

family, and, ultimately, “question the notion of maternity as a redemptive force” (134).

*Women with a Thirst for Destruction* won the Association of Women in Slavic Studies Book Prize for Best Book in Slavic/East European/Eurasian Women’s Studies in 2014. The image of the mother is important for Russian culture, but, as Kaminer deftly demonstrates in her first monograph, its symbolism impacts not just literary studies, but also has wide-reaching resonance politically, economically, and socially. Similarly, Kaminer’s study adds a new dimension to European motherhood studies, which historically have largely focused on Western European traditions. This book will be of value to those who are interested in Russian literature, but also family studies, the role of women in society, childhood studies, or the historical transformation of cultural myths.

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Stephen Amico, *Roll Over, Tchaikovsky! Russian Popular Music and Post-Soviet Homosexuality*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2014. 336 pp.

The apparent paradox at the centre of *Roll Over, Tchaikovsky!* would be perceptible not just to fans of Russian popular music or specialists in post-Soviet cultural studies but even, through Russian participation in the Eurovision Song Contest, to curious television viewers across Europe and beyond: why, when state and Church homophobia has depicted sexual diversity in general and male homosexuality in particular as a Westernizing moral threat to the values and demographic power of the Russian nation, does Russian pop music contain what Stephen Amico and his gay research participants easily read as “so many embodied examples of a ‘netraditsionnaia seksual’naia orientatsiia” (66) or “non-traditional sexual orientation” among its male stars? Amico’s fieldwork in Moscow and St Petersburg between 2003 and 2005, and his observation of Russian popular culture and gay media into 2011

(when the main part of the book concludes), provide him with the empirical material to answer this question through a theoretical lens which grounds its intervention into post-Soviet sexualities debates in the phenomenology of the socially situated, sonically responsive and sexual body.

The contrast between the silencing of public LGBT protest in Russian cities and the legible, audible homosexuality and homoeroticism that Amico argues can be perceived from the bodies and voices of many Russian stars is established in the introduction, which begins with the banning of Moscow Pride in 2006, and frames the book, with a new epilogue (written after the death of the sexologist Igor' Kon in 2012 and the passing of Russia's federal "anti-homopropaganda" law in 2013) having to reassess whether the arguments originally offered as a conclusion can still hold. Amico engages with a steadily growing literature about Soviet and post-Soviet sexualities and bodily cultures (including the work of Brian James Baer, Dan Healey and Laurie Essig), as well as Dennis Altman's critical perspectives on the "internationalization" (9) of gay identities. At the same time, he aims to theorize how music—as a somatic rather than cognitive phenomenon, and one that (significantly for Amico) penetrates the ear—differs fundamentally from texts, ideologies and other sources that scholars charting the evolution of sexual subjectivities might use.

This is a book about the careful negotiations involved in the making of post-Soviet Russian pop songs and stars—with Boris Moiseev, Valerii Leont'ev, Andrii Danylko (the Ukrainian performer behind the character of Verka Serdiuchka), Dima Bilan, Hi-Fi and Smash!! (a post-Soviet Wham! in which Russia's latest Eurovision representative, Sergei Lazarev, began his career) chief among its constellation—but also about gay men's own subject-making. Amico's tracing of the materiality and temporality of "gay social space" (138) in mid-2000s Moscow and St Petersburg will invite comparisons to Francesca Stella's recent *Lesbian Lives in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia* (2015), though remains within the larger metropolitan centers. Like other scholars of post-Soviet sexualities, Amico also faces the question of whether and how to compare Russian sexualities against "the West"—a debate that has grown

ever more complex since it took form in the 1990s because of the very pace with which identity terms and claims in Russia might have been changing since. Amico sees Russian gay men and women as caught between a need to disavow the Soviet “pathologization and criminalization of homosexuality” and an ambivalence towards the “hegemonic Western gay (political) identity” that Western popular culture, as well as international LGBT rights campaigns, appear to offer them (184). Russian popular music, its sound and style testifying to “[t]he complexity of the intersections of the Russian and the Western” (199), here binds together gay men’s material and virtual social spaces as a site of “embodied *intersubjectivity*” (163, emphasis original), where men can be conscious of occupying the same space as other men who move in the same way, and where the very repetitiveness of Russian pop formulas grounds listeners in a “somatic memory” (23) where men can exist as simultaneously Russian and gay.

To “roll over” Tchaikovsky, we learn in the conclusion, would imply replacing the figure of the stigmatized homosexual man who sublimates his doomed desire into spirituality and art (a trope often applied to Tchaikovsky) with a “lively, sexual” (187) understanding of homosexual subjectivity and embodiment. The tension between depth and breadth once one begins acknowledging “the diversity of models of homosexual desire” (7) (though what of bisexual desire?) means that this is a study of one gender, one identity, and one pair of metropolitan settings rather than a broader, relational account of post-Soviet sexualities and their musical cultures. Its emphasis on the somatic and affective dimensions that set music apart from other cultural forms is valuable to researchers of popular culture and sexual politics beyond as well as within the post-Soviet space, though presents the text with its own paradox of form: how to evoke the sonic and sexual sensations of corporeality while densely and precisely conveying the book’s layers of phenomenological thought? *Roll Over, Tchaikovsky* might not offer non-specialists an easy answer to the paradox of visibility with which the book starts and ends, but nevertheless offers a model for understanding the production of post-Soviet sexual subjectivities in the moment before the sharpening of state homophobia and the reshaping of Russian

and Ukrainian musical identities after 2014 brought about yet another revision in the meaning of “the post-Soviet” itself.

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Irina Mukhina, *Women and the Birth of Russian Capitalism: A History of Shuttle Trade*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014. 224 pp.

*Women and the Birth of Russian Capitalism: A History of Shuttle Trade* offers a rare glimpse into a unique moment in the history of the transition from communism to capitalism by focusing on the evolution of female shuttle traders and the significant role they played in the formation of contemporary Russia. Shuttle traders are individuals who traveled abroad during the transition period and brought back bags of consumer goods for resale in local markets (4). Due to import restrictions, the traders were limited to the amount of goods they could wear and/or carry which is why monuments around Russia erected to the largely female based labor force depict women carrying heavy suitcases and wearing heavy clothing. Irina Mukhina’s slender volume uncovers the impact of this trade during the transition period, an influence unbeknown to most due to the semi-legal and black-market driven labor practices and the commodities it provided consumers.

While the book focuses mostly on trade in and out of Russia, many of the trading themes in the book were common across the entire post-Soviet region as economies expanded due to the lifting of visa and trade restrictions in the late 1980s. Mukhina divides the shuttle trade into three distinct waves with different characteristics and overarching goals. Push and pull factors of this temporary form of migration are prevalent during every time period pushing people towards this semi-legal industry and pulling them abroad to purchase goods. The first period from 1987–88 included a small number of traders who traveled abroad before it was legal and were able to do so because of their job or privileged status in the communist party. Since hard currency was difficult to obtain, this