

of the subject). But in that case Christoff should have been aware also of the eighteenth-century background and should not have given the impression that the trends he describes made their appearance in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Even a cursory glance at Hans Rogger's monograph or Iurii Tynianov's seminal study (*Arkhaisty novatory*)—both published long before 1963, by the way—should have helped Mr. Christoff to a more correct perspective.

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OTMENA KREPOSTNOGO PRAVA V ROSSII. By *P. A. Zaionchkovsky*.
3rd edition. Moscow: "Prosveshchenie," 1968. 368 pp. 90 kopeks.

The first (1954) edition of this work marked the high point of Soviet studies on the reform era, surpassing in scope the best prerevolutionary scholarship. The first revision (1960) introduced valuable chapters on the emancipation of state and crown serfs, and on the extension of the reforms in 1863 to Lithuania, White Russia, and Right Bank Ukraine. The present second revision adheres to the general interpretation of its predecessors but has been considerably refined in detail. A judicious yet sweeping synthesis of all Russian research on the emancipation, it sets forth the mature conclusions of the most distinguished specialist in the field.

Several chapters from the first revision appear unaltered in the latest volume. These include the several sections devoted to the application of the legislation after 1861. In these chapters Professor Zaionchkovsky confines himself to bringing his earlier arguments into sharper relief and to softening or deleting the more overtly ideological passages. His emphasis on the importance of regional variants, and on the continuity of prereform elements in the early capitalist era in Russia, is unchanged.

The principal revisions concern the character of serfdom before 1855, the role of peasant disorders in provoking the downfall, and the process by which the statutes of emancipation were drafted. On the character of agriculture under serfdom Zaionchkovsky has come to assign even more importance than before to the increasing differentiation within the peasantry, the same development that has recently been detailed so meticulously by I. S. Kovalchenko. For example, the notion that increased *obrok* levies pauperized all *obrok*-paying serfs is revised to take note of the fact that many members of that class were at the same time benefiting from substantial increases in the productivity of their own plots. Such considerations lead the author to reiterate his view that the crisis in the prereform countryside arose from tensions among the different levels of serf agriculture rather than from any general collapse of the system.

Against this background, Zaionchkovsky reassesses the voluminous statistics on peasant disturbances which Soviet historians have gleaned from police records. He decries the "striving to exaggerate the dimensions of peasant disturbances" and the concomitant failure to categorize specific outbreaks according to the conditions that gave rise to them. Though he advanced this critique in article form a decade ago, Zaionchkovsky now goes further and asserts that the decisive issue in forcing national leaders to appreciate the need for change was not the peasant rebellions but the Crimean War. Serf uprisings after 1856 hastened the implementation of decisions already taken by the autocracy but did not force the decisions themselves.

The account of the preparation of the emancipation includes no major revisions, but numerous small changes alter the tone of the section significantly. Typical is the new stress placed on the innovative role of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, particularly in publicizing the celebrated rescript to Nazimov which brought the issue of abolition into the open. The cumulative effect of many such shifts in emphasis is to encourage the reader to see the final legislation as the outcome of a complex of factors—administrative, moral, and psychological, as well as economic.

The present edition of *Otmena* appears in a *tirazh* of forty thousand copies as contrasted with the first revision of only fifteen thousand. This, along with the fact that the second revision bears the imprimatur of the Academy of Sciences rather than that of Uchpedgiz, confirms what is evident from the text itself—that the most recent edition is the definitive one. Libraries should include it in their collections, even though they may already own its predecessors.

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MIROVOZZRENIE D. I. PISAREVA. By V. A. Tsybenko. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1969. 352 pp. 1.75 rubles.

In this new study of Dmitrii Pisarev (1840–68), V. A. Tsybenko suggests that previous Soviet scholarship has not understood Pisarev because of his “Aesopian language.” Tsybenko believes that Pisarev’s articles must be “deciphered literally” to reveal what he concealed because of tsarist censorship. Tsybenko has built his book on four theses which he uses as guides for “deciphering” Pisarev’s articles: (1) Pisarev “correctly” understood the problem of the role of the masses and the individual in history and of the origin and role of ideas in society; (2) Pisarev understood the path of socialist development in Russia and Europe by applying materialism and the dialectic to the interpretation of nature and society; (3) Pisarev played a major role after 1861 in the struggle between the liberals representing the bourgeoisie and the nihilists representing the growing proletariat; (4) Pisarev overcame the limitations of utopian socialism and approached scientific socialism.

Anyone acquainted with Pisarev’s writings will not be surprised that Tsybenko offers no satisfactory evidence for his misconceived theses. They reflect a less than adequate understanding of either Pisarev or his time. Tsybenko’s evidence consists of quotations from Pisarev’s articles, often out of context, which he interprets (“deciphers”) by irrelevant references to Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Tsybenko also puts forward unusual claims for Pisarev’s analytical ability. According to him, Pisarev was not only the first “philosopher” in the world to understand the implications of Darwinism, but he even “resolved more correctly than Darwin” several problems concerning the origin and evolution of species. Tsybenko unfortunately does not identify these problems. Pisarev’s denial of the validity of metaphysics in his essay on Darwin is quoted out of context and attributed to Pisarev’s “profound” appreciation of the dialectical character of Darwinism, rather than to Pisarev’s very obvious admiration for the mechanistic materialism of Büchner, Vogt, and Moleschott.

Tsybenko’s concern with making Pisarev into a consistent precursor of Soviet Marxist doctrine is not typical of Soviet scholarship on Pisarev. A. N. Maslin summarized in 1968 the contemporary Soviet interpretation when he praised Pisarev as a passionate and original thinker who provided a rationale for materialism,