

ments. Alexander's initial foray into foreign policy, the author concludes, was a miserable failure, tempered only by one useful lesson: France and Britain would heed Russia's claims only when they could be backed by force.

The narrative is presented with great clarity, thanks in part to the exclusion of other aspects of Russian foreign policy. The reader is left somewhat confused by the generous space devoted to Rostopchin, Panin, Kochubey, Vorontsov, Maria Fedorovna, and the Unofficial Committee, for the author fails to delineate their respective contributions, if any, to Alexander's policies. But can foreign policy in an autocratic state be described successfully without coming to grips with the question of its formulation? The monograph's significance is further reduced by the author's admission that among Alexander's priorities the German constitution was secondary to the Mediterranean, and that the negotiations themselves were nothing more than a passing episode, soon eclipsed by renewed Anglo-French rivalry, which finally permitted the tsar to pursue his interest in the Mediterranean (here the author would have done well to consult Norman E. Saul's study, *Russia and the Mediterranean, 1797-1807*). Given its limited scope, the thesis could probably have been presented more conveniently in article form.

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NAPOLEON BONAPART. By *A. Z. Manfred*. Moscow: "Mysl'," 1972. 724 pp. 2.40 rubles.

Albert Manfred, author of *Ocherki po istorii Frantsii* (1961), has set out to write a biography of Napoleon using sources "insufficiently or not at all studied by specialists," all seen "without preconceptions through the eyes of a Marxist historian of the end of the twentieth century" (p. 5). It is hard to find where he has added new matter of any significance. We hardly need the seven pages—seven lines would suffice—on why Dumouriez was not received by Paul I. It is also difficult to find Marx used in any but the most perfunctory way. Manfred shows throughout his book the decisive role of the personal factor, whether in battles or diplomacy, the abandonment of revolutionary tactics, the reading of Alexander I's character at Austerlitz, the restoration of aristocracy and church, or the pursuit of an endlessly predatory policy against Napoleon's own interests. Never is Napoleon called, as one would have expected, the tool of the bourgeoisie. Manfred has truly abandoned preconceptions, and his book represents a significant advance for Soviet historians seeking to understand an absolute ruler's impact on history. He has moved well beyond the Tolstoyan (and Marxist) caricature of Bonaparte as a mere figurehead for historical forces.

The book is not an advance in Western terms. It is an old-fashioned political biography—pre-Jung, pre-Freud, and pre-Lytton Strachey. But let us be grateful that a Soviet historian has not only noted Josephine but also observed that her infidelity was an important factor in Napoleon's growing disillusion. Manfred is concerned to defend his hero from the historiography which has portrayed him as from the start cynical, cold, calculating, and power-hungry. The author shows that he indeed became so, but only gradually and understandably.

To portray a tragic fall, one must portray what the character once was, and Manfred's best chapters are those on Napoleon's youth, his Rousseauism and idealism when he was a Corsican Don Quixote, his adulation of and disillusion

with Paoli, his involuntary schooling in deception and craftiness, his Jacobinism when it was a deadly risk and not the “bandwagon.” Tarle’s biography allots only twenty pages to Bonaparte before the Italian campaign; Manfred devotes 130 pages to this period, and they are excellent—sympathetic, vivid, and unabashedly aware of the irony and drama of the events told. Manfred appreciates the role of luck and the unforeseeable in Napoleon’s career. The Grand Abstractions, often so unintentionally comic, are given a rest in this book. “The dialectic of the historical process,” first mentioned only on page 462, is forthwith implicitly refuted by the narration.

The Egyptian campaign is handled indulgently as a grandiose plan to raise fellahin against their masters, Greeks against Turks, and eventually Hindu peoples against the British. Bonaparte’s growing cynicism is partly explained by the failure of revolutionary strategy—so successful in Italy—to have any effect in Egypt. There is no mention of Napoleon’s execution of three thousand prisoners at Jaffa. Taking issue with Tarle (and Vandal, Madelin, and Castellet), Manfred denies that Bonaparte returned from Egypt with the aim of making himself dictator.

With the failure of his grandiose revolutionary strategy in the East, Napoleon had to return to the small scale of Europe and abandon revolutionary principles to find allies against Britain. Manfred never questions why the war against England had to continue, but assumes British aggressiveness throughout. Whitworth is blamed for the murder of Paul, with no evidence cited. The resumption of war in 1803 is blamed on Britain’s failure to evacuate Malta, with no mention of Bonaparte’s violation of obligations not to occupy southern Italy. Manfred is thoroughly conversant with Russian, German, French, and Italian sources, but only twice does he cite British ones. (One is Becke’s *Napoléon and the Battle of the Waterloo [sic]*, not available to me.)

With such a bias, Manfred lauds the Franco-Russian alliance and regrets its demise—as though this alliance (if that is the word) would not have meant the permanent subjection of Europe to Napoleon. He holds both emperors to have been sincere at Tilsit, a view which Sirotkin, cited but not heeded, has disproved from Russian sources. Manfred quotes Alexander I’s letter to his mother as proof of his belief that the alliance answered Russia’s needs. In fact the tsar wrote that he must *appear* to welcome the onerous alliance lest Napoleon turn on him. For Manfred, Tilsit granted Russia dominance in Eastern Europe, a strange idea when one considers Napoleon’s subjection of Prussia and creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. The Continental Blockade’s harmful effects on Russia’s economy are greatly underplayed. When the war begins, Napoleon’s famous proclamation of the need to drive the “Colossus of Northern Barbarism” back into her snow and ice is not mentioned.

On the War of 1812 Manfred follows standard Soviet exaltation of Kutuzov and seems to forget he is writing a biography of Napoleon. Kutuzov’s failure to destroy the French and to capture Napoleon at the Berezina is passed over in silence, as is Kutuzov’s reluctance to pursue them across the border. The account of Napoleon’s tactics in 1813 is skimpy, omitting even the classic nine-hour imperial ranting at Metternich in the Marcolini Palace. Marengo is given five pages; Lützen, Bautzen, and Leipzig (“the Battle of the Nations”) are together given a small paragraph.

The most incredible omission is Caulaincourt’s brilliant, balanced memoir of the 1812 war, a classic by the confidant who received the emperor’s first and

last orders of the day and with whom the emperor argued before, during, and after the campaign. Caulaincourt recorded the *rabotosposobnost'*, the *tverdost' dukha*, the blindness, and the bonhomie which Manfred notes elsewhere but which are missing from this chapter, as is the awesome spectacle of a vast army's relentless disintegration.

There is no bibliography, as there was none in the 1957 reissue of Tarle's book on Napoleon, of which Manfred was *otvetstvennyi redaktor*. (Tarle's 1942 edition had an excellent one.) But there are useful footnotes. The index contains names of persons but not of places or topics. Proofreading of foreign words is poor. Thus one finds Rodocanadri (for Rodocanachi), Khissinger (for Kissinger), Insbruck, Saint-Ildefonso, Somosnerra, la politik, progets, Grognhards, Donhadieu, D'Abrantés, and so forth.

Nevertheless this is an absorbing account of a great, tragic figure, a victim of hubris, one who could fascinate Goethe, Leopardi, Pushkin, Stendhal, and succeeding generations. This "cult of personality" was different. One can only speculate on the comparisons forty-five thousand Soviet readers will make with their own recent dictator as they read of a Corsican despot who at the height of his power spoke to Goethe as an equal, who had no cities named after him, who fascinated savants before he had power, who never could bring himself to silence the opposition of the Paris salons, who offered to pardon Staps for seeking his murder if Staps would only renounce this intention (Staps declined), and who, some time after banishing his minister of police to his estates for plotting against him, recalled him to power.

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DECENTRALIZATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT IN RUSSIA, 1830–1870. By S. Frederick Starr. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972. xiii, 386 pp. \$15.00, cloth. \$8.95, paper.

This is a study of the "attempt to reconstitute the decrepit system of provincial government" which was part and parcel of the reform process begun after Russia's defeat in the Crimean War (p. x). It consists of five chapters: the first is devoted to a survey of provincial government under Nicholas I; the second deals with the contours of reform ideology concerning administration at the opening of the reform era; the third describes efforts at legislating administrative decentralization (deconcentration); the fourth does the same for public self-government (devolution); and the fifth deals with the aftermath (1864–70) of the zemstvo reform, primarily in terms of the reassertion of the centralizing tradition.

There is a great deal to commend this work: it marshals to its task an extraordinary range of sources, including an almost astonishing amount of material from Soviet archives, with the result that we have for the first time a systematic study of the whole problem of administrative reform in the context of the other reforms of the "sixties." In the process it provides an unprecedented depth of view into the variety of opinions and maneuverings within the government bureaucracy, which is too often treated in the literature as a monolith. Space forbids a sampling of these wares. Anyone interested in the reform era and in the character of the Russian state can read this book with considerable profit.

There are points of conceptualization and interpretation with which I would take issue. At the conceptual level, for example, I found overdrawn the author's