

Shragin graduated from the philosophy department of Moscow University and worked in the Institute of the History of the Arts in Moscow until 1968. He contributed articles to Soviet journals on art theory, criticism, and the history of culture. He was expelled from the Communist Party in 1968 for having joined the struggle for human rights. Shragin wrote pseudonymous articles for *samizdat* until he emigrated in 1974. Although he was a confirmed Marxist earlier in his career, his participation in dissident activity led him to reject Marxism because of its inability to provide the basis for the individual protest inherent in the democratic movement.

Meerson-Aksenov's religious bias and Shragin's anti-Marxism do not prevent this volume from fulfilling the aim outlined in their preface, namely, to give the Western reader "an understanding of the variety of the free social-theoretical thought that has developed in Soviet Russia in the last decade." A single volume of twenty-three articles—less than one percent of the *samizdat* documents currently available in the West—can hardly provide a comprehensive survey of the literature. Nevertheless, the editors have attempted to select materials that cover a broad spectrum, ranging from Neo-Leninist criticism of the Soviet regime to Neo-Nazi anti-Semitism parading under the banner of Russian patriotism. Essays by Peter Grigorenko and Roy Medvedev make up a section entitled "Socialism With a Human Face." Analysis of the moral quality of the Soviet intelligentsia is the subject matter of another section, "Personality, Freedom and Responsibility," which includes one of Shragin's pseudonymous articles. Alexander Esenin-Volpin and Valerii Chalidze discuss problems of Soviet legality, and Andrei Sakharov and Lev Kopelev reply to Solzhenitsyn's "Letter to the Soviet Leaders." The renaissance of Russian nationalism, problems of the Orthodox church, and the Jewish question are among other major themes treated by several writers. Special mention should be made of a penetrating article by Dmitrii Nelidov (a pseudonym), which examines Soviet-style doublethink.

The editors provide valuable insights into the materials in their remarks introducing each section and in their footnotes. Meerson-Aksenov painstakingly traces the evolution of the dissident movement and *samizdat*, describing them as two sides of the same post-Stalin process which he calls "the awakening of the consciousness of Soviet society."

The translation is at times careless. The Communist journal is not *Problems of Socialism and the World*. And we find the following passage in a virulent anti-Semitic tract by Ivan Samolvin: "It is a secret to no one that the events in Czechoslovakia were inspired by the world Zionist organization through their goldsticks." The reference, of course, is to Eduard Goldstuecker, one of the leaders of Dubček's ill-fated regime.

On the whole, this anthology can be highly recommended as a textbook for a course on contemporary Soviet culture, although it should be supplemented by *In Quest of Justice*, edited by Abraham Brumberg, which covers a wide range of *samizdat* material written in the 1960s.

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THE SAMIZDAT REGISTER. Edited by *Roy A. Medvedev*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1977. viii, 314 pp. \$10.95.

Among the tributaries to the stream of underground dialogue in the Soviet Union are, from the far right, the conservative thinkers represented in Solzhenitsyn's anthology *From Under the Rubble* and, from the far left, the followers of Roy Medvedev, whose writings appear in the journal *The Twentieth Century*. Selections from that journal's first three issues are included in the book under review, and they demonstrate

that the Marxist critics are better at scoring their opponents' logical fallacies than in firmly grounding a platform of their own.

One of the most trenchant pieces is written by Lev Z. Kopelev, who shared the prison camp ordeal of Solzhenitsyn and served as his model for Lev Rubin in *The First Circle*. Kopelev charges that Solzhenitsyn's attack on Marxism is misdirected, because Marxism is merely an ideological screen that obscures the self-serving interests of a bureaucracy acting on old Russian imperialist motives. Stalin buried Old Bolsheviks and their dreams amid the chauvinistic witch hunts of the 1930s. Today's officials, his spiritual heirs, proceed with a scarcely disguised cynicism to aggrandize their power. Meanwhile, the current regime's humanist pretensions are punctured by A. Krasikov's analysis of alcohol production and consumption, both of which reached record levels in the 1970s. Popular discontent is dissipated in a haze of vodka, as the state turns what might be called a staggering profit from its monopoly.

Medvedev tackles the "gross falsifications" that have become the staple of official historians in an essay that tries to distinguish accidental from determinist factors in the making of the Revolution. Western readers are unlikely to quarrel with his conclusion that socioeconomic forces made an explosion inevitable but that its specific course was the fortuitous result of choices made by individual leaders. What is questionable, however, is Medvedev's depiction of Lenin as the only clear-sighted protagonist on the scene, a saintly image that stands in sharp contrast to Solzhenitsyn's satanic portrait. An analogous attempt to trace one's intellectual genealogy to Lenin's wisdom animates M. P. Yakubovich's essay. Despite his twenty years in labor camps, this author still directs most of his outrage at the Provisional Government and the Bolshevik lieutenants, including Trotsky, who were not "dialectical enough" to fully appreciate Lenin's genius.

A primary source for revisionist historians is the last letter of F. K. Mironov, a maverick Red Army commander, in which he asserted his innocence of the charge of treason after a year in Bütyrki prison. The editor's point seems to be that this free Cossack spirit was sacrificed in 1921 for protesting the rape of the Don peasantry and for prematurely suggesting reforms that were to emerge later as the New Economic Policy. A skeptical reader might ask why Lenin was evidently not disturbed by this case of a war hero secretly arrested and executed without a trial in a prototype of the repression that was to flower fully under Stalin.

The Christian thinkers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, discussed by German Andreev and Sergei Elagin, keep incongruous company with Lenin as models for those who would restructure Soviet society in true socialist fashion, with due weight given to individual rights and justice. Leo Tolstoy's philosophy, in its purity and tolerance, is adapted by Andreev to show up the narrowness and racism of Solzhenitsyn's creed. Elagin draws on the socially conscious faith of Berdiaev and other religious philosophers to make the authors of *From Under the Rubble* appear to be indulging in shallow cant.

The Medvedev reader, though unfocused and uneven in quality, provides an unusual opportunity for a Western audience to overhear the debate between Marxist dissenters and their conservative rivals regarding Soviet reality past and present. From this sample at least, their grasp of historical detail seems more formidable than their ability to demonstrate that freedom and a greater measure of equality can be introduced within the system.

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