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Eventually he completely withdraws from literature to politics, and in the process ‘kills’ his exilic protagonist Eddie and similar quasi-autobiographical characters whose transgressive behaviour could compromise ‘The Leader’ in the eyes of his young followers.

The study posits the question whether the writings of return reflect the authors’ nostalgia, rootedness, and their articulation of national identity. Returning in the 1990s, the authors had to face a drastically changed culturescape: no censorship, democracy, and at the same time economic crisis, rising nationalism, nostalgia for the Soviet Union, and the waning authority of literature as social force. These changes could not but influence their creative activities and decisions. Wakamiya discerns nostalgia in Aksyonov’s *Moscow Saga* and *Moskva-Kva-Kva*—nostalgia not for Stalin and Stalinism but for the vitality of that era. Producing *Moscow Saga* and Solzhenitsyn’s *First Circle* as TV mini-series successfully drew the audience’s attention to the respective novels.

Locating Exiled Writers in Contemporary Russian Literature is informed by current critical discussions of writings of exile and diaspora, nostalgia, travel, autobiographism, and historiography. The dense prose of this little book—only 154 pages of text—manages to address numerous issues of creativity, interaction between the author, the narrative, and the reader, the agency of the author, and the structuring limitations forced upon him by the cultural and political environment. This book should become essential reading both for experts in contemporary Russian literature and for a wider audience—scholars working with writings of exile and return.

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Directory of World Cinema: Russia. Ed. by BIRGIT BEUMERS. Bristol: Intellect. 2011. 333 pp. £15.94. ISBN 978-1-84150-372-1.

This volume, dedicated to the national cinema of Russia, is a welcome addition to the *Directory of World Cinema*, a project intended not only to provide a review of cinema for ‘university students of film and their professors/lecturers’, but also ‘to play a part in moving intelligent, scholarly criticism beyond the academy’ (<http://worldcinemadirectory.co.uk> [accessed 14 May 2012]). In its entirety the *Directory* comprises a pre-print online database for the collection of and free access to content, a series of printed volumes designed to provide culturally representative insights into national and regional cinemas, and e-book versions of the printed materials. While publisher Intellect hopes that the online database will be kept up to date by the *Directory*’s users, the printed and electronic books will be peer-reviewed, published, and then remain static as an archive.

Like other volumes in the series, *Directory of World Cinema: Russia* is formatted as follows: introductory articles, including features on the ‘Film of the Year’ and key directors; film reviews and case studies grouped by genre; lists of recommended reading and online resources; a ‘test your knowledge’ quiz; and notes on the volume’s contributors. Each section of film reviews begins with an essay outlining the

origins of the genre in question and tracing its subsequent development, which is then followed by a series of critiques of individual titles deemed representative of that genre. The critiques, which consist of synopses, analyses, and full production credits, are organized chronologically within each section and, when read in conjunction with the section's introductory essay, paint an increasingly detailed picture of a genre's evolution in Soviet and Russian film history from the pre-revolutionary era (where applicable) to the present day.

At the volume's outset editor Birgit Beumers highlights the fact that approaching the diverse manifestations of a national cinema from a genre-oriented perspective presents a particular challenge in the Russo-Soviet example, since most Soviet products distributed in the West were *auteur* works that defied clear genre definitions (p. 6). Dawn Seckler proceeds to elaborate the point, stating that genre cinema 'traditionally has a bad reputation among Russo-Soviet filmmakers', being perceived as early as the 1920s as a low-brow, commercial form of mass entertainment that was 'not simply distinct from *auteur* cinema [. . .], but antithetical to it' (p. 28). The editorial decision to employ a genre-based structure, then, means that a significant number of *auteur* films familiar to the volume's intended English-language readership have been excluded from the collection precisely because they do not conform to the patterns of any specific genre category. While the overarching aim to foreground lesser-known productions is commendable, the missed opportunity to reappraise *auteurist* works by film-makers such as Sergei Paradzhanov, Kira Muratova, and Andrei Tarkovskii, when certain genre films such as *Chapaev* (1934) and *New Gulliver* (1935) receive multiple critical treatments, is somewhat frustrating.

The volume's division into sections organized by genre does, however, present an account of Soviet and Russian cinema that is coherent and easy to follow. Preliminary articles situate each genre against its social, cultural, and industrial background, and the numerous film reviews, read together, prove an effective medium through which to investigate the exchanges that occurred between film practitioners, their works, and the categories into which these works eventually fell. Moreover, the volume's contributors appear unconstrained by its genre-based methodology. Vlad Strukov, to note just one example, pushes the boundaries of the 'Red Action/Western' genre to which blockbusters *Night Watch* (2004) and *Day Watch* (2005) have been assigned by concluding that the former boasts a narrative 'presented through elements of fantasy, horror and science fiction' (p. 238) and that the latter is 'an extraordinary hybrid of Christmas fairy tale, national epos, horror film, comedy and drama' (p. 241).

While all contributors provide remarkably comprehensive insights into (often problematical) periods, figures, and films in a very small space, certain key concepts (such as Artavazd Peleshian's 'distance montage') and theoretical debates (including those between montage director-theorists in the 1920s) are never fully explained. References to secondary materials are not cited, even though quotation marks are furnished throughout, and an overall uniformity of presentation is not maintained. Even the first two films listed in the volume's opening genre section

reveal inconsistencies when recording production details: the language of *Stenka Razin* (1908) is listed as 'Russian (intertitles)' (p. 56), whereas that of *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) is simply 'silent' (p. 57).

Despite such shortcomings, the volume succeeds in drawing together a range of critiques that reflect a variety of interests and presenting them in the context of political and cultural developments, thereby offering a kaleidoscopic insight into Soviet and Russian cinema both past and present. Peppered with high-quality film stills and questions to consider while viewing, *Directory of World Cinema: Russia* encourages its reader to hunt out lesser-known films and to revisit his/her favourites. As such, the volume would greatly benefit from the inclusion of both an index and a section detailing the availability of films outside Russia, or highlighting those that are limited to Russian-language editions.

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