

especially Russian conservatism. The editors have truly assembled an amazing array of scholars to shed light on this very important subject. I plan to continue to consult it for my own research interests for the foreseeable future.

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Performing Tsarist Russia in New York: Music, Émigrés, and the American Imagination. By Natalie K. Zelensky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019. xi, 235 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. \$35.00, paper.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2021.53

Natalie Zelensky analyzes music which is rarely discussed in academic literature on Russian emigration. She addresses questions about how music developed amongst post-revolutionary Russian exiles, how it helped to create Russian identity in emigration, and how both music and Russian émigré identity developed. The focus of her research is on New York and how the American context affected émigré identity in music. Her research illuminates aspects of the Russian émigré community about which little has been written.

In her first chapter she analyzes the Russian gypsy and stylized folk repertoire that was established in Russian Harlem in the 1920s, beginning to symbolize an émigré identity. Zelensky argues that through such musical performance, émigrés were helped to “maintain their mission of cultural preservation” (28). As in other émigré communities, the church, in this case Christ the Savior Cathedral in Harlem, was at the center of spiritual life while the adjacent parish house was the hub for cultural and musical events.

In the second chapter, Zelensky expounds some of her main ideas. New York was swept by a “Russian vogue” in the 1920s and 30s that “was informed by the specific circumstances under which the First Wave Russian emigration came into existence” (71) and helped post-revolutionary émigrés both to adapt to this fashion and to create Russian identity abroad. Although then the US was more insular and less welcoming, Russian émigrés were able to use this to expound their notion of a lost exotic nation that helped to shape Russianness abroad. In doing so, the Russians interacted with local culture, notably jazz.

The third chapter discusses the effect of those who arrived as a result of the war: members of the first wave of émigrés moved from Europe to the US, but also Soviet citizens who brought their own music with them. Zelensky notes that there were social and political divisions between these groups, which also occurred in the musical sphere. Over time various songs were consolidated into a “timeless and non-political category” (125) and this evolved into a “broader idea of Russianness” (135) revivifying émigré culture. Chapter 4 examines broadcasting by Radio Liberty and the music of Vernon Duke, who was of Russian origin. Based on interesting archival research, this chapter illustrates the tangled policy behind broadcasting by émigrés but also details musical evolution. The last chapter discusses Russian balls held in New York and attended by a range of people associated with Russian emigration. This chapter offers an amusing *aperçu* into research methods, but the difference between those who had to leave Russia as political exiles as a result of the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917 and the new wealthy economic migrants from Russia to the US should be discussed.

As a musicologist, Zelensky’s work is strongest when she is discussing music. At times, I would have liked to be able to hear the music and it would have been good

to have a website where recordings of the different songs and genres could be found. Perhaps Zelensky might consider producing such a website.

Her work would have been strengthened by a clearer and more nuanced discussion of what was meant by “Russian culture” and its preservation. If members of the emigration could unite over the idea that the Bolsheviks were destroying Russian culture, there was little consensus about what they were trying to preserve. To say that they focused on Tsarist culture is an oversimplification. Some would have agreed, but the intelligentsia formed a high proportion of the emigration and many had been critical of the tsarist order. Zelensky quotes Marina Tsvetaeva as expressing the notion that “Bolsheviks had usurped Russia politically and culturally” (104) but Tsvetaeva returned to Russia albeit with tragic consequences. Aleksandr Pushkin was accepted as a symbol of cultural unity but there was little agreement on anything else. In the literary field there has been a long-standing argument about whether émigré and Soviet culture were separate. By examining the arguments in the literary world, Zelensky would have strengthened her argument as to what was particular about music and émigré life in the US.

Analyzing the paradoxes in the relations between émigrés and Soviet citizens and between the different waves of refugees would have further enhanced Zelensky’s contention that Russian musical culture had to interact with the surrounding influences and was able to cross boundaries and appeal to those of differing views, and indeed provide part of Russian identity when language was no longer the defining element.

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Tolstoy and His Problems: Views from the Twenty-First Century. Ed. Inessa Medzhibovskaya. Northwestern University Press Studies in Russian Literature and Theory. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2019. xiv, 233 pages. Notes. Illustrations. Photographs. \$39.95, paper.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2021.54

Lev Tolstói’s interests were diverse and his methods eclectic. Not surprisingly, his writings attract a similar type of scholarship, witnessed by this thought-provoking collection featuring scholars with multiple methodologies and writing styles grappling with a number of issues that hold their relevance for the twenty-first century.

In his “Prologue: Tolstói’s Nihilism,” Jeff Love focuses on Tolstói’s “Nominalism” and his penchant for constructive deconstruction, deconstructive construction, expressing the inexpressible, formalizing formlessness, and other paradoxes that my Marxist teachers back in the Soviet Union called “the unity and the struggle of the opposites.” Michael A. Denner examines Tolstói as a social theorist, while Daniel Moulin-Stožek articulates the main principles of Tolstói’s educational work. Vladimir M. Paperni traces Tolstói’s attempts to tame and rephrase the mystical tradition into rational discourse; the editor of the collection discusses Tolstói’s thinking and writings on Jews, Judaism, and the plight of Russian Jews; and Jeffrey Brooks writes twenty-three pages on the subject of Tolstói’s Humor (clearly beating any visible competition by at least twenty-two pages). Two essays focus on Tolstói’s aesthetics: Stephen Halliwell scrutinizes Natasha Rostova’s seduction scene at the opera and exposes the paradoxes of Tolstói’s theory of “aesthetic seduction,” while Caryl Emerson revisits Tolstói’s polemics with William Shakespeare and Tolstói’s