

example, Berkhin discusses the importance of *State and Revolution* as representing Lenin's idealism during the first few months of Bolshevik power. Lenin was clearly sanguine about the ease with which a socialist economy might be built in Russia, and it seems reasonable to assume that when problems occurred, he looked to socialist remedies to solve them.

Furthermore, Berkhin uses Lenin's remarks as he needs them, failing to point out the contradictions in some of them. For example, he refers to Lenin's statements in March 1921, in which he claimed that "war communism" was both a hasty and unwise attempt to create a socialist economy without the necessary prerequisites and a system created out of need to save both the state and the economy. Unfortunately, Berkhin neither tells how such opposing comments can be reconciled nor shows how one deserves more attention than the other. And finally he dismisses Lenin's opposition with little comment, ignoring (except to condemn) the attitudes of leaders such as Bukharin and Preobrazhensky. This is no minor omission, because both men saw "war communism" as a socialist offensive.

In trying to re-evaluate this period and remain within the party line, Berkhin has left a questionable legacy. His efforts do not meet the period's basic historiographical need for an impartial work which will include a study of the attitudes of Lenin's colleagues toward the new socialist state, the policies on local and regional levels, the cultural milieu, and Lenin's role, and which will enable us to view "war communism" as the product of complex and often contradictory political, social, economic, and cultural processes.

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M. N. POKROVSKII I SOVETSKAIA ISTORICHESKAIA NAUKA. By  
O. D. Sokolov. Moscow: "Mysl'," 1970. 276 pp. 1.06 rubles.

Even those who know little else about him identify Pokrovsky as the author of the formula, "History is nothing but politics projected to the past." Dr. Sokolov demonstrated more than ten years ago that this quotation had been fabricated. Though in the Soviet Union Pokrovsky no longer is quoted in this manner, there are still writers in the West who continue to do so. The Stalinist propaganda was remarkably successful in spreading an image of Pokrovsky as a dogmatic and doctrinaire party ideologist, uninterested in scholarly history and possibly incapable of writing it. Perhaps the most interesting of the book's five chapters is chapter 2, a biographic sketch, based on a variety of manuscript sources, including Pokrovsky's autobiographic notes. This *dvorianin* in the third generation (son and grandson of state officials and a descendant of a line of Orthodox clergymen), far from being a politician ignorant of historical research, had done his advanced graduate work in Moscow specializing in medieval history. Two long chapters deal with Pokrovsky's writings and ideas on history in a generally reliable, informative, and sympathetic manner. However, one must question Sokolov's decision not to review Pokrovsky's works devoted to general European history. Pokrovsky's basic perspective was international. He compared Russian developments with analogous processes elsewhere; more important, he perceived the Russian historical process as one that was part of a larger whole transcending national boundaries.

As a genuine internationalist, Pokrovsky judged the policies of his own country by standards applied to others. He presented Russia's foreign policies, territorial expansion, and colonial rule in the Caucasus and Central Asia as detrimental to the

progress of the non-Russians. Regrettably, on those topics Sokolov only expresses his disapproval of Pokrovsky but does not clarify the writer's position.

The chapter on Pokrovsky's "struggle against noble-bourgeois historiography" fails to indicate that after 1917 one of his principal concerns as a critic was to expose the nationalist, Great Power interpretation of Russian history, and that he feared a revival of Russian nationalism in historical ideas. Pokrovsky warned especially against those "bourgeois" ideas (justifying tsarist Russia's foreign policies and its treatment of non-Russian nationalities, for example) which were disguised in Marxist language.

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THE DESPISED AND THE DAMNED: THE RUSSIAN PEASANT THROUGH THE AGES. By *Jules Koslow*. Russia Old and New Series. New York: Macmillan, 1972. 174 pp. \$5.95.

This book contains twenty-one chapters, ranging from "The Early Years" (thirteenth century) to "The New Soviet Peasant." It is interestingly illustrated and has a two-page map showing the union republics, some major cities, and a few rivers. The bibliography contains a short list of books in English on the Russian peasant (the most recent source was published in 1968). Since the book is undocumented, it is difficult to tell whether Koslow has based it on any Soviet work.

To whom can the book be recommended? To high school students, perhaps, but very cautiously. The quotations from Russian literature and from Donald Mackenzie Wallace's work might stimulate a young mind to further reading, but the teacher assigning the book would do well to point out that Koslow has organized his material in a rather strange fashion: past and present are all mixed up, as if the peasant had made no progress through the ages, and as if the Russian Revolution had happened so recently that thirty-seven pages and ten photographs were adequate coverage of the present. Some of those photographs are oddly placed: "Collective farm workers attend a literacy class" is the caption of one (p. 159), just below a paragraph pointing out that the literacy rate in the USSR is 95 percent. In fact, in 1970, 99.7 percent of Soviet citizens between the ages of nine and forty-nine were literate, with men having a very slight edge over women.

A number of Koslow's statements about the history of the Russian peasantry seem questionable to me, but since I consider myself a cultural anthropologist rather than a historian, I will point out only the following: the collective farmer's garden plot cannot have been as large as five acres (p. 143), since Iu. V. Arutiunian (*Sotsial'naiia struktura sel'skogo naseleniia SSR*, Moscow, 1971, p. 130, notes 1 and 2) points out that the maximum size was set by the Kolkhoz Charter of 1935 at 0.5 hectare (one hectare = 2.47 acres); in 1938 it was actually 0.49 hectare on an average, although in the Northern Caucasus kolkhozniiks were given 0.68 hectare; and in 1967 it was 0.31 hectare. It also seems wrong to suggest (p. 146) that state-farm workers are much like factory workers. It is true that, unlike collective farmers, state-farm peasants were paid wages, but the data of Arutiunian and others amply demonstrate that even state farm peasants were and remain disadvantaged compared with factory workers. Nor is it correct to say that the "MTS have been largely superseded by farms that own their own equipment" (p. 143). The MTS is defunct, and has been for more than a decade.