occupation of Königsberg by Russia in the context of a pan-European war constitute colonialism and make Kant a colonial intellectual? The fundamental question, however, that remains unanswered is that of the boundary between Russia itself and the Russian empire. Russia might have colonized itself, but it also colonized many others. What constitutes the boundary between these two zones of empire? The question has real political implications for many people today, mainly those who live along Russia's edges, and is thus of analytical import. The widely used nineteenth-century term *vnutrenniaia Rossiia* (inner Russia) implied that such a distinction was in fact made in the empire itself. The notion of a country colonizing itself naturalizes conquest and elides the boundary between internal and external colonization, between the Russian empire and Russia itself. It can make conquest and violence disappear from view and turn Poland, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Transoxiana, and Alaska all into "Russia," while making Russians (as in peasants) the biggest victims of the empire.

In Russia today, such formulations buttress a particular national memory that is happy with the idea of an imperial past, but not with that of conquest, violence, and the possession of colonies. Annexation (*prisoedinenie*) continues to outflank conquest (*zavoevanie*) as the preferred mode of thinking about the imperial legacy. A key goal of postcolonial critique in such a situation would be to destabilize received wisdom, to question, in this case, the ideological work being done by the notion of internal colonialism. Etkind ponders the question of the boundary between internal and external colonization but contents himself largely with explicating Kliuchevskii's position rather than deconstructing it. He notes that the theorists of self-colonization were not anti-imperialists in any way, and, although they might have been prone to "political despair" about Russia's future, their attitude to colonization differed markedly from "the strongly ideological, postcolonial approach" (70) of the present. On the one hand, it is hardly surprising that the concerns of nineteenth-century imperial historians would differ from those of early twenty-first-century critical theory. On the other hand, to dismiss postcolonial approaches to colonization and colonialism simply as "strongly ideological" is to undermine the whole purpose of writing a book confronting Russia with postcolonial theory and vice versa.

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Architecture of Oblivion: Ruins and Historical Consciousness in Modern Russia. By Andreas Schönle. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011. xii, 283 pp. Notes. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. $45.00, hard bound.

This excellent study is the most recent installment of Andreas Schönle's multistage megaproject, which began with a 2005 "Ruins of Modernity" conference at the University of Michigan, resulting in an edited cluster of articles in *Slavic Review* (65, no. 4, Winter 2006) and a superb coedited volume (*Ruins of Modernity* with Julia Hell, 2010). In its unfolding, Schönle's "Ruins of Modernity" project provides an exemplary model for new scholarship in Russian cultural studies—sustained exploration of a rich topic that stimulates both individual and collaborative contributions, also drawing in accomplished participants from outside our field.

Under Schönle's sure guidance, ruins prove a fascinating object of inquiry as "palimpsests of construction, use, and decay" (*Slavic Review,* 649). Although ruins give the past a "palpable density," the ruin is "a cultural construct more than a

physical object," a "work in progress" rather than a finished result (*Architecture of Oblivion,* 8). Ancient ruins are modernity's creation, physical artifacts in dialogue with Enlightenment ideologies of progress and Romantic meditations on history. Modern ruins are the product of large-scale wars and catastrophes, industrial decline, and globalizing patterns of life.

Conveying "an ambivalent sense of time," ruins are valuable to us in their "suggestive, unstable semantic potential" as objects of contemplation in a secular world, fostering "intensive compensatory discursive activity." More broadly, ruins are a "trope for modernity's self-awareness" (*Ruins of Modernity,* 5–6), and ruin-gazing punctuates modern western philosophical thought. Schönle identifies several historical perspectives on ruins: providentialist means of inciting compassion and promoting social cohesion (Edmund Burke), site of freedom from social norms and practices (Denis Diderot), reconciliation with nature (Georg Simmel), affirmation of modernity at the expense of the past (G. W. F. Hegel, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno), and emblem of on-going historical decay (Walter Benjamin).

Schönle finds ruins most valuable in their "heteronomic force" and "capaciousness" (28), as diversely "instrumentalized and allegorized" (17). Ruins may be preserved by a modern state as sites of commemoration or tourist destinations, asserting historical continuity in the present. In contrast, ruins can offer a challenge to the teleology of historical progress, as a locus of imaginary resistance to official ideology. Alternatively, ruins might suggest a transcendence of the present *in* the present, creating a timeless space for reflection. Ruins may evoke "divergent memories," provoking "democratic debate" vital to a civil society "properly cognizant of its own historicity" (*Ruins of Modernity,* 10).

The monograph terms itself "the first interdisciplinary study of Russia's response to ruins," proposing a new way to think about "striking gaps and discontinuities in Russia's historical consciousness" (6) and "Russia's complex and ambivalent attitudes toward modernity" (24). For Schönle, the Russian ruin is "a foreign body of sorts, stylistically, existentially, but also politically" (28), manifesting as a western cultural import or along an invading army's path of destruction. Many ruins in Russia are the result of self-inflicted wounds. Schönle's study illustrates "key moments in Russia's response to the decay and destruction of its built heritage" (25), among them 1812, the Bolshevik Revolution and its aftermath, the Great Patriotic War, and post-Soviet urban reconstruction, as experienced in Moscow and St. Petersburg/Petrograd/Leningrad.

Much of Schönle's study treats the ruin-gazing of the Russian intellectual and artistic elite, for whom ruins have diversely represented a "trope of freedom" (28). Lev Tolstoi imagined the smoldering remains of 1812 Moscow as "a heterotopia . . . an alternative to a constituted social order" (69) and "a plea for lived heterogeneity" (70). The World of Art group viewed ruins as "multiple, incongruent, and humorous interpenetrations of the past and the present" (26), whereas the modernist avant-garde embraced ruinous destruction as a new beginning. Viktor Shklovskii, Vladislav Khodasevich, Mstislav Dobuzhinskii, Anna Ostroumova-Lebedeva, and Pavel Shillingovskii all found inspiration in postrevolutionary Petrograd's physical decline, finding new expressions of "de-familiarization, openness, and freedom" (26). Artists experiencing the Leningrad Blockade recorded their "aesthetic struggle for survival" (152), despite state pressures to suppress a full account of the siege. Joseph Brodsky invoked physical ruins in his poetry in a "surrender to the immensity of time" (193). "Paper architects" Alexander Brodsky, Ilya Utkin, and Mikhail Filippov rendered ruins in spiritualized artistic forms that countered drab late-Soviet reality.

Schönle's provocative conclusion explores post-Soviet Moscow of the early twenty-first century, when former Mayor Iurii Luzhkov's project to create an "aes-

thetically polished, slightly retro-looking, financially profitable urban landscape" replaced authentic historic structures with "a packaged, glossed-over simulacrum" (224). Schönle extends traditional scholarship here, investigating contemporary topics by partnering with journalists and present-day architectural preservation specialists.

Schönle's study covers a wide swath of modern Russian cultural history but passes over the second half of the nineteenth century. He explains this decision in a footnote to the introduction: "This . . . period represents a certain anomaly . . . [I]n the context of rising nationalism, the interest in (and respect for) ruins made palpable inroads, only to fall prey to the subsequent revolutionary upheavals. But this is also a time of transition. The nostalgic sense that the past is slipping away . . . seamlessly moves into the modernist aestheticization of history, while industrialization and urbanization prompt an interest in all things peripheral" (235). This tension between the accelerating pace of change and the mournful sense of the past disappearing into history is the selfsame sensibility that brought the "ruins of modernity" into existence. True, the second half of the nineteenth century did not see a major historical cataclysm on the order of 1812 or the 1917 Revolution, but Schönle could have made more of this no less fissured Russian cultural moment. Nineteenth-century chronicler Mikhail Pyliaev certainly saw the period in these terms, describing the ruined remnants of earlier imperial periods in his *Zabytoe proshloe okrestnostei Peterburga* (1889). And as Schönle himself suggests, the disruption of traditional rural community life in the post-Emancipation era produced diverse varieties of local ruins, including but not limited to deteriorating country estates.

The many strengths of Schönle's study include its impressive historical sweep, theoretic acuity, and exploration of heterogeneous verbal and visual texts through a broad range of Russian sources. Conceptually, Schönle might have worked out a more rigorous distinction between self-inflicted and other-inflicted Russian ruins, as well as between ruins produced by catastrophic events (natural or man-made) versus ruins that reflect on-going neglect and decay. Apart from a lucid historical overview in the introduction, Schönle does not give much attention to the significant damage inflicted on the imperial built heritage during the revolutionary period, the 1930s, or the 1960s, nor does he explore the landscape of ruins across the Soviet Union in the wake of the Great Patriotic War. Derelict imperial-era buildings and their adaptive reuse during Soviet times, as well as the post-Soviet ruins of camps, sanatoria, and factories, also afford endless grist for Schönle's mill. And Schönle might have ventured further afield, beyond Moscow and St. Petersburg, or included voices not representing either the intellectual elite or the state. But Schönle's study cannot include everything, and it already covers a great deal.

Schönle's ambitious study makes a significant contribution to the study of Russian cultural modernity, providing a complex and deeply absorbing picture of Russian ruinology. For Schönle, ruins hold a genuine imperative in the present: "To inhabit the ruins is to reconcile oneself with the present's heterogeneity, to recognize its rich texture." Schönle's cautionary final observation refers to the attendant dangers of failing to ruin-gaze: "Ultimately, what has been lost in Russia is Diderot's sense of the emancipatory potential of ruins, of the way they focus our minds on the openness of the present, of their power to release unpremeditated associations and enable us to elude the encroachments of the state and society" (230). Schönle's study reminds us that ruins produce aesthetic pleasure, but the imaginative energies they release also carry a powerful ethical charge.

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