

erty. His best formulations stretch the mind. "Comme les libertins du xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle français, les étudiants russe ne rejettent pas Dieu sans l'avoir interrogé avec passion." It was worth waiting for that.

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INSIDE SOVIET SCHOOLS. By *Susan Jacoby*. New York: Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974. vii, 248 pp. \$8.95.

This book would have been better titled *Personal Impressions of Some Soviet Schools*, for in it Ms. Jacoby recounts her impressions of several formal educational establishments in the European part of the USSR and a few in Tbilisi. Jacoby, a former reporter for *The Washington Post*, spent 1969–71 with her husband, a *Post* correspondent, in Moscow. Unfortunately, she tries to make out of the book something more than just her impressions. She mentions statistics and/or studies about pupils and education in order to verify these impressions, but many of these citations are carelessly done and some of her readings of the literature cited are hopelessly superficial. For example, the author states: "The Soviets do not take part in international testing programs designed to compare the results of secondary schooling in different nations. We know from these studies that Japanese high school graduates display a higher level of proficiency in math than students in other countries . . ." (p. 204). I assume the reference here is to Torsten Husen's *International Study of Achievement in Mathematics: A Comparison of Twelve Countries* (New York, 1967). Actually this study did not test graduates of high schools at all. Most of those tested were thirteen years old. In another instance, Ms. Jacoby asserts that "a disproportionate number of Central Asians . . . rank lowest in educational achievement among the Soviet nationality groups . . ." (p. 24). Here, she is confusing educational achievement with educational attainment. She does not offer any cross-national achievement test scores comparing Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, Turkmen, and Kirghiz students with other ethnic groups in the USSR. To my knowledge these test scores, if they exist at all, have not become publicly available. The author is also in error when she states that "it is understood that native-language secondary schools can not lead to a higher education, since all university classes are conducted in Russian" (p. 159). In fact, at least in Central Asia (and by Jacoby's own discovery in Tbilisi), one can get any university degree without proficiency in the Russian language. There are, of course, other factors at work that push the Russian language to become the *lingua franca* of the USSR, but these cannot be elaborated here.

Ms. Jacoby is apparently correct in observing that "Educational opportunity in the Soviet Union is influenced by three major factors: social class, geography and national and ethnic origin" (p. 135). These, she explains, are the same factors affecting educational opportunities in the United States. However, when citing the literature concerning the United States (recent works on equality by James Coleman and C. Jencks and their colleagues), she exhibits little understanding of the materials beyond what one might gain from reading a book review or a press release from the publishing house. She does not offer any documentation of her generalizations about the USSR. (My own work in higher educational attainment of national minorities in the USSR and the United States shows a much higher percentage of national representation for the major non-Russian peoples of the USSR than for national minorities in this country.)

The strength of this book lies in its freshness, exuberance, and sensitivity to the education of the young. Like a good story teller, Jacoby takes one through a variety of socializing agencies—the Soviet school, the Russian family, nursery school, elementary school, and the upper grades, and then discusses, again with sensitivity, the interaction between school and society. In this connection, she considers the dilemma of efficiency and equity in education faced by the Soviet decision makers and the equally thorny problem of how to satisfy the expectations and aspirations of the young while simultaneously striving for the establishment of the classless society. She ends her book with a very refreshing content analysis of two social studies textbooks (one from the United States and the other from the USSR).

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DIE PETERSBURGER RELIGIÖS-PHILOSOPHISCHEN VEREINIGUNGEN: DIE ENTWICKLUNG DES RELIGIÖSEN SELBSTVERSTÄNDNISSES IHRER INTELLIGENCIJA-MITGLIEDER (1901–1917). By *Jutta Scherrer*. FORSCHUNGEN ZUR OSTEUROPAÏSCHEN GESCHICHTE, vol. 19. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz in Kommission, 1973. 473 pp. DM 88, paper.

The interest of contemporary Russian writers and thinkers in religion gives added significance to the religious heritage of the Russian intelligentsia. (There is a definite connection between *Problemy idealizma*, a collection of articles which appeared in 1903, and *Iz-pod glyb*, which was published in 1974.) In this volume, Scherrer recounts the intelligentsia's quest for religion and inner experience at the beginning of the twentieth century. The undertaking is very useful for all students of modern Russian history, for although there is no lack of writings by the participants themselves, there is little comprehensive analysis of their thought. Scherrer stresses the discussions within the Religious Philosophical Meetings and the Religious Philosophical Society of St. Petersburg (1901 to 1917), but she also recounts the activities of similar societies in Moscow and in Kiev, as well as related publications, such as *Novyi put'*, *Voprosy zhizni*, and *Put'*. She draws up handy lists of participants, gives good synopses of the debates, and catalogs both the issues agitating the intelligentsia and the sources in which the debates appeared.

Scherrer constructs her presentation within the context of the intelligentsia. She argues the formation of a new intelligentsia, clustered around "the new religious consciousness." As proof, she repeatedly musters lists of participants in various meetings, groupings, publications, and, on this basis, hypothesizes the existence of a coherent group. Closer study of the people involved, however, will reveal serious differences among them. Although they all met to discuss religion, inner freedom, and overlooked traditions of intellectual life, there was no unity in their understanding of the terms. Thus, when Merezhkovsky and Gippius—who rightly play leading roles in Scherrer's presentation—speak of the church, they do it in a different sense than Evgenii N. Trubetskoi or Pavel I. Novgorodtsev, both of whom were conventional churchgoers.

A serious drawback of the book is Scherrer's own unwillingness to deal with manifestations of the religious quest and its psychological motivation. The towering shadow of Vladimir Solov'ev could easily intimidate any scholar and Scherrer