

era of the late 1960s and 1970s, and the chain of *Beriozka* shops became instrumental in developing these new business practices for future post-Soviet capitalism.

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The Art of the Bribe: Corruption Under Stalin, 1943–1953. By James Heinzen. The Yale-Hoover Series on Authoritarian Regimes. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. ix, 406 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. \$65.00, hard bound.

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What was the bribe in the post-WWII Soviet Union, and what can the practice of bribery tell us about society and power during the last decade of Iosif Stalin's rule? To answer these questions, James Heinzen exhaustively worked through the enormous Soviet archival collections of the Procuracy General's office, the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the OBKhSS, and the Communist Party. What emerges from this fascinating scholarly journey is a social and cultural history of Soviet bribery. Both the subject under investigation (bribery) and the historical period (late Stalinism) represent underexplored areas in the historiography.

Heinzen examines bribery from the point of view of both guilty participants and prosecutors. His major focus is on the givers, however, including the scope of social involvement in bribery, people's perception of the bribe, and the extent to which they considered bribery acceptable. By examining a wide range of bribery types and situations when people felt it necessary to offer bribes to officials, as well as the regime's ineffective efforts to fight bribery, Heinzen presents a rich depiction of everyday life and the moral universe of the post-war Soviet Union.

Heinzen proves that in many cases bribery was a rational response, both by individuals and those officials who worked in the police, procuracy, judiciary, and party and state organizations to the injustices of the legal system, as well as a way to correct social inequalities. Within the context of massive post-war disruption, bribes helped people to solve problems with housing, migration, work, and food shortages. Bribes served as a substitute for *blat*—personal connections or power positions. Bribery was a crucial and widely-spread practice, “a flexible tool for maneuvering inside a disorganized economy, and rigid bureaucratic system” (279). This research humanizes bribery, as well as Soviet bureaucrats, and documents why people in many cases were reluctant to report the crime. In drawing a vivid picture of personal initiative in building networks of connections and pursuing goals, Heinzen challenges the stereotypical view of Soviet society as passive. He also documents a transition in state policy, in comparison with the Great Terror when police sentenced people en masse on political grounds. After the war, it operated on the principal of individual crimes or crimes committed by small groups, each with their own motives and methods. The number of people accused of political crimes drastically dropped, and the number of sentences for economic crimes rocketed. The state suppressed bribery, but at the same time, by perpetuating socio-economic, political, and legal systems that reproduced material hardship, social injustice, and harsh unjustified punishment, it promoted bribery.

Bribery was not unknown to the subjects of the tsars and the Soviet population in the 1920s and 1930s. However, the author believes that the post-war period was pivotal in the evolution of corruption. He writes that “a critical turning point in the development of the patterns of bribery that typified the later Soviet era was World War II and

its aftermath" (14). A relaxation of state control over local officials and people coupled with the extreme hardship of the war created grounds for the explosion and transformation of corruption. Nevertheless, according to Heinzen, the conditions that "put many Soviet people at risk, while tempting officials to benefit from their offices" during and after WWII, such as "the dislocation of populations, poverty, extraordinary shortages of housing and goods, the disruption of the courts and the legal system, breakdowns in goods distribution, and famines" (37) also apply to the 1930s, which were marked by colossal migration caused by industrialization and collectivization, massive law abuse during the Great Terror, and mass famine in the first half of the decade.

Thus, the author declares (but does not explore) the continuity between corruption after WWII and the corruption endemic in the Brezhnev period, but seems to underplay the continuity between the 1930s and late Stalinism. Many of the bribery patterns of late Stalinism that he describes existed in the 1930s. Then, as after the war, bribes were paid to get a decent place to live, find a job, secure medical treatment, obtain a passport, and break through bottlenecks to meet plan targets. The author's conclusion that bribery in late Stalinism was a way to navigate "an economy in which markets were suppressed, shortages of all manner of goods and services were epidemic, and bureaucracies were characterized by inefficiency and incompetence" (59) echoes the research on the 1930s black market (Osokina, *Our Daily Bread: Socialist Distribution and the Art of Survival in Stalin's Russia, 1927–1941* [2001], and Julie Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade: Trade Policy, Retail Practices, and Consumption, 1917–1953* [2004]). Although the war and its aftermath created a variety of new situations, the entrepreneurial nature of the people's bribery activities remained the same.

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Everyday Law in Russia. By Kathryn Hendley. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2017. xvi, 285pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Photographs. Figures. Tables. \$45.00, hard bound.
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Kathryn Hendley's book contradicts much of what people are reading today on the operation of law in Russia. The core argument she makes is that law still operates relatively well on a daily basis for ordinary Russian citizens—making this an especially important work for the present political environment. It counters popular misconceptions of Russian justice through clear research based on years of personal observation and careful analysis.

Hendley's research reflects continuity from the Soviet period. My research in that period reached the same conclusion—when citizens' legal concerns did not touch the political interests of the state or the personal interests of highly placed citizens, justice was often accessible and citizens could resolve their problems through the legal process. A persistent observer of the operation of law in the courts and the chambers of state-employed lawyers, she reaches the same results today. Hendley also conducted focus groups with citizens to assess their perceptions of law and the legal process, and to put in context what she observed.

Individual Russians can solve their residential problems with neighbors, familial conflicts, and auto accidents by using the existing legal processes of the Russian state. Without incurring great financial costs or great delays, many issues that significantly affect the daily life of citizens can be resolved successfully by lower-level attorneys of the legal process.