

essentially an abridgment of volume 1 and the first four parts of volume 2 of Korolenko's *Istoriia*—as well as for his useful introduction to this work and his notes, which make the subject matter and the times intelligible even to the nonspecialist. The value of the translator's introduction could have been enhanced by greater attention to the problem of how and why the *Istoriia* was written, its publishing history, and, above all, by a more detailed sketch of the author's life. As it stands, even elementary information—such as Korolenko's full name and the dates of his birth and death—is missing. Finally, in view of the richness of this work as a historical source and document, an index would have been desirable.

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BELORUSSIA UNDER SOVIET RULE, 1917–1957. By *Ivan S. Lubachko*.
Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1972. xiv, 219 pp. \$10.00.

In recent years interest in the non-Russian nationalities has increased at a surprising rate, as though to make up for the long neglect of this aspect of Soviet affairs. Surely the Belorussians—fourth in number among Soviet nations—deserve close scrutiny, if only because their separate identity has been most frequently questioned.

Unfortunately Professor Lubachko's volume is the kind of work more likely to turn away serious students of ethnic relations than to encourage the sort of study needed. Essentially the book is a chronological survey, drawing heavily on the abundant specialized Soviet literature and on Belorussian émigré publications. Since much of this literature is in Belorussian, a critical summary would be of some service, although even in this respect Nicholas Vakar's work provides what is needed except for the last twenty years (it is not clear why Lubachko gives 1957 as his terminal date, since virtually no significant information, even of a chronologically descriptive nature, is provided for the post-Stalin period). In fact, Lubachko's volume is neither critical nor comprehensive. Although much space is devoted to the general Soviet background of Belorussian affairs, use of major analytical studies is spotty. Even some major works dealing specifically with Belorussia (Zbigniew Brzezinski's *Permanent Purge* and Maurice Hindus's books) are omitted. Chapter 7, on collectivization, has astonishingly little material on specifically Belorussian aspects, despite the availability of highly revealing demographic data in, for example, the 1941 economic plan captured by the Germans. Thus, despite the overwhelming evidence that the Kazakhs, at least, suffered more than the Belorussians, the author is able to assert that the human cost of collectivization was greater for the latter than for any other ethnic group except the Ukrainians.

Even more serious than the documentary omissions is Lubachko's failure to *pose* the fundamental questions of Soviet Belorussian development, even if he could not answer them conclusively. His excellent maps and brief textual discussion point to the fact (often overlooked) that the Belorussian SSR does not include a major Belorussian linguistic area around Smolensk. Yet the study provides no analysis of why the Soviet regime kept this area in the RSFSR, though eventually making other territorial concessions to Belorussia. Similarly, the crucial role of the "gray earth" agricultural conditions is never emphasized. Even the position

of the Orthodox Church (and the considerable Roman Catholic minority) is treated haphazardly. Some generalizations about the purge of the Belorussian party apparatus are made, but there is no analysis (the materials are readily available) of the extent of turnover in, for example, the central committee compared with turnover in other republics.

In sum, this book provides a meager introduction. Let us hope that Professor Lubachko, or others who can use the rich Belorussian sources, will not delay long in providing us with truly sophisticated monographs.

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LENINGRAD DIARY. By *Vera Inber*. Translated by *Serge M. Wolff* and *Rachel Grieve*. Introduction by *Edward Crankshaw*. Foreword by *Harrison Salisbury*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971. iv, 207 pp. \$6.95.

The publication of yet another diary of a survivor of the 900-day siege of Leningrad during World War II may appear, at first glance, not worthy of much notice. Of course, there is the fascination with one of the great epics of modern history. However, much has already been published about the horrors and privations of that siege, which, in the winter of 1941–42, resulted in the death by starvation, disease, freezing, and German bombardment of over one-third of Leningrad's population.

But this diary has other points to recommend it. Vera Inber was a poet, best known for her wartime poem "Pulkovo Meridian." She and her husband, Professor I. S. Strashun, who was appointed chief of one of the city's hospitals in August 1941, were members of the Soviet intellectual elite. Thus the diary reflects both the keen powers of observation and the sensitivity of a gifted poet and provides a view of events from the vantage point of that elite. It is also noteworthy that *Leningrad Diary* was first published in the Soviet Union in 1948, at a time when many Leningrad writers had come under attack by Zhdanov, among other reasons for their treatment of the siege in too gloomy, frightening, or demoralizing a manner. Vera Inber fared better, for her diary reflects her fears and despair as well as her faith and hopes, and her descriptions of the siege are graphic enough. Perhaps the fact that she laced her diary with bits of stories and communiqués which seem to have been copied from Soviet broadcasts and the *Leningrad Pravda* caused the censors to relent.

Leningrad Diary is a very human document of fortitude and courage in the face of incredible odds. As such, it has a timeliness which should make the reader welcome its publication.

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THE STRANGE NEUTRALITY: SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1941–1945. By *George Alexander Lensen*. Tallahassee: The Diplomatic Press, 1972. x, 332 pp. \$15.00.

This is one of a series of volumes in which the author is engaged in tracing Soviet-Japanese relations since the First World War. It parallels the *Istoriia sovetsko-*