

However, one could ask: are these contemporary Russian art forms so different from those of other times or places? The author himself points out that classical Russian literature was already “a treasure house of the uncanny” (p. 222) such as Aleksandr Pushkin’s Bronze Horseman chasing poor Evgenii, or his Stone Guest; Mikhail Lermontov’s Demon; Nikolai Gogol’s Vii; A. K. Tolstoi’s Vampire; and a panoply of Russian symbolists’ beasts. Or, have a look at Slavic folklore. Related to the human condition, the dead haunting the living is a theme of all times and places, although terrible events, of course, can add to it. Counterculture movements of people of a certain age do not need a history of Gulags and terror to be susceptible to this challenging of death. The “Necrorealists,” Leningrad artists of the late 1970s and one of the examples mentioned by Etkind, might as well be an expression of such extremism; neither is an element of kitsch to be ruled out.

An exercise in cultural studies, *Warped Mourning* displays great erudition by a highly literate author as well as an insider. Born two years after Stalin’s death, he ranks himself in the “ex-Soviet intelligentsia.” His grandfather was arrested as a “Nepman” under Stalin and after a couple of months in prison was told that he was to be executed. Liberated instead, he never returned to his former self. He died during the Siege of Leningrad. The dissident essayist Efim Etkind was the author’s uncle.

A reader at home in the subject will find much of interest in the book, particularly the chapter “Writing History After Jail,” which looks at scholars like Dmitrii Likhachev, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Lev Gumilev; the passages on Vladimir Vysotskii singing Gulag songs, or the sections devoted to Andrei Siniavskii and Iulii Daniel. In classifying the victims, the author makes an instructive difference between the *dokhodiagi*, the “goners” or “soon-to-be dead,” described by Varlam Shalamov in his *Kolyma Tales*, who suffered without any purpose, and the survivors, like Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s Ivan Denisovich, who maintained some kind of goal to their life, be it returning to their relatives and friends or bearing witness.

But I would not recommend the book to a student trying to find his way in the subject matter. The points Etkind wants to make are advanced in a quite complicated style. One has to be schooled in order to understand sentences like this one: “Aleksi’s memory breaks out of the cinematic duality of the visual and the acoustic and absorbs another sensory domain that is unusual for film: the olfactory” (p. 168). Or: “a monument creates a mystical zone in which time stops its flow, as in a snapshot, and space is transfigured from its neutral, dispersed condition into one that radially focuses on the monument” (p. 180). Or, to give one last example: “Explicating the spirit of postrevolutionary melancholia, Derrida substitutes ‘ontology,’ a central term of traditional philosophy, with ‘hauntology,’ a science of specters and an art of talking to them” (p. 199). By the way, Jacques Derrida’s point that Nazi and Soviet totalitarianisms were “equally hostile to the specter and spirit of Communism” and that this fear is “key to explaining the outbreaks of terror in both cases” (pp. 200–201), seems to darken rather than illuminate our understanding of the topic.

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Steven Harris. *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press and Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013. xxii, 394 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$60.00, cloth.

Stephen Harris’s *Communism on Tomorrow Street* is a history of accommodation under Khrushchev. Stalin’s Soviet Union had been a barracks society, marked by massive

violence and material sacrifice for most. In contrast, Khrushchev's regime attempted to provide a modicum of material comfort to Soviet citizens through a mass housing campaign. Its goal to provide Soviet citizens with a single-family apartment was emblematic of the changing relationship of state and society. Eschewing many of the traditional narratives of the Thaw, Harris shows how mass housing contributed to the experience of daily life under Khrushchev.

The first two chapters of *Communism on Tomorrow Street* place Khrushchev-era housing in its Soviet and European intellectual context. Harris argues that Soviet ideas about housing developed from broader European discussions of a rationally determined minimal living space and the desirability of single-family housing. Soviet idealists of the revolution and 1920s sought rational distribution norms but also supported communal housing as a means of creating a revolutionary society. However, in Stalin's 1930s the paradigm shifted to favour single-family homes, although the beneficiaries of this shift were primarily Soviet elites. Khrushchev's housing campaign confirmed the single-family apartment's desirability by attempting to extend the privilege of separate housing to the broader population. However, space distribution norms retained their currency, forcing architects under Khrushchev to design single-family apartments with less living and auxiliary space.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine the distribution of housing in its political and social context. Harris argues that central leaders aimed to centralize authority in housing and base its distribution on "objective measures" of need. (It should be noted that these measures often seemed less than objective and perhaps could have been analyzed more deeply to unpack the goals of central leaders.) However, using the case of Leningrad, Harris asserts that local politicians continued to favour privileged social groups with housing. Particularly fascinating is how would-be housing recipients positioned themselves, often successfully, as native Leningraders and siege survivors, but rehabilitated Gulag returnees were disadvantaged in their search for new apartments. Chapter 4 examines the "people's construction" campaign that began in 1955 when factory workers formed housing collectives to build their own apartment complexes. For the next half decade, these structures accounted for roughly ten percent of housing constructed annually. Despite the seeming success of this program, it lost official support in 1959, the victim of the entrenched elites surrounding Khrushchev. Defending the privileges of the white-collar supporters who were left out of worker-dominated "people's construction," the fall of the program foreshadowed motivations of the coup of party leaders against Khrushchev in 1964.

The final three chapters present a rich picture of everyday life and its discontents in the era of mass housing. Although the construction of mass housing was initiated in the party leadership, it was shaped by the ordinary people who built their lives in new apartments. As they moved into new buildings—often while still under construction—residents made their own environments, filling in the gaps where state control was absent with neighbourhood social organizations. Chapters 6 and 7 examine the regime's portrayal of the separate housing lifestyle and the complaints that new residents lodged when these portrayals did not meet the realities or desires of citizens. Countering the notion that these grievances were nascent anti-regime protests, Harris asserts that they represented the regime's sturdiness—the engagement of society with the state and vice versa.

From the outset, Harris strives to show the everyday experience of ordinary people in the Thaw through housing. In the search for the everyday in Khrushchev's Soviet Union, the author intentionally marginalizes the extraordinary as a corrective to a literature on

society in the Thaw that he argues has emphasized popular reaction to major political developments. Yet by engaging the narratives of the Thaw more actively (if only to dismiss them as less important to ordinary citizens than their living situation), the book might have made clearer the significance of mass housing for our understanding of the Khrushchev era. Additionally, although the work is about the Soviet regime's attempts to put people in new housing, the book itself often seems under-populated. People appear in brief sketches or as faceless residents to illustrate points but few provide compelling narratives, making the book a dense read at times.

However, the variety of perspectives is also a strength of *Communism on Tomorrow Street* and the research in it is quite extensive. Harris provides fascinating new information about how state and society tried to build the daily lives of citizens in the post-war period.

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Robert Hornsby. *Protest, Reform and Repression in Khrushchev's Soviet Union*. New Studies in European History. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. x, 313 pp. Bibliography. Index. \$103.95, cloth.

Rejecting the traditional dichotomy between “belief” and “non-belief,” Robert Hornsby explores Khrushchev-era “political dissent,” behaviours that, although the authorities labelled them “anti-Soviet,” often arose from citizens’ devotion to socialist ideals. Setting aside forms of dissent based on nationalist or religious sentiments, Hornsby concentrates on political dissent, a narrower category elastic enough to encompass distinct worker and intelligentsia groups and their characteristic activities. Juxtaposed in each section and chapter, these two classes of protest introduce a certain tension into the analysis. On one hand, workers and other rank-and-file citizens “lashed out” to voice discontent with material conditions or official abuses, causing an “outburst.” On the other hand, diminutive intelligentsia circles of idealistic socialists gathered to discuss society or, if oriented to action, to scatter leaflets in the hundreds or even thousands extolling Leninist values and preaching revolutionary struggle against the dictatorship of the bureaucracy.

The year 1958 divides the book’s two chronological periods. In each half, Hornsby outlines the authorities’ approach to suppressing dissent distinctive to each five-year period. The years from March 1953 to June 1958 brought the basic tenets of Stalin’s terror state into question, as the Soviet leadership dismantled the inefficient, apparently random terror apparatus. The process of unravelling the established norms of acceptable discourse and behaviour peaked in the aftermath of Khrushchev’s Secret Speech, which revealed lurid details about Stalin’s “cult of personality” and further blurred the boundaries between acceptable Soviet and anti-Soviet activities. This culminated when events in Hungary in the summer and fall of 1956 sparked official fears of similar convulsions in the USSR. The techniques they used, which Hornsby terms “putting out fires,” aimed to manage non-conformist behaviour as it became visible (p. 54). Arrests for anti-Soviet activity reached their post-Stalin peak in number and in the severity of the resulting sentences in 1956 and 1957. Although some were truly hostile, many citizens and party members earnestly spoke out in support of Soviet ideals, unknowingly transgressing the now obscured borders surrounding permitted expression.

Yet these events also proved a turning point in the fight against dissent, inaugurating the second period. Tellingly, no comparable spike in arrests or prosecutions followed the public denunciations of Stalin at the Twenty-Second Party Congress in 1961 because the