

debate. He has shown that there were few clear-cut categories but there was a bubbling fermentation of groups, mini-groups, ideas, alliances and differences, some mere nuances while others deeply divergent. It clearly bears out his claim that the opposition was heterogeneous and informally organized. One could say the party center was also heterogeneous but, and maybe Reznik underestimates this, much more formally organized.

The early chapters focus on the multi-faceted discussion. One of the two most original chapters focuses on “Techniques of political struggle” (*Tekhnologii politicheskoi bor’by*) which looks not only at the (decisive?) “struggle for votes” but also takes in the role of rumor and secrecy, party rules and enforcement (including a very valuable cameo on the work of Control Commissions) and, in a nod to the rising history of emotions, “the psychology of a Trotskyite” (191). The final chapter consists of fine accounts of the struggle and its outcome in the center and two local raions, Perm and Khamovnicheskii, in Moscow. In addition to the richness of the text the volume is superbly annotated with some eighty pages of invaluable notes.

Indeed, Reznik’s chief contribution is the depth of research. Does it convince along the lines of a new interpretation? Perhaps not. The picture of extreme fluidity he presents could perhaps be seen as general chaos in the party, indicating that, as Lenin’s health forced him into the background, the bitter factiousness of the party, which goes back to 1903, would be hard to keep in check. The constant complaint of oppositions was lack of democracy and weak worker-representation as opposed to the central bureaucracy. The very variety of positions of individuals and tiny groups around these basic orientations shows a critical failure to at least have some semblance of unity. The central bureaucracy is also shown to have major divisions but at least it adhered through this crisis. Some of its self-defense was ironic. Zinoviev argued it was necessary to centralize because of “too strong backwardness” and “the low cultural-political level of the entire mass membership of the party,” formulations which must have elicited a groan from every Menshevik who read them. The fact that the opposition remained small and isolated is perhaps glossed over. Although “emotions” are put into the picture personalities are not. What were Trotskii and Stalin’s personal relations like at this time? Stalin remained, at least overtly, friendly towards Trotskii until the latter’s fatal utterance about Stalin being the gravedigger of the revolution. While oppositionists complained about “military methods” and “administrative repression” being used against them, the picture of how this was done remains incomplete. Above all, the most fundamental cause of bureaucratization, the Bolshevik determination to lead in all aspects of society with only a handful of real “conscious” Bolsheviks, is not admitted by the protagonists or the author. Nonetheless, this an absorbing and well-written book which is compulsory reading for anyone interested in the opposition and the succession struggle. It shows there is still great value in studying party history.

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Nikolai Bolkhovitinov and American Studies in the USSR: People’s Diplomacy in the Cold War. By Sergei I. Zhuk. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017. xii, 274 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. \$110.00, hard bound. doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.345

The focus of the book goes beyond the intellectual evolution of Nikolai Bolkhovitinov (1930–2008), a prominent Soviet and Russian historian, intellectual, and a specialist

in Russian-American relations. By centering on the personal history of a scholar, Sergei Zhuk (who personally knew Bolkhovitinov) simultaneously provides a very detailed account of the construction of knowledge in the Soviet Union about the United States during a period lasting for half a century, from Iosif Stalin to Mikhail Gorbachev. Thus book cleverly explores the social and cultural history of a group of Soviet scholars engaged in the research of the United States, its history, politics, culture, and foreign policy. On the one hand, the book features short and extended biographies of scholars and their personal stories. On the other, these stories reflect how the social, political, and cultural changes taking place in the Soviet Union were shaping the intellectual interest and motivation of the researchers studying the United States.

The development of knowledge about the United States was a fascinating process affected by ideology, politics, doctrines, misperceptions, and at the same time the relentless quest for knowledge. The author sees this knowledge as transforming and rooted in different periods of Soviet history. These periods were characterized by specific political and social features or contexts, in which American studies (in Russian, *Amerikanistika*) have been developing from the 1920s to the late 1980s. Most Soviet scholars who study America had to adjust to the demands of Soviet ideology, cope with their immediate socioeconomic problems, and at the same time engage in academic and cultural diplomacy with their western counterparts at a time when most institutional and personal contacts were severely limited. Not only Soviet Americanists had to cope with the changing realities of Soviet ideological discourse during different historic periods before and during the Cold War. They were also changing themselves, changing from within, as scholars and intellectuals. Their personalities were evolving, which in turn affected their views of history and politics of the day.

By using case studies and interviews, Zhuk opens up the inner world of several generations of Soviet Americanists. There were several such interrelated groups: those who began their work in the early Soviet years, the post-World War II two generation, the researchers emerging during and after Khrushchev's Thaw, the generation of the 1970s and détente, and the scholars of the perestroika generation. Even during the most difficult times and crises in US-Soviet relations, these scholars (mostly after the 1950s) maintained both academic and personal dialogue with their American counterparts. Not only did Soviet Americanists provide advice to the Soviet leadership on American cultural products that could be allowed into the Soviet Union, they also—intentionally or not—served as advocates of western and American soft power.

Amerikanistika has had an uneasy past. Zhuk admits the failure of Bolkhovitinov and others who shared in Russia his non-ideological views and hoped to change the dogmatic and confrontational construction of knowledge of the west and the United States. One of the reasons for the relative failure of the endeavor was the departure of many anti-dogmatic historians and political scientists to the west during and immediately after perestroika. Another reason is political, referring to today's Kremlin's ideology, which frequently encourages a new national-authoritative discourse in history and political science in today's Russia.

The book is based on archival documents, eyewitness accounts, books, research articles, media sources, and more than one hundred personal interviews. The author's style is informal and engaging. Historians, sociologists, and political psychologists—and not only those who study the Cold War—will be enlightened and should find this book very useful in their studies and classes.

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