not long since rendered Russian diplomacy impotent, well before Miliukov tried to direct it. Specifically, it would seem that the willingness of the British and French to offer Russia control of the Black Sea Straits was less the result of Russian demands than of fears in London and Paris that a Russia whose armies were unable to move forward in East Central and Southeastern Europe would leave her allies in the lurch, as Lenin eventually did during the winter of 1917–18.

What made all the difference in 1917, therefore, was the fact that the United States, though wanting a revision of war aims, was ready and willing by 1918 to more than make up for the defection of Russia, by reinforcing the Allies on the western front. Moreover, if the United States had been available as early as 1914 to help block the German bid for the mastery of Europe, there would almost certainly never have been an Anglo-French offer of the Black Sea Straits to Russia. In any case, as things turned out, and with a considerable assist from the folly of the German generals, the Anglo-Franco-American combination brought down Germany and all her dependents in 1918 without Russian help. The war aims "issue," invented by Lenin in 1914, had served the Bolshevik cause well enough within Russia, by making it difficult for the S.R.'s and Mensheviks to cooperate with the Kadets in 1917. It was significant in the realm of international politics, however, only in the sense that the Germans, after losing World War I, effectively used it to make it difficult for the United States to cooperate with the democratic nations of Western Europe.

C. Jay Smith
Florida State University

CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA, 1928–1931. Edited by *Sheila Fitzpatrick.* Studies of the Russian Institute, Columbia University. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1978. x, 309 pp. $17.50.

Sheila Fitzpatrick and her fellow authors should be congratulated. This is a symposium containing a great deal of original, challenging, and intelligently presented material. Very few readers, even specialists, will be unable to find new facts, insights, and interpretations.

The book is devoted to a decisive and, in many ways, contradictory period. NEP in all its aspects was being overthrown. The overambitious five-year plan was adopted, and then amended ever upward. Collectivization was launched, with all its brutalities. Stalin was establishing his personal despotism. Amid all this turmoil, the ultraleft gained control of Soviet culture for a few years; zealots were given their heads. This was the "cultural revolution" of the book's title, not the quite different and gradual cultural revolution—transforming the backward masses by education which Lenin had advocated. In 1928–31, the semieducated (or lumpen intelligentsia) and Komsomols viciously attacked both the remnants of the "bourgeois" educated strata and many of the established leaders of Marxist thought; possible parallels with China spring to mind.

Why did it happen? What was it for? How much of it was Stalin's doing? Several authors dismiss explanations in terms of objective necessities of modernization, and are quite correct in this. If one wants to industrialize and is desperately short of trained engineers, arrest and dismissal of thousands of *spetsy* are hardly "functional" responses.

In excellent essays, the authors survey the antics of fanatics, who seemed to have the highest support on various cultural "fronts," such as law, literature, town planning, psychology, and education. Then, in 1931 or 1932, these zealots were themselves thrust aside, and most of them eventually perished in the purges.

https://doi.org/10.2307/2497240 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Sheila Fitzpatrick argues that the extremism of the period was only partially controlled by the party, that many participated enthusiastically in what appeared to be the waging of a class war. She and several other contributors link the whole process to the left turn in domestic politics, to the campaign against Bukharin and the "rights," to the adoption of the five-year plan, and to collectivization. It would appear that this led to a swing to extreme leftism in all spheres, ranging from the Comintern to agronomy. Can this be interpreted as the overreaction of obedient comrades, similar to various forms of *peresalivanie* during industrialization and collectivization? Or were they genuine zealots, enthusiasts who hated the *spetsy* and the "bourgeois" scholars, as well as old party intelligentsia, and acted from conviction and not by order? Or, finally, were the excesses also part of Stalin's plan to destroy his enemies? Evidence can be advanced in support of all three propositions, and perhaps all three are correct. It would certainly be wrong to regard the process as only an aspect of the "revolution from above," orchestrated and conducted by Stalin. There was indeed a social basis for the "cultural revolution," and enthusiasm too, as Jerry Hough rightly stresses in his contribution.

However, one can take issue with Hough's use of these facts to attack the totalitarian model. The concept is, of course, open to attack, but serious advocates of the totalitarian thesis do not deny that some strata in society supported the regime. One does not dispose of the view that Nazi Germany was totalitarian by showing that many Germans enthusiastically backed Hitler. Furthermore, in 1928–31, Stalin was still in the process of establishing what later came to be regarded as Stalinism. Before consolidating his despotic rule he still needed to dispose of the zealots, and then to kill a great many party members in the Great Purge. Nor am I convinced by Hough's claim that "the 1931–32 reversal of policy creates enormous difficulties for the view that Stalin was defeated by Kirov in 1934." This seems to be a *non sequitur*; surely no one suggested that Kirov was urging that the zealots be disciplined in 1934. Kirov and his supporters may have been seeking to limit Stalin's personal despotism and to achieve political relaxation and reconciliation. There may indeed have been no "Kirov victory," but the events of 1931–32 are neither here nor there. Incidentally, how would Hough then explain the massacre of most of the Central Committee in 1936–38?

There is nothing in this volume about philosophy and economics, which, in my view, do not quite fit the pattern. The chief victims—Deborin and Rubin—were *not* overthrown by ultraleft zealots but by men such as Mitin and Iudin, who are still harming Soviet philosophy today, as well as by the dull Ostrovitianov. Might not the fate of Deborin and Rubin, and also of Pokrovskii, suggest that Stalin was determined to remove leading "cultural" Communists of authority and standing, and replace them by obedient mediocrities?

Some might also question the assertion that the "conservative" measures of the middle 1930s were a retreat from the ultraradical 1928–31 policies, rather than from the line "followed for the greater part of the 1920s." But surely in respect to, for example, education, historiography, the family (divorce, abortion, and so forth), military hierarchy, *partmaksimum*, the ideology of egalitarianism, and a good deal besides, the retreat was *also* from the 1920s? The same is true of economic *policy*; after the wild extremism of the First Five-Year Plan period, sanity returned, but the methods and doctrines, of course, bore no relation to those of the NEP period, and the economist victims (unlike the surviving engineers) were not rehabilitated.

The book certainly contains some controversial and questionable propositions, but that is all to the good, since it will stimulate discussion. In sum, this is an excellent collection, well edited and well worth reading.

Alec Nove
University of Glasgow

https://doi.org/10.2307/2497240 Published online by Cambridge University Press