

Dante exposed contemporary and historical instances of violence to offer “a utopian theology of love on which to build civic unity.” **Summing Up: ★★** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.—*D. Pesta, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh*

Slavic

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Redefining Russian literary diaspora: 1920–2020, ed. by Maria Rubins. UCL Press, 2021. 278p index ISBN 9781787359437 cloth, \$75.00; ISBN 9781787359420 pbk, \$45.00; ISBN 9781787359413 ebook, open access

In this collection, Rubins (Russian and comparative literature, Univ. College London, UK) puts together a thought-provoking discussion of the links between diaspora and writing, a leading topic in Russian literary studies in the West. Drawing on postcolonial studies and hybridity, Rubins theorizes in the introduction how being apart from one’s home country and culture has shaped Russian literature over the past 100 years. A number of prominent specialists contribute analyses of prose and poetry. David Bethea connects Vladimir Nabokov and geneticist Theodosius Dobzhansky to evolution, and Kevin Platt compares famous Russian-Israeli novelist Dina Rubina with the poet Shamsad Abdullaev from Uzbekistan. Mark Lipovetsky, analyzing the brutal Siege of Leningrad, discusses how its image differs within diaspora writing. In his afterword, Galin Tihanov explores the limits of diaspora as a concept, a discussion that works well with Rubins’s conclusion to the volume. Given the controversies over national identity in the Putin era and increasingly diversified Russian communities abroad, this collection of essays is a timely, engaging publication. **Summing Up: ★★** Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty.—*B. M. Sutcliffe, Miami University*

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Solzhenitsyn, Aleksander Isaevich. **March 1917: the red wheel, node III (8 March–31 March), book 3**, tr. by Marian Schwartz. Notre Dame, 2021. 684p index ISBN 9780268201708 cloth, \$42.00; ISBN 9780268201692 ebook, \$33.99

This is the third book (of four) of *March 1917*, a “node” of Solzhenitsyn’s historical epic *The Red Wheel*. (Books 1 and 2, CH, May’18, 55–3149; CH, May’20, 57–2886). Book 3 takes place between March 16 and 22, at the height of the revolution. Solzhenitsyn’s prose (and Marian Schwartz’s heroic translation) offers readers a literary experience of these transformational days and unfolding events: Tsar Nicholas II’s forced abdication of the Russian throne; the house arrest of the royal family; the anticipation and uncertainty in factories and regiments; and the installation of the provisional government, including its recognition by the US at the end of the present installment. The translation remains lively and fresh—no small feat, given the sheer size of the novel, the pace at which it shifts among perspectives, and the depth of detail. The structure, served by a helpful table of contents, allows readers to dip in and out, immersing themselves in different narratives at their own pace. Especially welcome is Solzhenitsyn’s inclusion of authentic materials he collected during extensive research for the novel in Russian state and personal archives, administrative records, and so on and in the Western press. The latter offers viewpoints on the Russian Revolution from London, Paris, Rome, and elsewhere in Europe. **Summing Up: ★★★★★** Essential. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.—*A. J. DeBlasio, Dickinson College*

Performing Arts

59-2502 PN1969 CIP
Wood, Katelyn Hale. **Cracking up: Black feminist comedy in the twentieth and twenty-first century United States**. Iowa, 2021. 191p bibl index ISBN 9781609387723 pbk, \$35.00; ISBN 9781609387730 ebook, \$35.00

In studying the protest wit and humor of a neglected coterie of funny people, Wood (theater history) sets up her own scholarly routine with a quote from pioneer maverick Jackie “Moms” Mabley: “I just tell folks the truth. If they don’t want the truth, then don’t come to Moms.” Responding to “legacies of racialized grief,” Wood assembles a coalition of highly skilled, politically charged Black feminist comedians who have ruptured and subverted their lived experiences to perform what they see as truth, asking, as Horace once did, “What forbids me from telling the truth with a laugh?” She offers a political strategy of laughter to break down and open up other voices with unruly delight. Through her case studies, e.g., the hilarious Wanda Sykes and the strutting Mo’Nique, she conflates feminist, Black, and queer persona and enunciates a marginalized identity that aims to challenge, “critique, and dismantle white heteropatriarchy.” What brightens this ideologically charged work is the inclusion of performance routines from these grand comics that reveal the hearts, minds, pain, and hilarity of their subjects. **Summing Up: ★★★★★** Highly recommended. Graduate students, researchers, faculty.—*T. Lindvall, Virginia Wesleyan University*

Film

59-2503 PN1998 MARC
American twilight: the cinema of Tobe Hooper, ed. by Kristopher Woofter and Will Dodson. Texas, 2021. 312p filmography bibl ISBN 9781477322833 cloth, \$55.00; ISBN 9781477322840 ebook, contact publisher for price

Hooper (1943–2017) is an overlooked director in academic film studies. Although his film *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974) revolutionized the horror genre, his other work, which was prodigious, is often forgotten. Woofter (Dawson College, Montreal) and Dodson (Univ. of North Carolina, Greensboro) rectify this problem: this well-edited collection of essays considers Hooper’s entire oeuvre, including his films, television work, and music videos. The 18 essays focus on four major themes: Hooper’s use of the gothic, “embodiment” in his films, his complicated (and tragic) relationship to the industry, and the impact and aesthetics of *Texas Chain Saw Massacre*. The collection offers a nice mixture of close readings of individual or small groups of his films and discussions of the machinations of the film and television industry and its relationship to the auteur in the period from 1974 to 2006. If one of the editors’ goals was to encourage readers to see Hooper’s less-known works, they certainly succeed. The collection also demonstrates how Hollywood “success” in the post-*Jaws* era was based almost solely on box office returns rather than creative artistry. All of the contributors elevate the director from the realm of forgotten genius. **Summing Up: ★★★★★** Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty; professionals.—*G. R. Butters Jr., Aurora University*

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Christiansen, Steen Ledet. **The new cinematic weird: atmospheres and worldings**. Lexington Books, 2021. 186p ISBN 9781793612748 cloth, \$95.00; ISBN 9781793612755 ebook, \$45.00