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Review: *Late and Post- Soviet Russian Literature: A Reader. Book 1: Perestroika and the Post-Soviet Period*

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мотивированным) терминов социологии, маркетинга, межличностной коммуникации, культурологии, этнографии, что, к сожалению, не всегда проясняет, а подчас и затемняет лингвистические и семантические основы русской пищевой темы.

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Mark Lipovetsky and Lisa Ryoko Wakamiya, eds., *Late and Post-Soviet Russian Literature: A Reader. Book 1: Perestroika and the Post-Soviet Period.* Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2014. 344 pages.

Late and Post-Soviet Russian Literature: A Reader is a rich and informative classroom-oriented resource for students, scholars, and teachers alike. With the ambitious goal of capturing “the multiple voices and meanings that have emerged in the last several decades of cultural change in Russia” (Lipovetsky and Wakamiya 2014, 11), this engaging panorama of Russia’s literary milieu offers a diverse sample of literary texts, scholarly essays, and interviews published since perestroika.

The collection is organized into three thematic clusters, each prefaced with a brief introduction and supplemented with biographical sketches of each literary figure discussed. Part 1, “Rethinking Identities,” invites the reader to re-examine the potentially reductive categories of “women’s prose” and “queer literature” through the exploration of new narrative models for the expression of gender and sexual identity. This section opens with excerpts from Helena Goscilo’s canonical 1996 work *Dehexing Sex* and proceeds to include three stories by Liudmila Petrushevskaja (two of which came out in the early 1990s, while the third story, “The Fountain House,” is a product of the new millennium). This section also includes a poem by Vera Pavlova, Linor Goralik’s cycle of short stories “They Talk,” as well as several essays and stories by the gay rights activist, writer and photographer, Slava Mogutin. Bringing the discussion into the Putin era, the section concludes with excerpts from Tatiana Mikhailova’s scholarly essay dedicated to the recent phenomenon of commercial Russian “literature of glamour.” Focusing on Oksana

Robski, the pioneer writer who epitomizes this literary form, Mikhailova argues that the glamorization of the writer's own and of her heroines' images might be seen as a new—albeit conformist—type of female identity formation.

Part 2, "'Little Terror' and Traumatic Writing," examines post-Soviet literature within the contexts of individual and collective traumas of the past and the ensuing literary and performative discourses on violence. This section begins with excerpts from two theoretical essays that have probably become staples in many courses on post-Soviet literary and cultural studies: Serguei Oushakine's article on "post-Soviet symbolic aphasia" (2000) and Alexander Etkind's "Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied" (2009). With these two articles serving as a theoretical foundation for the discussion of violence and nostalgia, the section offers a broad array of works in various styles and genres, exploring identity formation through implied or explicit violent encounters. Included here are poems by Elena Fanailova and Andrei Rodionov, an essay by the Conceptualist poet Lev Rubinshtein ("The Smoke of the Fatherland"), excerpts from Evgeny Grishkovets's play *How I Ate a Dog*, and scenes from the Presnyakov brothers' play *Terrorism*. Fittingly, the section closes with excerpts from Eliot Borenstein's 2008 volume *Overkill: Sex and Violence in Russian Popular Culture*, which introduces readers to the elusive Russian concept of *bespredel* and its representation in contemporary Russian narratives about organized crime. (Unfortunately, the editors did not offer any contextualization of Borenstein's excellent piece within the framework of this section; students and instructors would also benefit from a list of suggested readings or viewings that are influenced by the aesthetics of *bespredel*).

Part 3 of the volume, "Writing Politics," focuses on some of the most influential, popular and widely read authors in today's Russia, whose work—according to the collection's editors—appears "at the intersection of politics, media, and literature" (16). Some of the literary personae (for example, the postmodernist Victor Pelevin or the best-selling writers Boris Akunin and Sergei Lukianenko) are presented solely through critical responses to their works. Others, such as the political dissident Eduard Limonov and the prolific Dmitry Bykov, find their way into the collection through their own, perhaps lesser-known, prose selections. (In this vein, the anthology features Limonov's piece "A Heroic

Attitude to Life" and Bykov's essay "The Fall;" both of these translations appear in their English version for the first time). A segment on the prominent postmodern writer, Vladimir Sorokin, offers the latter's 2007 interview with *Spiegel* as well as an original translation of his 2008 story "Petrushka."

For those who wish to examine the original Russian texts, it would have been useful if the editors had provided each translation with the original Russian title, along with the place and date of its publication. As it currently stands, most literary pieces in the anthology are accompanied only by the publication date of the reprinted translation, which might be misleading, particularly for readers who seek to place these works in a historical context. For example, Liudmila Petrushevskaja's story "Hygiene," originally published in 1990, appears in the anthology under the 2011 date of its Penguin Books English translation. Another Petrushevskaja story, "The New Robinson Crusoes" (1989), does not have a publication date at all, save for a reference to the translation copyrights of 2009 in the acknowledgements section. The volume would have also benefited from a unified bibliography or at least more consistent bibliographical references: for example, this reviewer could not find in the collection any detailed bibliographical information (or the date of publication) for the aforementioned article by Oushakine.

These editorial inconsistencies aside, the present collection's diverse choice of authors and texts will, no doubt, offer instructors abundant opportunities for the creation of a variety of courses on late and post-Soviet literature and culture. Easily supplemented by other primary and secondary texts (many of which are suggested throughout the book), this versatile anthology of some of the best writings from and about contemporary Russian literature is bound to stimulate productive classroom discussions. To further whet the appetites of students and instructors, the volume's introductory chapter promises the release of a second reader, this time dedicated to Russian literature of the Thaw and Stagnation periods (11).

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