when she was a little girl in Russia—lends a certain power to her portraiture, and the book evokes the past in an unassuming but authentic way. The style, running from elegant to racy, is always lively and engaging; indeed, the vivid tableaux of village, factory, prison, underground, and circle life—carefully and accurately reconstructed from memoirs and other personal documents—will have particular appeal to the general reader. The numerous errors are mostly minor (she locates the Schlüsselburg Fortress, for example, in the Gulf of Finland); and the lay reader for whom the book is obviously written will be more concerned with the compelling drama which unfolds in Broido's pages than with accuracy of detail.

But *Apostles into Terrorists* is not the "definitive scholarly work" that the dust jacket claims it to be. The author explains her approach in the foreword: "This is not . . . a feminist book. To assign to revolutionary women the narrow partisan role of feminists is to distort their position in the revolutionary movement and to diminish their contribution to Russian history" (p. vi). Granted. But the decision not to analyze revolutionary women as women means treating them simply as the female component of the movement. This in turn has led Broido, perhaps unwittingly, to retell a familiar story with excessive and often trivial detail but with little analysis and no fresh documentation. Her account of the famous Trepov affair, for example, offers more about Trepov and Bogoliubov than about the protagonist, Vera Zasulich; and when we get to the People's Will, we find little more than a list of the female members of the executive committee and a recounting of the numerous assassination attempts, all of which has been well covered in previous works. Lack of attention to recent scholarship results in ignoring some very interesting female radicals of the 1860s. The treatment of the feminists and of the struggle for women's education (wisely included in spite of the author's cautionary words cited above) is very thin and often inaccurate. The approach to Chernyshevskii's *What Is To Be Done?* is delightfully ironic; but why not sort out the main motifs, their sources and their influence?

In short, the book is a pleasure to read, an eyeopener for the novice, and a needed corrective to standard accounts of the Populist movement, but it is not a scholarly introduction to the subject.

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THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA: FEMINISM, NIHILISM, AND BOLSHEVISM, 1860–1930. By *Richard Stites*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978. xx, 464 pp. Illus. $37.50, cloth. $12.50, paper.

The fashion for women's history, like all fashions, has created an outpouring of literature of very uneven quality. Richard Stites's monograph is, however, not a product of the current vogue. Stites was busy mastering his subject long before the trend started and, as a result, has produced a well-researched, comprehensive, and thought-provoking study.

As the subtitle reveals, the work is organized around three political tendencies of the women's movement: feminism, nihilism, and radicalism. Despite the large scope of his study, Stites shows excellent command of the literature, including not merely the newspapers, journals, and belles-lettres specifically dealing with the woman question but also the broader political literature, social surveys, police reports, and minutes of professional congresses. He has also consulted much of the literature on the women's movement elsewhere and never loses sight of the strong influence that the West was exerting on Russian events.

The background material treats women in early Russia and the birth of the woman question in the mid-nineteenth century. Stites is on less solid ground in this period than in more recent history. In sticking to the available literary sources, which mainly reflect the life of institute girls and aristocratic "dolls," he does not do justice to the important role of the rural gentry woman and certainly overestimates the general impact of Western ways on gentry women in the eighteenth century. In the same manner, a discussion of the economic difficulties of women in the cities leaves the impression that only upper crust society women and prostitutes peopled the towns, an imbalance that stems from reliance on the most readily available sources: upper-class women's accounts about themselves and police reports concerning prostitutes. We hear little or nothing about women of merchant, artisan, civil service, and clergy families, because they neither posed problems for public order nor were well enough educated to articulate formally their needs and feelings.

The strengths of the work become clearer in the sections on the inner dynamics of the women's movement itself. Stites shows great skill in leading the reader through the mass of detailed debate among different women's groups. He tracks down the sources of their ideas in the West, describes the modification and elaboration of the same ideas in Russia, and here and there inserts thumbnail sketches of the leading figures in various branches of the women's movement. The story is consistently lively and personal. After first treating the feminist response to the woman question, for which the literature is extensive, Stites moves on to the nihilist position, especially significant because it was later codified by the victorious Bolsheviks. But here he has difficulty because of the thinness of sources, and the chapter is based largely on a retelling of Chernyshevskii's *What Is To Be Done?*, supplemented by assurances that fictitious marriages and artel-communes were indeed "common" or that "many cases" occurred. Few specific instances are actually cited, prompting doubt about whether the "nihilist response" should be considered a separate tendency or merely a subspecies—concerned mostly with life style—of the larger radical response. There is a good deal more to be said about the latter, and Stites does an excellent job of narrating the exciting events of the 1870s. He briefly attempts an analysis of the numbers of women in the movement, their reasons for joining, and the intensity of their involvement, but he then gives up, saying it is impossible to generalize. Nonetheless, Stites concludes with an interesting generalization about radical women's rejection of feminism and easy acceptance of themselves as equals in revolutionary struggle, which resulted in their neglect of the special problem of liberating lower-class females.

The sections on the revolutionary era are equally well informed and well written, even if Stites sometimes gives too much credence to sensational literature and public outcry. In discussing the period of "Saninist" decadence, for example, he describes a society all but overwhelmed by prostitution, white slavery, license, and depravity; yet, in passing, he also notes that these problems were quantitatively no greater in Russia than elsewhere. Here again the best discussions are those treating the women's movement itself: patriots versus pacifists, feminists versus Bolsheviks, and the untold story of women in struggle during the 1917 upheaval. The remainder of the book follows the evolution of the new morality by the Bolsheviks, with Stites giving space here, as he has elsewhere, to an apologia for Alexandra Kollontai. A brief review cannot do justice to the many topics explored or the often novel twists that Stites gives to them. Some, like his view that women's liberation is bound up with larger liberalizing movements, confirm established knowledge; others may provoke controversy, such as his opinion that the Stalinist sexual Thermidor was more of a moral reaction than a conscious pronatalist policy.

Stites liberally seasons his discussions with statistical data and survey results. None of this should be taken seriously, however, because he applies no critical standards for the use of such material. He tells us that illegal abortions in Moscow rose two and one-half times in 1909–14 and tenfold in St. Petersburg from 1897 to 1912, but provides no hint as to how these data were collected. On the same page we learn the results of a student questionnaire on sexual problems with decimal point precision, but nothing at all about how the sample was obtained, the form of the questions, or the circumstances (even the city) in which they were asked. In other cases, statistics (as those on literacy on page 397) come out so badly garbled or mistranscribed that no sense at all can be made of them. The best the reader can do is to treat all this material as simply another type of impressionistic evidence.

Stites's monograph is also a pleasure to read. The language is straightforward and the judgments are well grounded and stated with conviction. No slave to form, he takes the reader on a number of byways that are informative and often absorbing. This important addition to the history of modern Russia will be much read and much discussed.

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RASPUTIN: THE MAN BEHIND THE MYTH, A PERSONAL MEMOIR. By *Maria Rasputin* and *Patte Barham*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977. vi, 266 pp. $10.00.

Here is a portrayal of Grigorii Rasputin that we have not seen before. Perhaps only a daughter looking back fondly many decades after the painful events of her youth could have produced this sympathetic memoir. We meet the loving father, the miracle-worker, the sincere (if not always successful) combatant of his own wild impulses toward debauchery and licentiousness, and, above all, the devoted champion of Russia's salvation from communism. It should come as no surprise that Rasputin possessed a number of redeeming qualities. No one could earn the devotion and influence he obviously enjoyed without a measure of intelligence, charm, and generosity. The reader will nevertheless want to place in perspective many of the claims made here on behalf of that influence.

Despite selective memory and temporal distance, Maria Rasputin succeeds in creating some of the personal texture of her father's life. We learn of the inextinguishable humiliation he suffered at the hands (literally) of the maidservants of a capricious noblewoman toward whom he had made his first clumsy sexual advances, his involvement with orgiastic religious sects, his home life (what little there was of it), and his battles with the church leader, Iliodor, and with his murderer, Felix Iusupov. As expected, Maria takes the last two thoroughly to task, not even forgoing *ad hominem* sallies of a most indelicate kind. Yet amid the personal assaults and often unconvincing apologies lie some valuable insights.

Finally, I must admit to a slight uneasiness at Maria's boast about the size and resilience of her father's sexual equipment, even if the comment provides graphic preparation for the epilogue, in which we learn that this very same instrument survives to this day in Paris as an object of cult worship. That is what it says.

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