

finds a divisive issue between Marxian socialist and traditional societies, namely morality, not economic or religious approaches. The issue is whether citizens may choose freely and change when they wish the economic arrangements under which they are to live.

The impact of polycentrism in communism attracts attention. The Comintern volume quite rightly indicates the centralized direction of the Communist center in Moscow during the effort to win China in the 1920s and even Yugoslavia in 1941. Drachkovitch finds the Yugoslav Communists of that time "a small but tightly knit group led by professional revolutionaries fanatically devoted to the Soviet Union and trained to implement Comintern directives" (p. 184). Branko Lazitch's account of the execution of foreign Communists during Stalin's purge in the USSR embellishes what is known of Stalin's conception of the loyalty he demanded.

The current potentialities of polycentrism as it emerged under Khrushchev are assessed for their impact on Soviet thought and on outside leftists. Ivo J. Lederer, in the Drachkovitch volume, concludes that the split between some parties is so great that "it would be foolhardy to forecast recovery and reunion" (p. 194). He expects the Soviet leadership to interpret every event today in terms of its security and not to press outward in the expansion of a doctrinal area regardless of its potential. Robert C. Tucker, in the London volume, finds that lack of Soviet pressure and centralized control of world communism will not necessarily end expansion of the concept. To him "prospects of communist revolution are not necessarily harmed by division in the communist world" (p. 37), since independence of Moscow may compel parties to stand on their own feet and thus acquire new strength.

The two fiftieth-anniversary symposium volumes provide good reading and much food for thought. They can be heartily recommended. The other three deserve less attention, although for the public for whom they were written, they may have attraction.

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CONTEMPORARY SOVIET GOVERNMENT. By *L. G. Churchward*. New York: American Elsevier Publishing Co., 1968. xxi, 366 pp. \$6.95.

POLITICAL POWER IN THE SOVIET UNION: A STUDY OF DECISION-MAKING IN STALINGRAD. By *Philip D. Stewart*. Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1968. xvii, 227 pp. \$3.95, paper.

Aside from the general area of Soviet politics these two books have little in common. Churchward's work deals with the Soviet system as a whole; Stewart's confines its attention to politics at the oblast level. Both authors claim to apply the methods of modern political science. Churchward does not really do so. Stewart is much more persistent in this respect, although the effort is not entirely successful. Indeed, methodological characteristics are perhaps the most striking features of the two books.

Churchward is a Marxist (of the Leninist persuasion). His approach to his subject promised to be rather refreshing to this reviewer. Rejecting the traditional modes of criticism of the Soviet system "from an alien standpoint of Western liberalism" (p. xvii), he proposed to analyze Soviet practice strictly in terms of Soviet political and social theory. Unfortunately, his treatment of this theory is so

uncritical and his Marxist-Leninist biases so pronounced that he is unable to deal effectively with the shortcomings suggested by his own analysis. To be sure, there are a few critical comments on some aspects of the system—for example, he admits that the Soviet “concept of democracy is in some respects deficient” (p. 275)—but the pallor of his critique throughout suggests a distressing underestimation of the importance of even those problems he raises. By explicitly rejecting a historical approach and concentrating primarily on the post-Stalin period, Churchward necessarily sacrifices much that is indispensable for a comparative analysis of current trends. For example, his coverage of the Great Purge and collectivization is almost pathetically brief and insensitive. He seems to ignore the impact of these and other calamities on current Soviet practice. (One is embarrassingly reminded of Condorcet painstakingly tracing the progress of the human spirit while awaiting the summons of his executioner.)

Still, Churchward’s thesis that technological change has made Stalinist methods of rule impossible is, if not very original, certainly worthy of consideration. His assertion that such change had already become manifest by 1950–51 is interesting, but he does not specify his criteria. In any case, Stalin obviously did not perceive the change in circumstances.

The book is not without redeeming features. It contains considerable factual information on the structure of Soviet institutions. Churchward’s argument that the hierarchy of soviets has become increasingly important in recent years is not totally convincing, but he does present a useful description of central and local governmental functions. However, he continually bogs down in marginal details, tediously citing official statistics without significant critical analysis. (This, I suppose, is the basis of his claim to be using modern political science techniques.) What we have, then, is another textbook—this time in English by a non-Soviet writer—on *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*. The need for such a book is not glaringly obvious.

The Stewart book, its title notwithstanding, is much more limited in scope. It is an in-depth study of the decision-making machinery of the Stalingrad Oblast from 1954 to 1960. The author analyzes successively the oblast party conference, the oblast party committee, the obkom plenum, the obkom bureau, and the obkom first secretaries. Not very surprisingly, he concludes that it is the obkom first secretary who is the real center of authority and influence in the oblast.

For methodology Stewart borrows explicitly from Robert A. Dahl, particularly his treatment of influence and its measurement in *Who Governs?* (New Haven, 1961). The result is the typical “sandwich” familiar to students of contemporary political science—that is, an outer layer of theoretical apparatus surrounding a “filling” of old-fashioned data and interpretation. In Stewart’s case the “filling” is often good, substantial fare. He furnishes a wealth of material on the structure and functions of the obkom and presents numerous tables correlating personal background variables with party leadership characteristics.

In some respects the analysis of this material is a bit disappointing. Stewart is inclined to rely too heavily on easily available data, such as educational background. To a certain extent he is prone to treat the party apparatus as an undifferentiated “interest group,” a view that is certainly obsolete. His efforts at “Sovietology” are sometimes unconvincing—for example, when he attributes significance to the difference between “*edinoglasno*” and “*edinodushno*” in describing a reaction to a Central Committee decision (p. 61). (Not even Ozhegov seems to acknowledge this distinction.)

On balance, Stewart's commitment to the forms of current political science scholarship is unfortunate. For one thing, Dahl's approach is inappropriate to the Soviet situation. We are simply unable to conduct the interviews and surveys necessary to ascertain the influence patterns in a Soviet oblast. For another, the methodological jargon greatly detracts from the readability of the book. When Stewart lets himself go—for example, when he discusses decision-making style or when he uses passages from Kochetov's *Sekretar' obkoma*—he is very readable. Such passages are, alas, very few. Stylistic foibles aside, however, the book is a worthwhile contribution to the literature on Soviet local politics.

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ASPECTS OF MODERN COMMUNISM. Edited by *Richard F. Staar*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1968. xxiv, 416 pp. \$7.95.

Any collection of writings which attempts to summarize the present stage of Communist bloc relations is necessarily a highly perishable item, and this volume is unfortunately no exception. Since it went to press in the summer of 1968, it does not deal with the impact of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

In putting together any comprehensive analysis of the current state of a vast and complex political field, the compiler faces a basic choice: either to stress the many aspects of present developments and try to build a picture—possibly ephemeral—from them, or else to stress the background of present developments on the assumption that the history of the last few decades furnishes useful knowledge of the present. Although this volume is possibly somewhat more lasting in value than others like it, it certainly falls between the two stools. Most of the authors strive to present both a historical framework and a more than superficial assessment of present trends. On the whole, they succeed better in the former aim than in the latter, although this may not have been the editor's intent. As a collection that is meant to be integrated both in themes and in treatment, it attempts far too much.

The three essays on Soviet developments—on general political events, foreign trade, and military strategy—all point toward a settled outlook of caution in the Kremlin and an increasingly realistic awareness of dangers and obstacles. James M. McConnell, in his piece on military strategy, finds an emphasis on strategic deterrence rather than on offensive strategy; W. W. Kulski describes a deliberately paced series of adjustments to domestic pressures for reform in a great variety of areas; Carl B. Turner finds a pragmatic expansion of horizons in Soviet foreign trade, coupled with a somewhat surprising new emphasis on the international division of labor.

While China and the other Asian Communist regimes are dealt with in separate essays, all of Eastern Europe is treated as a whole in three essays on the topics of polycentrism, economic integration, and the Warsaw Pact. COMECON is found to be making only slow progress against largely self-imposed obstacles, in the essay by Hermann Gross. William R. Kintner finds Warsaw Pact defenses improving, with emphasis on nuclear strategy, in the face of a distracted NATO alliance.

The three essays on China, by Richard L. Walker, Chu-yuan Cheng, and Juergen Domes, raise far more questions than they answer. Except for Cheng's interesting statistical summaries of China's foreign trade, these essays add little