

The author has chosen to concentrate on the single most sensitive theme in Soviet historiography—the rewriting of party history since 1956—as a means of clarifying the role of history in the Soviet system. After leading the reader through the structural maze of the scholarly apparatus, she supplies fine details on cases of “horizontal spillover” which became inevitable once historians answered Khrushchev’s call to clean up Stalinist falsification. The more truthful history of Stalin entailed a more truthful history of Mensheviks, of Trotsky, of the purges and collectivization. But some historians, such as E. N. Burdzhhalov, who sought historical objectivity even at the expense of the myth of party infallibility, were soon in trouble. The party retrenched and has since tried to guide historians along a path of “contained revisionism.”

The historians have made definite gains through their troubled dialogue with the party. The author declares that Burdzhhalov’s “heretical suggestions in 1956” have become “canonized text in 1967,” and his history of the revolution is the most objective in forty years. In other cases the historians have made less progress: the Mensheviks have been transformed from traitors to misguided idealists, and Trotsky from a “nonperson” to a “semiperson.”

This study gives us the most detailed analysis to date of the complex role of the Soviet historian, who must balance scholarship with rationalizing official policies, perpetuating myths, and legitimizing political authority. It is remarkable that scholarship has made substantial gains despite the persistent political pressures.

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IN QUEST OF JUSTICE: PROTEST AND DISSENT IN THE SOVIET UNION TODAY. Edited by *Abraham Brumberg*. New York, Washington, London: Praeger Publishers, 1970. xiv, 477 pp. \$10.95.

This compilation preserves between hard covers material the bulk of which appeared in the magazine *Problems of Communism* in 1968. Subsequent events confirm the wisdom of the editor’s and publisher’s decision. The documents have retained their sting and their pathos, have proved to point the way to more recent manifestations of dissent in the Soviet Union, and have provided good guidance to the probable actions of the Soviet regime.

The heart of the book contains documents prepared by Soviet citizens, signed with (true) names and addresses, and usually sent to appropriate “instances” in the Soviet government or the United Nations. Most of the documents are links in the chain of repression, protest, secondary repression, secondary protest—in such areas as literature, nationalities, religion, self-expression, and intervention in Czechoslovakia. There are some records, unofficial of course, of trials and board meetings, interrogations conducted by the police or party officials, and a few Soviet news articles.

The documentary section is preceded by brief commentaries from foreign specialists and followed by a few samples of the underground literature of protest. For different reasons, both the scholar and the general reader will be grateful for the perspective contributed by the commentators but will prefer to dwell on the primary material.

A jurist must be struck by the tenacity with which the dissenters bring, now Soviet law to bear against Soviet administrative practice, now Soviet constitu-

tional provisions to bear against Soviet statutes and regulations. The legal arguments, though not highly refined, seem superior to most of what passes for legal reasoning in official publication. It is possible also that they occupy a transitional place in the continuum of protest: injustice is attributed to more than the personal failings of officials, but in most cases the legal objections have not yet been expanded into criticism of Soviet political institutions. Since the time when the documents sampled in the Brumberg book were written, materials quasi-published in the *samizdat* publication *Chronicle of Current Events* as well as essays like those of Amalrik have marked more advanced stages.

The editor has had less good fortune in the belles-lettres put at his disposal. With the exception of part of Brodsky's verses and Siniavsky's trenchant critique of Evtushenko, they elicit more sympathy than admiration, even in Sidney Monas's engagingly magniloquent introductory essay.

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THE LYSENKO AFFAIR. By *David Joravsky*. Russian Research Center Studies, 61. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970. xiii, 459 pp. \$13.95.

There has been a strong tendency among Western observers of Soviet life, especially the Kremlinologists, to treat Soviet decision-making within the framework of Marxism-Leninism. Many have argued that the rise of the Ukrainian agronomist Trofim Denisovich Lysenko and his followers—and their domination of Soviet agricultural practice—was in great part the outcome of ideological considerations. In *The Lysenko Affair* David Joravsky carefully examines the role of theoretical ideology in the rise of Lysenkoism and the suppression of genetics in the Soviet Union. He thoroughly demolishes the arguments that Lysenkoism was in some way inherently connected with Communist theory and that Lysenko's theories were grounded in valid scientific concepts.

In explaining the emergence of Lysenkoism, Joravsky mentions a multiplicity of factors, ranging from the backwardness of Soviet agriculture to the Stalinist concept of the criterion of practice. He demonstrates that the high level of Soviet achievement in biological science, particularly genetics, was not easily applied to Soviet farming, which used agricultural methods that had been common in Western Europe in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Once Stalin rejected the slow but certain methods of modern agriculture to improve crop yields, he left himself exposed to quacks, cranks, and pseudo scientists who conjured a variety of nostrums to stimulate agricultural abundance. Joravsky reveals that these "agrobiological" cranks, harmless and otherwise, deliberately sought to develop techniques to prevent their theories and experiments from being subjected to rigorous scientific questioning and verification, and often presented distorted data to create the impression of having solved Soviet Russia's agricultural problems. At first such "paper" successes were sufficient to satisfy Stalin's epistemology of truth based primarily on the criterion of practice. Although in 1948 Stalin granted the Lysenkoists a monopoly in the areas of agricultural training and practice, Joravsky reveals that before his death in 1953 Stalin showed signs of doubting the wisdom of his decision to support Lysenko's agrobiology. The fact that he was able to reverse himself, especially in the matter of Lysenko's theoretical views, indicates that Stalin was not completely irrational in the area of agriculture. Interestingly enough,