

Bolshevik Party “substituting” itself for the working class and later writing *Terrorism and Communism*, a manifesto of revolutionary degeneration. Although concerned with freedom of cultural expression, he did not hesitate to suppress trade-union independence or the Kronstadt uprising. For Howe the assumptions critical for explaining away these incongruities were that “modernization” would automatically follow the seizure of power and that the Revolution might be “permanent” without leading to a totalitarian state. In order to secure Bolshevik power, Trotsky overlooked the possibility that “the other part of his earlier self—the Trotsky who had kept warning against Bolshevik monolithism and usurpation—might also be proved right” (p. 58). By committing himself to Lenin’s belief that only a single party could speak for the working class, Trotsky created his own perceptual barriers to an understanding of degeneration once it had begun.

But Howe also allows for the possibility of another outcome: Stalin prevailed because the Trotskyists and Bukharinists were unable to find a common ground of moderation, a problem attributable to “a shared Marxist assumption that made each group feel its differences over economic policy were more important than the question of democracy” (p. 127). Trotsky became aware of the economic constraints of backwardness and sought novel solutions. He wrote essays on literature and culture and spoke out for internal party democracy, all the while alienating himself from the more practical apparatchiks, as described on page 93: “Imagine a gathering of *apparatchiks*, tough old-time party hacks like Stalin, Molotov and Ordzhonikidze, over a good ration of vodka in their now comfortable offices, as they amuse one another with jokes about this interloper, this Jew-Puritan, Trotsky, who writes sermons . . . against swearing. God damn, it breaks them up!”

Professor Howe disclaims any attempt to write a comprehensive account of Trotsky’s transition from hero, to victim, and later to critic of the Revolution. Nevertheless, he spans Trotsky’s entire career and wide variety of interests in a concise and lively manner which is a joy to read. Trotsky emerges as a tragic hero who, at the twilight of his life, finally glimpsed the truth of the Revolution he had helped to create. The author is to be congratulated for writing a short work so rich in human interest and so free of preconceptions.

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THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF LEON TROTSKY. By *Baruch Knei-Paz*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978. xxii, 629 pp. \$34.95.

Trotsky represents the classic case of the Revolutionary leader who was also an intellectual in the fullest sense of the term, one who lived his thoughts and whose commitment to an idea overrode all other loyalties. Precisely because of the passions involved in forming an appreciation of Trotsky’s life and works, the biographies that have appeared have not been fully satisfactory. (Alfred G. Meyer makes a similar point in his review of Robert D. Warth’s *Leon Trotsky* in *Slavic Review*, 37, no. 4 [December 1978]: 674–75.) In his appraisal of Isaac Deutscher’s trilogy (in *Commentary*, 37, no. 1 [January 1964]: 52–60), for example, George Lichtheim asked if it were possible from our vantage point to find a niche for Trotsky, to bracket him with other major figures of recent history. Deutscher failed, in Lichtheim’s view, in spite of the biography’s considerable literary and analytic merits, because he was still caught up in his illusions and his faith in the inherently progressive role of the USSR. Nor was Irving Howe more successful in his recent biography, *Leon Trotsky* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978). More often than not Howe’s appraisal reflects judgments of what he would have liked Trotsky to have done rather than what Trotsky himself felt politically obligated to do. Baruch Knei-Paz, who seems not to have been as passionately involved (or disinvolved) with Trotsky and Trotskyism, has produced a

most useful volume, not of the literary quality of the Deutscher or the Howe volumes perhaps, but free from polemics and critical but not unfair. Yet, although Knei-Paz has distanced himself from the more personal involvements of his fellow biographers, he has been touched by an occupational hazard of contemporary writers on the Soviet experience, a reverse determinism which judges the present as the inevitable consequence of the past—in this case, Stalinism as the inevitable product of the ideas and practices of the Bolshevik Revolution. There is in much of this scholarship no flexibility, all too little allowance for the unforeseen, the unanticipated, and for simple “historical bad luck.” Thus, Marxism—imposed on backward Russia through the agency of the Communist Party—equals bolshevism, which led to the development of a unique form of modern, collectivist society. This standard reading provides the framework within which events and ideas are fitted with little consideration for what fortuitously may have slipped in between theory and practice.

In any case, Knei-Paz has written a painstakingly detailed analysis of Trotsky's social and political ideas in the context of historical events. (The author has excluded from the scope of his study Trotsky's political record while in power.) The inquiry is organized into a coherent framework centered around the theory of permanent revolution, its practice, and “betrayal.” A section on Trotsky's ideas on art, literature, philosophy, and the Jewish question is of interest, but is not central to Knei-Paz's evaluation of Trotsky's thought. In the author's view, the international aspect of Trotsky's theory has obscured his primary concern with the social dynamics of backwardness in a given country in general, and with the problem of the relationship and applicability of Marxism to Russia in particular. Permanent revolution is a revolutionary theory of backwardness, of a process that would by-pass the capitalist phase, in which societies would modernize without undergoing the Western experience and without developing institutions paralleling those of advanced industrial countries. In this light, there may be a closer connection between Trotsky's “permanent”—or more exactly “uninterrupted”—revolution and Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary theory than has been reflected in recent scholarship.

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THE SECRET BETRAYAL: 1944–1947. By *Nikolai Tolstoy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978. 503 pp. \$14.95.

The strident publicity and the waves of newspaper correspondence accompanying the British edition of this book are not attributable to its qualities as literature or history, which are poor. They are due instead to the author's determined attack on the United Kingdom Foreign Office, including many officials who are still alive, and, more by implication than by fact, on a former prime minister, Anthony Eden, foreign secretary at the time of the events described. These officials are held responsible for insisting, under the terms of the Yalta agreements, so as to maintain a policy of collaboration with Stalin, on the repatriation of about two million Soviet citizens liberated by the Allies—including those who did not wish to return or were being returned to death or to labor camps. Furthermore, these men are blamed for putting pressure on the Department of State to do the same, for concealing the fact that brutal cruelties occasionally had to be perpetrated by the military to effect the repatriations, for concealing their knowledge of the grim fate awaiting these people in the Soviet Union, and for flouting the principles of both British law and the Geneva Convention. Because of Tolstoy's more humane picture of the Department of State, this work may provoke milder reactions in the United States.

The book is the outcome of a great deal of uninspired hard work, much correspondence and talk with “witnesses,” an overflowing rancor toward the Soviet state, and the author's obvious desire to reach the best-seller market. From its jumble of