

SOVIET ETHICS AND MORALITY. By *Richard T. De George*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969. viii, 184 pp. \$2.95, paper.

This book will prove a boon to university professors who want to run seminars or workshops on Marxism or on questions of ethics. It is divided into two main sections of three chapters each, and this simple division also makes it useful for classroom reading and discussion.

This is not to say that there is anything elementary about Professor De George's treatment of his subject. In the process of discussing the basic issues (in the first three chapters) and their actualization in Soviet society (the other three), he manages to touch on most of the important ethical questions as well as on the most delicate points in contemporary Marxism. De George concentrates on the issues rather than trying to provide an exhaustive description of what is happening in Soviet ethics.

In his introduction, which is also chapter 1, De George clearly delineates the predicament of the contemporary Soviet philosopher, who is faced with real moral problems but is able to deal with them only within the confines of a very dogmatic system and under the watchful eye of a none too sophisticated political establishment. Chapter 2 shows how the collectivist or generic notion of man underlies all Soviet ethical discussions. Chapter 3 deals with the notion of good and chapter 4 with some of the basic values (freedom, duty, etc.) which the Soviets count among the norms of their system.

The second section begins with chapter 5 on "The New Moral Code." De George lists the elements of "the moral code of the builder of Communism," comments briefly on each, and shows how they relate to the collective notion of man and to the consequent externalization of values. Chapter 6 discusses moral inculcation and social control, and the final chapter takes up Soviet criticism of non-Soviet ethical views.

De George's discussion is intelligent and reasonably thorough. He provides a good survey of what the Marxist sees as ethically important as well as a discussion of significant social-ethical problems.

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RELIGIOUS AND ANTI-RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN RUSSIA. By *George L. Kline*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1969. 179 pp. \$7.50.

This is a very good book. One starts reading with a somewhat skeptical attitude: what can such a brief book say about such a vast subject? But soon one's skepticism is gone. The material, which is mainly descriptive in nature, is dealt with on a solid philosophical level, yet lucidly. The author's knowledge not only of Russian intellectual thought but also of Western philosophy makes him a competent authority in this field, and it is exactly this combination that makes the book of high value. The sources of Russian atheism, for example, are shown to be of West European origin. The book is well organized, and the author maintains a high standard of presentation throughout.

Indeed, there is not much that this reviewer could comment on except to raise a question or two. It is strange that the author places the attitudes of Tolstoy and Bakunin toward religion on one level, as anarchist. From the Russian Orthodox

State Church's point of view it might be justifiable to treat them both as anarchists, but a dispassionate researcher, as Professor Kline indeed is, should not have failed to see that Tolstoy's criticism of religion bore a highly positive approach. One could also question whether Bakunin's own atheism could really be traced as far back as the ancient philosophers Epicurus and Lucretius, as Professor Kline states (p. 14). Also somewhat strange, and much out of line with accepted criticism, is his interpretation of Turgenev's Bazarov as an ideal man of the future (pp. 103 ff.).

The author seems to have omitted what I would term one of the central ideas in Berdiaev's religion, his concept of justification by faith, which reminds one of Luther rather than of Russian Orthodoxy, and is witness again to the influence of Western Europe on Russian thought.

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THE SOVIET ECONOMY: MYTH AND REALITY. By *Marshall I. Goldman*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968. xv, 176 pp. \$4.95.

PLANNING AND PRODUCTIVITY UNDER SOVIET SOCIALISM. By *Abram Bergson*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie Press, Carnegie-Mellon University, 1968. Distributed by Columbia University Press, New York. 95 pp. \$4.00.

The Soviet Economy: Myth and Reality is presumably intended as an elementary guide for nonspecialists to the development and problems of the Soviet economy, with each chapter headed by a myth of various degrees of naïveté. Thus chapter 6 begins with the myth "The Soviet Union is a land of milk and honey where communism has brought fulfillment and tranquility to everyone," and this is duly disproved.

The author knows his subject, and there are many valid and well-founded arguments scattered throughout his pages. But why preface a discussion of living standards with so absurd a "myth"? The style, too, sometimes degenerates into "pop" language, as in "The whoosh of economic growth" (p. 10) or where Stalin's probably deliberate mishandling of agricultural statistics becomes "comparing onions and cheddar cheese" and leads to a "fancy before-dinner appetizer" or "economic indigestion" (p. 25). Far be it from me to discourage humor, but such a style is not too helpful to understanding.

There are other complaints to be made. Soviet prices are indeed poor measures of "economic worth," but this is as much or more because they do not reflect either utility or scarcity, which Goldman does not mention, as it is because of the non-inclusion in costs of a charge for capital or land. The picture of war communism in chapter 3 confuses syndicalism, which Lenin fought against, with all-around nationalization and centralized control over resources, which Lenin strongly supported in 1919–20. On page 26 we read that because prices were low the peasants bought back some grain in 1926–27 after having sold it to the state; but there were no compulsory deliveries in 1926–27, so the author should explain why they sold it in the first place. Then he asserts that in 1920–27 the rate of growth was 5 percent; but it was several times higher than that, owing to the speed of recovery from the ruin of war and civil war.

Goldman argues that if the prerevolutionary growth rates were extrapolated, Russia would have developed satisfactorily if no Bolshevik revolution had taken