

secondary sources, but arranging them in new combinations, the author seeks to demonstrate that choices were made neither randomly nor on purely rational-intellectual grounds. Instead, they depended upon a variety of situational factors, above all, the degree of "embeddedness" of each *intelligent* in the traditional sociocultural world of East European Jewry, and also on the particular sociocultural characteristics of the populations among whom each worked. More generally, this study is designed to show that the intelligentsia—and not the Jewish sector alone—was not as detached from society, nor as totally absorbed in ideas to the exclusion of interests as is frequently asserted.

In my judgment, Brym succeeds in establishing his main point, and in the process, he produces some interesting secondary insights as well. Some of the findings seem like truisms, however. For example, is it surprising that members of the intelligentsia most strongly attached to Jewish traditions and culture affiliated with the Zionists and the Bund? On the other hand, his allegations of the insensitivity of other writers to the role of the social milieu in shaping the views of the intelligentsia are surely exaggerated.

Even though burdened with a ponderous vocabulary, with tables whose basis is not always clear and which are sometimes more confusing than helpful, and with an unnecessarily long (and yet often simplistic) historical background, sociological studies of this kind are welcome.

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KARL MARX: AN INTIMATE BIOGRAPHY. By *Saul K. Padover*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978. xx, 667 pp. + 16 pp. photographs. \$18.95.

Padover's biography of Marx is written in an easy, flowing, and readable style. The author has done a great deal of research for the book. Unfortunately, all of his research was concerned with trivia, because of Padover's aim of writing "an intimate biography," designed to reveal Marx as a "lover, husband, friend, fighter, father, foe" rather than as a philosopher or revolutionary (p. xvi). As a result, the reader is treated to six hundred and sixty-seven pages of highly irrelevant gossip. Padover discusses in gory detail every illness Marx had (from carbuncles to liver problems), every boyhood poem (most of which are very bad), every alleged love affair (so what?), and Marx's momentary attitudes toward friends and foes (mostly petty and irrelevant).

What Padover does not tell us are the answers to all the important questions about Marx: What were the origins of his ideas? What were the prior philosophies and state of the social sciences? What socioeconomic conditions moved Marx to write as he did? What were the socioeconomic conditions that made his ideas acceptable to many people immediately and to millions of people eventually? How did Marx's ideas evolve from youth to maturity? None of these questions are relevant to Padover's project of showing us the intimate Marx, and therefore, none of them are answered. His approach may be useful for studying the life of Rudolph Valentino, but for a figure like Marx—whose ideas were shaped by history and have shaped history—such an approach is a sheer waste of time and a frustration for the reader.

Padover notes that the standard biography of Marx is Franz Mehring's *Karl Marx: The History of His Life*, which is still the best biography, because Mehring does answer all the important questions that help us to understand Marx's evolution and influence. Of course, Mehring writes from a Marxist point of view, as does Isaac Deutscher in his powerfully moving and informative biographies of Stalin and Trotsky. Unfortunately, although Padover seems to have read all the collected works of Marx in German, in Russian, and in English, he does not seem to have understood the

main contribution Marx made to historical theory. The biography of a major historical figure can only be understood in terms of the class struggles that shaped his or her life and that provided an audience for his or her ideas. Since Padover is non-Marxist and writes in a social vacuum, there is, of course, no way that he can explain Marx.

A secondary problem with the book is its bias. In his author's note (p. xvi), Padover tells us that *no one has yet written an objective account of Marx*, and that he will write one. This is a suspicious beginning because it is impossible to write a nonpartisan account of Marx. Padover's book is filled with biased statements. He tells the reader that Marx had a "demonic genius" (p. 1), a "lifelong antipathy for Jews privately" (p. 2, for which he presents no evidence whatsoever), and a tendency toward "untidiness," "improvidence," and "slothfulness" (p. 13). Marx's clothes may have been untidy, but is that relevant to his ideas? Padover seems to define Marx's "improvidence" by the fact that he chose the life of a revolutionary rather than that of a comfortable bourgeois lawyer.

There is nothing in the book to show that Marx was slothful. On the contrary, Marx did an enormous amount of work. Padover complains that Marx took too long to finish *Das Kapital* and speculates that Marx may have been afraid to publish it because of the criticism he anticipated. This is an amazing hypothesis when one considers everything else Marx wrote. Nor was the delay in publishing it attributable to slothfulness. Padover contradicts himself by showing in great detail that while Marx was working on *Das Kapital* he was made so miserable by poverty that it was often impossible to work, because (1) his wife and children were always ill from undernourishment and bad housing conditions, and he therefore had to nurse them, and (2) Marx himself was often too ill to work. Moreover, in those years Marx spent most of his time leading the First International against tremendous odds, a task that demanded a great deal of his energy. Padover, however, thinks the International was a waste of time, and Marx should have stuck to writing books the way Padover does.

All in all, a truly forgettable biography.

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RUSSIA IN REVOLUTION, 1900–1930. By *Harrison E. Salisbury*. Designed by *Jean-Claude Soares*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978. 287 pp. Illus. \$18.95.

Although this work appears under the signature of Harrison E. Salisbury, it gives the impression of having been produced by a committee. It is a popularization of the Russian Revolution, its background and consequences, with special emphasis on its effect on Russian art. The price is right, and the name Salisbury is a major selling point.

The book is lacking in ideas, even in popularized form, and contains a few factual errors, such as the assertion that Trotsky was the son of a manufacturer. Furthermore, unlike most of Salisbury's writings, it fails to present a consistent vision. It shifts from one eye-catching scene to another, from a Massie-like portrait (bereft of context) of the royal family to a picture of the downtrodden masses, then from the masses on the move (the enraged muzhik, rifle in hand and unafraid for the first time, throwing his weight against order and culture) to a somewhat complex portrait of Lenin seeking to direct and to some extent mute the fearful energy of the masses, then finally to the terrible offspring of the Revolution—Stalin, state worship, and the demonic growth of state power. These are standard images, but in this case they are not organically fused. Rather, they are stitched together by a highly professional (although occasionally mawkish) prose, skillful narrative construction, and a sentimental tone.