

Chaadaev, Karamzin, Pushkin, Turgenev and the young Tolstoy, the author argues that ‘cultural harassment’ by the west shaped the Russian national inferiority complex, to the point of self-hate.

The reader of this volume will be reminded that while French–Russian cultural relations have been much examined, scholarly interest in this area remains high, and many more questions remain to be raised and answered.

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Ingunn Lunde and Tine Roesen (eds.), *Landslide of the Norm: Language Culture in Post-Soviet Russia* (Bergen: University of Bergen, 2006), 318 pp.

This title, the sixth in the Slavica Bergensia series, is the first product of a research project on linguistic changes and literary development in Russia in the 1920s and 1990s which takes as its point de depart Roman Jakobson’s concept of ‘landslide of the norm’ (*Erdrutsch der Norm*) and Grigorii Vinokur’s notion of ‘language culture’ which was adumbrated in his seminal work *Kultura iazyka*. The editors have produced a collection of articles which seeks to ‘integrate linguistic and literary scholarship in order to study the language culture in post-perestroika Russia within a broad framework, including the development of the language in its socio-cultural context, the recent language debates and, above all, literature’s various responses to the contemporary linguistic situation’ (10). The book contains twelve articles, of which three are in Russian and the remainder in English, from contributors based in Norway, the United Kingdom and Russia. As the editors point out in their introduction, a combination of linguistic and literary approaches to the current situation is a relative rarity and marks a departure from the usual focus on neologisms in advertising and the media. This two-pronged approach gives rise to unexpected and productive synergies.

Michael Gorham’s article ‘Language Culture and National Identity in Post-Soviet Russia’ sets the scene for the later case studies. It charts the period of innovation and the subsequent move towards ‘a new linguistic reconciliation on the institutional level’ (11). His conclusion that the ‘language question will wither away along with the debate over a “Russian Idea”, each finding resolution in some amalgam of newly invented tradition and traditional embrace of change’

(30) is consistent with the analysis by Larisa Ryazanova-Clarke in her investigation into the use of the terminology based around the key phrase ‘the vertical of power’, ‘The Crystallization of Structures: Linguistic Culture in Putin’s Russia’. Using Vladimir Elistrator’s framework, she divides the post-Soviet decades into the period of ‘destabilization of the norm’ and the subsequent ‘crystallization of structures’ (31). Both articles reveal the extremely complex nature of the developments of the past two decades and the difficulties attendant upon their interrogation.

The following five articles each treat an aspect of the reflexivity of prose writers to the new situation. Ingunn Lunde charts the response of literature by comparing and contrasting Tolstaya’s ‘Kys’, Sorokin’s ‘Goluboe salo’ and a short text by Vladimir Korobov; Tine Roesen focuses on what she terms the ‘unpretentious text’ in the form of three short stories, which exhibit the features of modesty, apparent artlessness and a mimetic rather than diegetic style; while Dirk Uffelmann, Brita Lotsberg Bryn and Martin Paulsen investigate works by the authors Vladimir Sorokin, Iurii Buida and Viktor Pelevin respectively. Two articles are devoted to the response of poets to the new literary field. The longest of the collection, ‘Новые слова в поэтическом восприятии’ by Liudmila Zubova, provides an overview of the special demands which the poetic process makes on words in general and the extra dimensions added to this during periods of linguistic flux. By contrast, Annika Myhr restricts her analysis to two St Petersburg poets, Elena Shvarts and David Raskin, and to a close reading of one poem of each. Both scholars see poets as fore-runners in language democratization, a process which turned out to be a mixed blessing for them. Myhr writes of their new freedom that ‘society no longer needed poets to speak a suppressed truth, and the latter were left without the moral authority they had previously enjoyed, reduced to sophisticated linguistic experts’ (199). The final three articles are more obviously comparative in approach and draw interesting parallels between 20s and 90s. Irina Sandomirskaja in the concluding article ‘Язык – Сталин: «Марксизм и вопросы языкознания» как лингвистический поворот в вселенной СССР’ comes to some sobering conclusions on the enduring legacy of Stalin and the manner in which language and language discussions are framed even today, nearly sixty years after his death.

There is much here to interest those working in the field of contemporary Russian culture. The articles are of a universally high standard, meticulously

researched and well-written. Although it can be challenging to jump from one case study to another, there is a consistency of line which successfully links the constituent parts of this volume making the whole greater than the sum of its parts. This is a quality tome on glossy paper with very few misprints (catastrophy, 66) or errors of fact. Occasionally the translations could be queried, as for instance, ‘professional honesty’ for ‘professional honour’ (22), ‘of the Soviet countries’ for ‘of the land of the Soviets’ (202), and there was the very occasional misprint in the Russian, *найгорчайше* for *наигорчайше* (200).

There is however at the heart of this book a contradiction in its presentation which needs to be noted. The articles in English provide an English translation of all the quotations of Russian sources, an invaluable feature in a work treating a very fluid linguistic situation in which meanings are in the process of being negotiated and refashioned. However the articles in Russian, one of which deals with the response of poetry, understandably do not provide such a feature. This effectively divides the book into two sections: the part directed at an English-speaking audience and that written with a Russian-speaking audience in mind. While not irreconcilable, this division does reflect a bifurcation of competences on the part of the contributors and an expected division among those who will access it.

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Simo Mikkonen, *Music and Power in the Soviet 1930s: A History of Composers' Bureaucracy* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellers, 2009).

Two of the most fundamental organisational events in the history of Russian music occurred precisely seventy years apart: the foundation of the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1862 and the 1932 Resolution ‘On the Reconstruction of Literary and Artistic Organisations’. The decade that followed in the wake of each event witnessed significant and profound changes in the musical life of the nation, particularly in regard to the professional status of Russian/Soviet musicians. Both the 1860s and 1930s offer rich case studies – in a field of music history rather too dominated by accounts of the ‘big’ names and events – of the minutiae of daily professional life, personal relationships and rivalries amongst both well and lesser