

tions both within the "bourgeois" political science tradition and the Marxist tradition. Her constant readiness to point out rather than avoid analytical issues and to state her own position firmly (but without arrogance) is both one of the great virtues of this book and an inevitable provocation to critics of both the Right and the Left. Apart from a few factual errors, the other most likely object of criticism is the author's decisions about what to cover and in how much detail. Some will regret the omission of serious discussion of nationalities, the scant treatment of governmental machinery (in contrast to the excellent account of the Communist Party), or the "broad-brush" discussion of policy making. My own complaint is that little attention is paid to the informal processes and relationships that play such a large part in the operation of this, as any other, bureaucratic system.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, this is the best introduction to Soviet politics available in English, and its production as a Penguin paperback should ensure its reaching the more general audience it deserves, as well as its wide use in political science and history courses. The specialist will also benefit from reading it, if only by being forced (as I was) to reexamine some of his favorite assumptions.

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CONTEMPORARY SOVIET POLITICS: AN INTRODUCTION. By *Donald D. Barry and Carol Barner-Barry*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978. x, 406 pp. \$8.95, paper.

Authors of introductory texts face the herculean task of rendering mountains of descriptive data in a form palatable to undergraduates, while simultaneously avoiding any analytic angle that would offend the fetishes of potential professorial purchasers. According to several criteria, the Barrys have produced a good textbook: the material is condensed to a manageable three hundred pages, the narrative flows smoothly as catchy anecdotes are interspersed among generalized descriptions, the major subject bases are touched, and none of the primary schools of thought about Communist governments should react with substantial chagrin.

The book begins by sketching the environment in which the political processes in the USSR operate: the historical background, the ideological underpinnings of the regime, and the major characteristics of the Soviet socialization system. Political and economic institutions are then discussed. The formal constitution, governmental structure, and legal system are viewed as being derivative "superstructures" to the central core of "closed politics" in the Soviet Union—the activities and control of the Communist Party. A necessarily speculative consideration of the methods for influencing political decisions, both within and without the accepted "rules of the game," concludes the treatment of political processes. Two chapters on the economy outline the organization of the command economy and describe the Soviet citizen as worker and consumer. Policy-oriented chapters focus on foreign affairs and on the problems associated with nationality and religious tensions and with social deviance. A concluding chapter sketches how Soviet scholars gather and marshal evidence and argues that the general scope of the "totalitarian model" still applies to the USSR.

As is true for probably every text designed for the space limitations of the current market, those deeply interested in many of the topics treated here may feel that relevant details have been omitted. From an idiosyncratic perspective, more attention might have been paid to systematic interpretations of what really constitutes Communist "politics."

The Barrys display a sensitivity for the departures of political practice from the "formalism" of official thought and goals, but they never really present an overarching conception of praxis (or the lack of it) in the Soviet Union.

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CRIMINAL RUSSIA: ESSAYS ON CRIME IN THE SOVIET UNION. By *Valery Chalidze*. Translated from the Russian by *P. S. Falla*. New York: Random House, 1977. xiv, 241 pp. \$10.00.

Valery Chalidze's book is intermittently angry, in parts dispassionately provocative, and here and there a bit plodding, but, overall, it is well put together and thoroughly informative. In the opinion of this reviewer, it is a valuable book for the nonspecialist in Soviet law, be the reader someone versed in law or Soviet affairs or a lay person seeking to expand his or her knowledge and understanding of Soviet ways.

Valery Chalidze is a prominent human rights activist. Deprived of his Soviet citizenship and refused reentry into his country, he now lives in New York City where he edits a bimonthly journal on matters concerning the Soviet human rights movement he helped to found. He has also written *To Defend These Rights*, a study of the realities of the civil rights aspects of Soviet constitutional law.

The book opens with a brief essay on the Russian criminal tradition, an inquiry into the prevailing popular attitudes toward what might be called *mala in se*. Toleration of crime, glorification of brigands, disrespect for property, and widespread violence and cruelty in the pre-Soviet era are noted. According to the author, the Soviet criminal tradition absorbed many features of this earlier period. The Bolsheviks robbed for the party's treasury, elevated plunder to a principle of revolutionary policy, and harnessed the hitherto diffuse violence and cruelty in the service of the state. It is ironic, the author observes, that keeping violence off Soviet screens in order to lessen incentives to criminal behavior "would not be acceptable ideologically, since it would preclude educational references to the heroic revolutionary past" (p. 211). For the most part, he agrees with the official Soviet line that the criminal underworld has ceased to exist in the Soviet Union but attributes the beginnings of its demise to "[t]he seizure of power by amateur criminals and the underworld's collaboration with the new regime" (p. 71). The chapter on hooliganism is analytic and reflective, particularly with regard to the relationship between the broad definitions of hooliganism and the ostensibly discarded principle of "crimes by analogy." By contrast, the chapters on murder and sexual crimes contain perhaps an excessive number of case synopses. It is also my feeling that the chapter on bribery is not as clearly and crisply written as some other parts of the book; for example, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether bribe-giving or bribe-taking is being discussed. The author's attempt to gauge the extent of criminality in the Soviet Union reveals both the constraints that Soviet crime reporting imposes and the possibilities that a close study of the scattered published data holds out for an interested scholar. Moreover, the citation of the available figures juxtaposed to a chapter on combating private enterprise once again reminds us of the amorphousness of "crime" and, therefore, its virtual uselessness as a measurement unit for purposes of global comparisons.

The bibliographic notes indicate that the book is based entirely on indigenous sources. The book also concludes with a good index. Had this reviewer been in a nastier mood he might have quibbled with a few of the English renderings of the original; despite his mellowness, however, he cannot accept P. Stuchek for P. Stuchka (p. 223).

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