who spent more than ten years in the Gulag, in many respects deviated from the laws domineering the Soviet school. Furthermore, it would have been worth mentioning the impact of Mikhail Gasparov's approach on Sedakova's translations. In his later translations, Gasparov demonstrated a gaunt, nearly interlinear approach, stripped of rhetoric and embellishments; his translations are often shorter than the original poems (Mikhail L. Gasparov, *Verlibr i konspektivnaia lirika*, 2000, 189–90). This is evident, for instance, in Sedakova's own hermeneutic translation of T. S. Eliot's "Ash Wednesday" or Dante Alikgeri's *Paradiso*, in which she decided to sacrifice the form (*terza rhima*) for the sake of rendering the content.

Finally, in her detailed explication of Olga Sedakova's *Chinese Journey*, Natalia Chernysh reads the cycle through Confucius and uses *The Book of Changes* as a guide. Chernysh applies the term "hexagram," which Ezra Pound called ideogram, and concludes that the *Chinese Journey* is a spiritual quest "in praise of all changes" (376).

In his Afterword, David Bethea emphasizes that the way Sedakova thinks is "healthy and growth-worthy," and in itself the answer to the question of "how poetry as a written phenomenon survives in a world that seems. . .more and more postliterate" (381). Bethea agrees with Sedakova that one "can express new experience through the very intensity of language," as she stated in an interview with Polukhina (Bethea, 383). He affirms that "Sedakova's thinking is heir to Mandelstam's and Pushkin's" (388).

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New Russian Drama: An Anthology. Ed. Maksim Hanukai and Susanna Weygandt. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019. xxxiv, 461 pp. Appendix. Notes. Chronology. $35.00, paper.
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This well-edited and beautifully translated volume introduces an English-speaking readership to one of the most interesting Russian cultural phenomena of the twenty-first century: New Drama. The term New Drama refers to the extraordinary proliferation of Russian dramatic writing that emerged at the turn of the twenty-first century. The works and authors associated with the movement exhibit a remarkable degree of stylistic and thematic diversity, resisting facile categorization. As Maksim Hanukai and Susanna Weygandt also astutely note in their introduction, the emergence of New Drama coincides roughly with the years that Vladimir Putin has held power, "making it one of the most important documents that we have of this period" (xxix). Given the multifaceted nature of New Drama, the numerous playwrights who have been associated with it, and its importance as a historical document, the editors of this volume faced several daunting tasks. How to select an array of plays that captures the disparate voices comprising the contemporary Russian dramatic landscape? How to render those voices accessible to readers as well as to English-language theater practitioners? And how to place New Drama in the context of both Russian and western theatrical and dramatic histories? Hanukai and Weygandt, along with their translators, have succeeded admirably in meeting all of these challenges.

The volume opens with an engaging foreword by Richard Schechner, a well-known American theater practitioner and scholar. Schechner reminds the reader of the formidable influence of Russians such as Konstantin Stanislavskii on Anglo-American theater practice until the 1930s, and how the years after World War II, by contrast, were marked by a cessation of that cultural cross-pollination. The plays in

this volume, Schechner hopes, will herald a new chapter in Russian drama's relevance for a global audience. In their introduction, Hanukai and Weygandt also situate the anthologized plays amidst broader dramatic and theatrical trends. They argue that the playwrights and practitioners associated with New Drama continue the attacks on theatricality that have characterized western theater since the nineteenth century. New Drama, however, emerged out of the social chaos and profound instability of Russia of the 1990s, compelling the formation of a distinctive concept of the real. It is this specific "pursuit of the real" that Hanukai and Weygandt identify as one of New Drama's key unifying characteristics, a quest that renders these plays especially relevant in an "increasingly digitized and mediated world" (xxxviii). The editors helpfully chart New Drama's journey from obscure provincial playwrighting festivals and cramped basements to productions on the stages of Moscow's preeminent stages and an outsized influence on Russian cultural production well beyond the theater—particularly on film and visual art. The reader is further assisted by a timeline of crucial events in the development of New Drama, as well as by brief biographical notes about each featured playwright, including the production history of the anthologized play, at the end of the volume.

New Russian Drama: An Anthology contains ten translated plays, written between 2000 and 2013 and presented chronologically, all but two of which are rendered into English for the first time. *Plasticine* by Vassilii Sigarev and *Playing the Victim* by the Presniakov Brothers, both translated by the British translator Sasha Dugdale, are here modified for an American English-speaking audience. The texts selected by the editors successfully highlight New Drama's stylistic and thematic diversity. *September.doc*, for example, written by Mikhail Ugarov and Elena Gremina—founders of New Drama's "spiritual home," the Moscow-based Teatr.doc (xx)—showcases the verbatim technique of documentary theater: the text is comprised solely of messages posted to internet blogs and forums in the wake of the terrorist school siege in Beslan in 2004. At the other end of the spectrum, *Project "Swan"* (by Andrei Rodionov, a well-known contemporary poet, and Ekaterina Troepolskaia), about a futuristic Russian society that forces all would-be citizens to pass a poetry recitation exam, is written entirely in verse. Translator Thomas Campbell deserves special praise for his efforts in rendering this complex text into vibrant English. Thematically, the plays contain elements as diverse as the brutalizing of teenagers by former convicts (*Plasticine*); marital infidelity (*Summer Wasps Sing in November, Too*, by Ivan Vyrypaev, and *Somnambulism* by Yaroslava Pulinovich); and the familial histrionics of the Chekhov clan (*Brothers Ch.* by Gremina). Many of the texts are united by their depiction of the radical atomization that characterized Russian society after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The following question reverberates throughout the plays: have the circumstances of contemporary life rendered human qualities obsolete, perhaps even harmful? For example, a character in Mikhail Durnenkov's *The Blue Machinist* declares that "whatever you imagine, everything already exists," and so it's best to "never think again" (214–15). The only way to survive being taken hostage is to stop being human (*September.doc*, 152). An exhausting, nearly logorrheic stream of words concludes without any new insights or human connections, ending with the characters abandoning communication altogether in favor of an animalistic tickling session (*Summer Wasps Sing in November, Too*). Radical atomization is, of course, not unique to post-Soviet Russia; considered together, these plays compel a sobering rumination on the twenty-first century human condition.

This volume will be of interest to scholars and students of contemporary Russian culture, as well as to anyone concerned with international trends in theater and drama. Because of the prominence of several New Dramatists, such as Sigarev and Vyrypaev, as filmmakers, it will also prove valuable for specialists in Russian cinema.

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The consistently excellent translations of the individual plays lend themselves well to staging by English-language theater practitioners. Along with John Freedman's *Real and Phantom Pains: An Anthology of New Russian Drama* (2014), Hanukai and Weygandt's volume effectively introduces New Drama—one of the most confounding, important, and dynamic Russian cultural movements of the twenty-first century—to the broader audience that it so richly deserves.

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This Thing of Darkness: Eisenstein's Ivan the Terrible in Stalin's Russia. By Joan Neuberger. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019. xvii, 404 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. $48.95, hard bound.
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There are few historians who can write about Sergei Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* with Joan Neuberger's academic authority. Indeed, Neuberger has been studying the film's historical, political, cultural, and narrative contexts and nuances for over two decades. Her excellent I.B. Tauris "film companion" to *Ivan the Terrible* has been on the reading lists of many undergraduate film courses since the volume's publication in 2003, while her numerous articles have offered additional important insights into the conception, production, and reception of Eisenstein's unfinished trilogy. *This Thing of Darkness*, the volume under review, builds on Neuberger's earlier studies, while introducing new archival research and offering a wide-ranging survey of the latest scholarship on Eisenstein's film. The resulting monograph is a systematic, comprehensive, theoretically-sophisticated, and multilayered scrutiny of a work that some scholars have described as the "most complex movie ever made" (Yuri Tsivian, *Ivan the Terrible*, 2002, 7).

Neuberger begins her discussion by mapping out the film's extraordinarily complex production history (Chapter 1, "The Potholed Path"). Drawing on material from a wide array of sources (including Eisenstein's film production notes, personal diaries, theoretical writings, and correspondence with Mosfilm administrators), the author traces the various ways in which the director had to "maneuver in the Stalinist political-cultural labyrinth" (37). Chapter 2, "Shifts in Time," looks at Eisenstein's own theoretical writings (especially *Method* and *Nonindifferent Nature*), as well as literary works, documents, and secondary sources that the director studied and / or consulted while working on *Ivan the Terrible*. Neuberger argues that Eisenstein's vision of history as a dialectical, three-dimensional spiral not only informed the film's structure and narrative, it also profoundly challenged both "Stalinist historicism" (122) and the regime's attempt to make Russia's pre-revolutionary past useful to the Soviet state. To illustrate this point, Chapter 3, "Power Personified," offers a thorough analysis of several scenes from *Ivan the Terrible* while demonstrating how the director's theories regarding historical processes shaped his depiction of Ivan's biography "as a dialectal spiral" (128). After briefly alluding to the standard interpretation of Tsar Ivan as a reflection of Stalin, Neuberger further elaborates on the theoretical intricacies of Eisenstein's notions of how a life, especially a political biography, should be narrated.

Chapter 4, "Power Projected," begins with a discussion of Eisenstein's concept of the "fugue" as a structural model for narrating Tsar Ivan's complex and "polyphonic" relationships with his antagonists and then moves on to analyze the use and abuse of power presented in the film. Chapter 5, "How to Do It," examines (and illustrates through an exceptional in-depth analysis of several individual sequences from