1.

The interaction of church and politics in Russia has been the topic of intense research during the last decades. The obvious contrast between the repressed and marginalized Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) during the Soviet times and the powerful and politically influential institution of the beginning of the twenty-first century triggered numerous studies from different disciplinary perspectives. Dmitry Adamsky's work for the first time focuses on the relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian nuclear military complex and thus contributes to the ongoing discourse on the politization of the ROC and the sacralization of Vladimir Putin's imperial politics.

For his main theoretical framework Adamsky relies on the works of Garrard/Garrard on the role of religion in Russian politics, and of Hassner on the relationship of religion and militaries. His declared aim is to deepen these approaches, which lack expertise both on Orthodox Christianity and the Russian military, by analyzing the Russian case. He structures the Russian development into the Genesis decade (1991–2000), the Conversion Decade (2000–2010) and the Operationalization Decade (2010–20). For each of these stages, Adamsky presents an impressive amount of material, covering events, meetings, holidays, speeches, and agreements connected to the research question. By

systematically describing the growing interactions between the hierarchy of the ROC and the commanding levels of the Russian nuclear military, he explores state-church relations (chaps. 2, 5, and 8) and the evolving nexus between the church and the nuclear section of the Russian military (chaps. 3, 6, and 9). Finally, for each of the decades he describes the processes of "strategic mythmaking" (chaps. 4, 7, and 10) in order to reconstruct the emergence of a new narrative of the interaction of church and state in the field of military power.

Adamsky successfully shows how the main actors of the ROC and the military units carefully evaluated the potential of mutual support starting from the 1990s and developed an effective algorithm of cooperating on the operational level. The case of the nuclear community is a convincing illustration for the general frame of the state-church relations in their search for a new national idea and in order to fill the identity vacuum after the Soviet Union. The formal signing of agreements, the reconstruction of church buildings, consecration of staff, buildings and weapons, the presence of clerics on all operational levels, the implementation of a special corpus of military saints, the religious justification of military action—all these signs of the clericalization of Russian politics can be observed also in other branches of local and federal politics as well. Adamsky therefore adds an important pattern to the according discourse of political sciences.

However, from the point of view of religious studies and Orthodox theology, the detailed description of the situation can hardly be used as a basis for evaluating the position of the ROC. Though it is indeed true that the ROC's position on the military, war, and peace has not undergone any significant theological assessment during the last thirty years, a study aiming to understand the development of a church should at least at some point engage with the theological and ecclesiological background of that church. This would help us to understand the divergence between the different levels of church hierarchy, Orthodoxy faith, and Orthodox theology. It would enable us to contextualize the activities of the church hierarchy in the military sphere in relation to the theological texts and statements, such as the Basis of the Social Concept of the ROC from 2000 (mentioned only once in the book, in a footnote on page 246) or the joint theological documents on peace and on (nuclear) disarmament in the context of the international ecumenical dialogue. Finally, a controversial discourse on the military activities is going on within the ROC, and the legacy of a spirituality focused on peace and reconciliation rather than on war, military, and imperial glory can hardly be ignored when taking Orthodoxy serious as a religion, and not only as a pattern of political power. Adamsky himself admits that his discussion "may create a disproportionate impression of the magnitude of religiosity within the Russian strategic community" (p. 236). The same impression is appropriate when assessing the magnitude of the politization and militarization of the Russian Church.

The entanglement of the ROC and Russian nuclear military without doubt deserves a comprehensive scientific analysis, to assess both the impact on international political strategy and the increasing politization of Russian Orthodoxy. Yet the ignorance of the diversity of Russian Orthodoxy makes Adamsky's book rather an addition to the biased discourse on Russian Orthodoxy than a contribution to understanding the complex situation of state-church relations in twenty-first-century Russia.

Regina Elsner, Zentrum für Osteuropa- und internationale Studien, Berlin

Medvedev, Sergei. *The Return of the Russian Leviathan*. New York: Polity Books, 2019. 250 pp. $69.95. ISBN 978-1-5095-3604-7.

Over the years there have been many attempts to explain why modern Russia has failed to become what people like to call a "normal" (that is, Western) country. Some commentators pin the blame on the evil machinations of Vladimir Putin. Others trace the roots of Russia's problems to the reform program of the 1990s. Still others emphasize external factors, such as the sense of threat produced by the actions of Western states. Among Russian liberals, yet another explanation is popular, namely

that Russia's problems are fundamentally psychological, an explanation often associated with complaints about the continued existence of the "Soviet man" (*Homo Sovieticus*).

Sergei Medvedev's *Return of the Russian Leviathan* is very much in line with this final mode of thinking. The book consists of a collection of short op-ed-style articles bundled into four parts, each examining one of the four "wars" which Medvedev says are being waged by the Russian state: "the war for space," "the war for symbols," "the war for the body," and "the war for memory." Through these, Medvedev, a professor at the Higher School of Economics, seeks "to understand where this regime appeared from and how it got a grip on power" (p. viii).

Insofar as a single theme emerges from the book, it is that Russians are profoundly morally deficient. Medvedev writes of the "mass infantilization of public consciousness" (p. 18), an "embittered, alienated and provincial consciousness" (p. 136), "an undeveloped mass consciousness" (p. 144), and the "archaic, pre-rational and mystical condition of our national consciousness" (p. 183). Russia, he says, is "a society mired in lies, cynicism and lack of trust, having lost all hope for the future" (p. 163). Its defining characteristics are the "syndrome of trained helplessness" (p. 227) and the "condition of resentment," defined as "the moral of slaves" (p. 219). Russia, concludes Medvedev, "is in desperate need of collective therapy" (p. 137).

Medvedev writes extremely well. As op-eds go, those in this book are exemplary—colorful, hard-hitting, and penetrating. But an op-ed is not a work of scientific research, and readers should treat Medvedev's arguments with caution. The first article, "Sovereign territory ... with no roads," sets the tone of hyperbole which characterizes the book as a whole: "All around there are ever more dead villages. ... The people you come across are increasingly wretched. They wander aimlessly along the roadside ... with a look of hopelessness ... everything is dissolving into oblivion" (p. 4). As a depiction of modern Russia, it is very lopsided. Nevertheless, it is entirely typical of Medvedev's style.

Undoubtedly, there is some truth to what Medvedev writes. For instance, Russian surveys do indeed show low levels of social trust. But Medvedev engages in a large amount of exaggeration, and pushes arguments far beyond what the evidence allows. It is rather a stretch, for instance, to argue that "football hooliganism in hybrid Russia is a matter of vital importance for the state" (p. 104), that male marital violence explains the annexation of Crimea and Russia's military mission in Syria (p. 143), or that the war in Ukraine is a product of *Grand Theft Auto* (p. 153). Furthermore, Medvedev fails to support his psychological analyses of the moral failings of the Russian with any firm data. Though there may be something to them, one needs to treat such analyses with a healthy dose of scepticism. In short, while it makes some interesting points, *Return of the Russian Leviathan* cannot be relied on as an accurate depiction of modern Russia, let alone of the causes of its political, economic, and social problems.

Paul Robinson, University of Ottawa

Rowley, Alison. *Putin Kitsch in America*. Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019. ix + 197 pp. $27.95. ISBN 978-0-7735-5901-1.

With the publication of *Putin Kitsch in America*, the scholarship devoted to images of, artifacts featuring, and narratives about Vladimir Putin has become almost as diverse as the phenomenon of Putiniana itself. Rather than focus on the Putin myth circulating in Russia, Alison Rowley turns her attention to the astounding range of products and stories created by American observers of the Russian president. Whether analyzing cross-stitch patterns featuring his bared chest or fiction whose plot pivots on his oversized penis and toxic sperm, Rowley convincingly demonstrates that Putin functions as a highly sexualized and endlessly adaptable trope in the United States' popular political discourse.

The book's introduction lays out Rowley's argument for considering the impressive array of American Putiniana that she has catalogued as a form of political engagement. Rather than lament the proliferation of Putin coloring books and Ritz-cracker memes, she urges readers to view the

participatory processes, which have transformed the real-life Putin into a veritable feast of irony and satire, as a sign of the vibrancy of America's popular political discourse. As chapter 1 points out, Putin emerged as the perfect foil for American politicians beset by scandal after the Kremlin circulated topless photos of the Russian president in 2007, and his over-the-top machismo seems tailor-made for faux news venues like *The Onion* and *The Daily Show*. The Putin products Rowley examines in chapter 2—including baby bibs, t-shirts, swimsuits, Etsy handicrafts, and greeting cards—demonstrate the amazing adaptability of the Putin trope to just about any surface and every purpose. In chapter 3, Rowley turns to the pornification of American political discourse in the twenty-first century, demonstrating Putin's ultimate role of "topping" American politicians, both female and male, through hypermasculine sexual dominance. The following two chapters dive deep into misogynistic and homophobic narratives that place Putin on top: chapter 4 treats fake fiction in which Putin has sex with the likes of Sarah Palin, Barack Obama, and Hilary Clinton, while chapter 5 explores slash fiction inspired by the Putin-Trump bromance. In the book's final chapter, Rowley turns to the rich universe of Putiniana on the web, emphasizing the multivalence of the virtual Putin in memes, apps, and internet games. Interestingly, Rowley finds that actual porn sites like PornHub do not feature Putin despite the explicitly sexual nature of much of the Putiniana she describes. As she argues, the incongruous couplings and bodily fluids that characterize the Putin trope do not pack an erotic, but a political punch against America's leaders.

Rowley's book provides valuable insight into the bizarre array of Putiniana that Americans have created and consumed in recent years. However, two points in her argument invite additional thought and theorization. First is Rowley's use of the term "kitsch" to describe the vast body of Putiniana she examines. The history of kitsch as a category of taste, which elites use to label products of middle- and low-brow culture, makes it a poor fit for an argument that valorizes the horizontality of popular political discourse. Second is Rowley's reluctance to read the multivalence of Putiniana as an inherent feature of popular political discourse in the twenty-first century. Perhaps treating the term "kitsch" with greater circumspection and analyzing the performative dimensions of American Putiniana in more detail would lead to a more nuanced assessment of the horizontal political engagement facilitated by Putin objects, fiction, and memes. The very richness of the Putiniana Rowley analyzes suggests that the process of interpreting the Putin trope has only just begun and invites others fascinated by the Russian president's ever-morphing persona to pick up where *Putin Kitsch in America* leaves off.

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Smith, Mark B. *The Russia Anxiety: And How History Can Resolve It*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. xxv + 480 pp. $29.95. ISBN 978-0-1908-8605-9.

Mark Smith has written an erudite overview of Russia's history and a critical assessment of mainstream Western scholarship on the country. Presented by the author as a correction of the dominant narrative the book aims to dispel a series of myths generated by what Smith defines as the Russia Anxiety—the emotional attitude that prevents scholars from developing a complex and balanced perspective on the country. Influenced by this attitude, researchers tend to develop viewpoints that stress Russia's eternal dictatorship and proneness to violent and expansionist practices. Historically, the Russia Anxiety has manifested itself in cycles of fear, contempt, and disregard for the country and its interests that, when expressed by foreign countries, generate Russia's resentful reaction, which then serves to justify their return to fear.

Smith challenges the idea of Russia as a country with an originally established pattern of tyrants oppressing their people by referring to it as the "black legend." He proposes that, given the country's complex substantive and historical evolution, its development should be viewed in terms of multiple layers rather than a single legend. While acknowledging the especially violent periods of Ivan IV and Josef Stalin, Smith takes a *longue durée* perspective and insists on viewing Russia's overall trajectory as "normal" and not fundamentally apart from Western societies.

The book's organization serves the argument. Part I establishes the approach and central claims of the book by engaging with the dominant Russia narrative. Part II identifies and challenges the main Russia myths. Individual chapters on Russia's political system, role of violence, relations with nationalities, position with respect to Europe, and use of force in foreign relations are written as historical accounts of separate issues, from old Russia to Soviet and post-Soviet times. Smith's strategy of critical engagement with the dominant narrative includes identification and assessment of influential scholarly figures such as George Kennan and Richard Pipes. Evaluating their perspective against Russia's historical record and making occasional comparisons with European countries allows the author to provide a complex and stimulating analysis. Part III proposes ways to overcome the Russia Anxiety by discussing the country's most widely debated leaders—Stalin and Putin. At no point does Smith present the latter as a follower of the former; rather, he places each leader in the social and historical context of his time. The author concludes by formulating several recommendations for historians and scholars who aspire to be objective in their analysis.

The Russia Anxiety reengages a critically important debate in Russian studies. Some may be tempted to criticize the author for being "soft" on Stalin and Putin. In the highly politicized environment of contemporary Western academia such criticism would not be uncommon. Others may complain that the argument is too ambitious to allow a systematic defense. Indeed, the cyclical stages of contempt and disregard, as well as the transition to fear, could be defined further. Smith's book, however, deserves a serious and wide-ranging discussion. His task is different from presenting a definitive empirical assessment of a particular issue or historical period. The author's reasons for making ambitious and bold claims are entirely legitimate for the object of his assessment is a large body of research laden with ideological and ethnocentric stereotypes. For challenging the dominant narrative, his approach and selection of historical evidence are justified and sufficient. Smith's work is reminiscent of Martin Malia's *Russia under Western Eyes* (1998). Every two decades or so comes a book of ambitious historical reassessment that deserves a wide readership. *The Russia Anxiety* should be read by scholars, policymakers, and general readers. It should be assigned in courses not only in history but also in politics, cultural studies, sociology, and international relations.

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