

tieth century, where “voyeurism, surveillance, and collectivism . . . ushered in new ways of seeing” (21). Chapter two continues this dialogue between imperial Russian understandings of glass and twentieth-century and modernist views; Chadaga explores Mikhail Lomonosov’s and other eighteenth-century understandings of glass and particularly the *zertsalo* (mirror, archaic), while closing with an examination of parallel psychological effects of glass objects during the modernist period. Moving in a slightly different direction, in Chapter 3 we see a discussion of the “propagandistic potential” of glass (22) through eighteenth- and nineteenth-century glassware meant to serve as ideological spectacles reinforcing imperial autocracy.

The next two chapters consider glass architecture, analyzing its utopian and at times dystopian elements. In Chapter 4, Chadaga compares the utopian potential of glass in Nikolai Chernyshevskii’s *Crystal Palace* with Dostoevskii’s aversion to glass. She continues this line of analysis in Chapter 5, which treats twentieth-century utopian ideals of glass as they appear in the works of Velimir Khlebnikov, and the more dystopian views of glass held by Evgenii Zamiatin who saw the surveillance potential of glass. Chapter 6 explores how the Soviet state attempted to appropriate the spectacular elements of glass in order to lionize its own achievements. As Chadaga reveals, ideologically heterodox writers like Yuri Olesha and Andrei Platonov worked to undercut these efforts in their writings. In this chapter, the author also focuses on electric-glass light bulbs during the Soviet period and how the Soviet system sought dominance over light.

This is a well-researched and well-argued book that will prove useful to scholars. Chadaga has consulted innumerable sources on the historical and cultural significance of glass and Russian literature and history, as well as a broad range of theorists such as Walter Benjamin, Michel Foucault, Yuri Lotman, Mikhail Epstein, and others. As a result, the book really inspires us to pay more attention to glass and the ways in which it shapes our lives by simultaneously placing boundaries and urging us toward the infinite with its inherent reflectiveness. One minor quibble is that precisely because glass is so omnipresent, multilayered, and borderless, the author might have benefited from limiting the study somewhat. As it is, the scope of the exploration can sometimes feel too large, as multiple and at times seemingly contradictory narrative strands emerge. I realize, however, that in expecting the author to close hermeneutic doors, I am asking that she place walls where she sees glass, and this approach may prove antithetical to the very nature of the subject matter. That aside, this is an impressive book, and readers will learn a great deal.

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‘Russian Americans’ in Soviet Film: Cinematic Dialogues between the US and the USSR. By Marina L. Levitina. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015. xvi, 320 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. \$99.00, hard bound.

Marina Levitina’s book on Russian Americanism in Soviet cinema could hardly be a more timely reminder that less than a century ago, there was a lively discourse about the positive attributes of the American character in early Soviet society, especially (but not exclusively) in the film world. In five lively and well-researched chapters, Levitina thoroughly explores the *amerikanshchina* in Soviet cinema in the 1920s and 1930s through her careful reading of the contemporary press and her precise and fresh analyses of films. Levitina has excavated so much new, interesting, and im-

portant detail that she deserves plaudits for this alone. She is not content, however, merely to describe. She also offers an original and provocative thesis, that ideal characteristics of the New Soviet Man and the New Soviet Woman were based in part on Soviet perceptions of Americanism.

Given that a number of scholars have previously written about the impact of American culture during the NEP—including Kendall Bailes, Alan Ball, Jeffrey Brooks, and this reviewer—one might assume that there would be little original in the early chapters. Although Levitina uses this prior research as a basis for her project, she goes much deeper into the literary and cinematic influences on Russian Americanism than any of her predecessors. Particularly impressive is her knowledge of the American films and film stars that NEP audiences loved, moving beyond notables like Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., and Mary Pickford, to studies of other influential American stars, such as Richard Barthelmess, Priscilla Dean, Cleo Madison, and Pearl White. Levitina demonstrates that Soviet critics, spectators, and directors found these actors compelling not only because of the characters they played, but also for their public personas that radiated energy, enthusiasm, competence, and fitness. There are some surprises in Levitina's analysis, especially about the function of these early American film actresses in modeling modern behavior for the emerging image of the New Soviet Woman, the subject of the third chapter. For example, although I was already familiar with the adventure heroines of American silent cinema, I have never thought of Mary Pickford's "girlish" roles as having anything to contribute to evolving ideals of the modern American woman, her real life as a powerful businesswoman notwithstanding. Levitina managed to convince me, however, that even as Judy in *Daddy-Long-Legs* (1919), Pickford personified the underclass grit and pluck beloved by Soviet audiences and officialdom alike during the NEP.

After the Cultural Revolution, open embrace of cultural Americanism was much more difficult, but not impossible. Here the foundation has been laid by the previous work of Richard Taylor, Maia, Turovskaia, and Rimgaila Salys on 1930s cinema, but early Stalinist cinema is not nearly so well known to most readers of this journal as NEP cinema, apart from the oft-researched Grigorii Aleksandrov and Ivan Pyr'ev, who directed some of the most popular films of the decade. In her final two chapters, therefore, Levitina arguably makes her most original and provocative conclusions. Based on her astute interpretations of Aleksandrov's and Pyr'ev's films, she convincingly make the case that the New Soviet Woman of the 1930s drew heavily from the stock characteristics of major American actresses, disagreeing, for example, with Oksana Bulgakova's assertion that Liubov' Orlova was merely "Soviet cinema's direct response to Pickford" (151). For Levitina, Orlova was the Soviet Pickford: girlish, pretty but not sexual, yet able to stand up for herself. Likewise, Marina Ladygina was the Soviet Pearl White: athletic, trouser-wearing, and to some extent, androgynous.

Finally, Levitina offers a new interpretation of the origins of the New Soviet Man, which differs from Lilya Kaganovsky's emphasis on the martyr hero, by focusing on the Soviet version of Fairbanks, the "male hero with the ever-present smile" (188). Here, she examines the screen personas of the male counterparts to Orlova and Ladygina, especially Sergei Stoliarov and Nikolai Kriuchkov. Both men were good-looking, strong and athletic, and it seemed, brimming with a natural optimism and energy. She also analyzes 1930s films such as Aleksandr Macheret's *Deeds and People* and *The Private Life of Piotr Vinogradov*, in which the heroes seem to be consciously emulating American characteristics like efficiency, rationalism, and mastery of technology.

I have only been able to gloss the many riches to be found in *Russian Americans in Soviet Film* in the space allowed. The book is so informative, engaging, and accessible that it deserves a readership that extends beyond the relatively small circle of

Soviet cinephiles to scholars and students of Soviet culture, Russian-American relations, gender studies, and American silent film. Highly recommended.

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Religion in Secular Archives: Soviet Atheism and Historical Knowledge. By Sonja Luehrmann. The Oxford Series on History and Archives. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. xii, 240 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$74.00, hard bound.

Sonja Luehrmann, associate professor of anthropology at Simon Fraser University, has written a valuable and insightful book on Soviet religiosity, atheism, and cultural mores by studying how Soviet atheists described, interacted with, and archived materials and testimonials related to religious believers in the Soviet Union from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s. This is a book about archives—how they are organized, who assembles them, the bias of those who classify them, and the way organization is intended to shape the views of researchers. The book investigates the content and the filing system of atheist archives in Moscow, the Volga region, and, in an attempt to present a counter archive, the Keston archive, which was organized by religious believers under the direction of Rev. Canon Michael Bourdeuax in Keston village outside of London to document Soviet persecution of religion and the survival of religious belief and which is now located at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

The author uses the action of archival organization to reveal the perspective of the organizer. She shows that there is an agenda, perhaps at times unconscious, in looking at facts and that that context is vital to finding the truth regarding the status of religion and atheism in Soviet society. She confronts the challenge of Soviet observers who desired to describe objectively and accurately the fact of religious belief, but who could not overcome the fact that they harbored a viewpoint that was at odds with the perspective of the subject of study and, thus, were determined to present the facts in an ideologically acceptable form. For example, she demonstrates that Council of Religious Affairs material in Moscow was organized by archivists who wrote down and organized quotations from believers, but then put their own evaluative judgment on the quotes and the believers, inevitably casting religious belief as backward and believers as misfits and parasites. Soviet scholars of atheism and official ideology aimed to prove that religion was disappearing and, thereby, provide evidence that the Soviet system was a maturing socialist state and that they were doing their jobs. Luehrmann reveals, with a wonderful touch of irony, that these same scholars were just as interested in showing that religious phenomena still persisted and, thus, that more work needed to be done, which then qualified them for more resources and established their place in the bureaucratic pecking order.

Her treatment of the Keston archivists is similarly sardonic. She points out that Keston archival materials were organized by archivists who were skeptical of Soviet documents proving religion was declining and suggests that Keston and its allies may have made religious rebirth in the USSR more meaningful than it actually was. She argues that the Keston Institute's materials, particularly its collection of *samizdat* documents, were a counter-archive that aimed to push a reality that it wanted but which may or may not have been real or which, at least, could not be supported by evidence to prove that it was real. The case of religious revival was central to Keston's mission. In the author's opinion, its archivists tried to prove over and over again that religion and its spirit were alive and thriving despite the official efforts to undermine and destroy religious belief. Here, the author is not as convincing. Her evaluation