

Solomon shows that the debate followed a logic inherent to the research problem, at least until 1928, and was not subject to external political pressures, as was already the case in the field of literature (see, for example, studies by Sheila Fitzpatrick). For Chayanov, the dynamics of the family farm were of a biological nature, which led him to believe in the existence of a natural cycle generating stability. For Kritsman, the market was the motor of the peasant economy, which evolved unilinearly and inevitably led to capitalism. His disciples corroborated this thesis by refining the method for detecting dependence or domination criteria among peasant units (see the works by Nemchinov and Gaister) and within the family unit itself (see Kubanin's studies). The controversy, however, was not limited to the scientific. It also put into conflict two generations of researchers who had neither the same ideology nor the same academic prestige. Until 1928, a spirit of tolerance had prevailed over the feeling of division in the *agrarniki* community. But because of the Fifteenth Party Congress, which decided upon collectivization, and the Shakhty trial, the debate changed in both tone and content. Interest became less focused on the peasant economy, centering instead on the desirability of large-scale collective estates. The criterion of truth was no longer scientific, rather, the group-adopted truth came to determine the destiny of the individual researcher. Chayanov's destiny was grim, and even Kritsman was eclipsed by the young wolves of the party.

Despite the merits of the work under review, I have a few minor reservations. First of all, the sociological approach overlooks certain aspects of economic theory or policy—namely, the links between the Austrian marginalists and the curves of Chayanov and especially with respect to the problems of land rent and taxation. A study of the latter would have allowed the author to establish connections between the agrarian and the industrialization debates. This connection is suggested by the title of the work (in apparent reference to A. Erlich's earlier book). Moreover, the chosen framework of Professor Solomon's study limits the debate to the 1920s. It is cut off from earlier debates, in particular from the argument within the Agrarian Reform League which placed a wide range of trends in opposition as early as 1917. The framework similarly isolates the debate from its external connections (Chelintsev and Makarov were engaged in editing *Krest'ianskaia Rossiia* in Prague, S. Prokopovich and Petrim Sorokin were also there, and Brutskus was in Berlin). In other words, the discussions among the *agrarniki* were more wide-ranging than merely opposition between Soviet Neo-Populists and Marxists, as is suggested in Susan Solomon's book. Because the last phases of the debate were made known solely through publications unfavorable to the organizational school, Chayanov's arguments carry less weight than they should. Chayanov began as an agronomist on a practical level. Solomon's depiction of him as a conservative economist ignores the fact that, as early as 1918, in *Osnovnyia idei i metody raboty obshchestvennoi agronomii*, it was Chayanov the sociologist who highlighted problems (overcoming resistance to technical innovation and determining the motivating factors which dictate peasants' decisions, for example) which, even today, preoccupy Western experts who are trying to aid developing countries.

To sum up, Professor Susan Solomon's work should capture the attention not only of historians of Soviet Russia, but also of everyone engaged in studying the theory of peasant decision making.

BASILE KERBLAY

University of Paris, Sorbonne

LEON TROTSKY. By *Irving Howe*. Edited by *Frank Kermode*. New York: The Viking Press, 1978. x, 214 pp. \$10.00.

Irving Howe's *Leon Trotsky* is a sympathetic but frankly critical study of a man who combined brilliant insight with stubborn intransigence, who readily saw the errors of others but simultaneously became a prisoner of his own assumptions, who was a "mixture of the rigid and the flexible." Trotsky is shown anticipating the danger of the

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.

RICHARD B. DAY
University of Toronto

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