



PROGRESS QUARTERLY

Critical Introductions to the Reissued Classics

VOLUME III · NUMBER 1

ПРОГРЕСС · МОСКВА

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MARXISM

Following Lenin's Course

Brezhnev in his own voice, 1967 to 1971: the jubilee report, the Lenin centenary, the Twenty-Fourth Congress and the Peace Programme. The ruler's own account of himself, delivered in the years immediately after Prague - evidence rather than history.

Leonid Ilich Brezhnev

Introduction to the 1972 Edition

Almost every book in this series was written about Soviet power by people who served it — institute directors, academicians, editorial committees. This one was written by it. *Following Lenin's Course* collects the speeches and articles of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, delivered between the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution in November 1967 and the Sixth Congress of the Polish party in December 1971. It is the voice of the man himself, at the height of his authority, addressing his own Central Committee, the congresses of the fraternal parties, the collective farmers, the Komsomol. Progress Publishers put it into English in 1972 for the same reason it put out everything else: so that Communists and sympathisers from London to Lagos could read what Moscow wished to be understood as saying. The commission here is not scholarship dressed for export. It is the ruler's own account of himself, and it should be read as such — as evidence, not as history.

The value of that evidence is unusual. When a Progress textbook tells you that the Soviet state embodies socialist democracy, you are reading a functionary paid to say so. When Brezhnev tells you the same thing, you are reading the man who decides what the state does. The gap between the words and the deeds is therefore not the gap between a propagandist and reality; it is the gap between a ruler's self-description and his own conduct, and the conduct is a matter of record. The central fact about this book — the fact that governs how it must be read — is that its author, in August 1968, had ordered the armies of five Warsaw Pact states into Czechoslovakia to crush a reform movement inside the Communist Party there, and had justified that invasion with a doctrine of limited sovereignty that now carries his name. The speeches gathered here are the speeches of the author of the Prague intervention explaining why he follows Lenin's course. We can test that claim against the one thing this series usually lacks: the deeds of the man making it.

What the speeches are, and when

The volume is front-loaded with set-pieces. It opens with the November 1967 jubilee report, "Fifty Years of Great Achievements of Socialism," a canonical survey of the whole Soviet past — October, the Civil War, industrialisation, the collectivisation of 1929–30 (which the book calls "one of the key components of the socialist revolution," breaking "the resistance of the last and numerically largest exploiter class, the kulaks"), the Great Patriotic War, the postwar recovery. It closes with the great occasion of Brezhnev's early rule: the Report of the Central Committee to the 24th Party Congress of 30 March 1971, and the six-point programme of foreign policy — the "Peace Programme" — announced there. Between them sit the speeches to the international meeting of Communist parties in June 1969, the Lenin-centenary report of April 1970, and a chain of congress addresses to the Polish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, East German and Yugoslav parties.

Establish the date of the argument, not the date on the spine. The 1972 imprint is honest here: nothing in the book postdates December 1971, and the load-bearing texts are of 1969–71. This matters because it fixes what Brezhnev knew and had done when he spoke. The June 1969 speech was delivered ten months after the tanks entered Prague; the 24th Congress report, thirty-one months after. Czechoslovakia was not a distant memory to be smoothed over. It was the freshest and largest act of his own foreign policy, and — as we shall see — he did not smooth it over. He defended it.

The doctrine: "Lenin's course" as a claim of title

The book's title is its thesis. Everything Brezhnev does, he does because Lenin would have done it; the legitimacy of the Soviet state and of his own leadership rests on unbroken descent from the founder. "Our Party and the Soviet people feel that the best way to express unbounded respect to the memory of Lenin is always and steadfastly to follow the course charted by him." The word Leninist is applied to

everything — the general line, the principles of economic management, the standards of Party life, the policy of peace.

Two of these claims of descent are worth pinning down, because they can be checked, and because both recur across the whole series. The first is peaceful coexistence. Brezhnev repeatedly presents the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems as "a principle substantiated by Lenin," and in the Lenin-centenary report he is more specific: "It was Lenin who advanced the proposition for 'peaceful co-habitation' or, as we now call it, peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems." Notice what the quotation marks contain. They contain peaceful co-habitation — Brezhnev's own gloss on what Lenin supposedly said — not a quotation of Lenin using the phrase. This is a pattern the sibling volumes in this series display without exception: in D. Tomashevsky's *Lenin's Ideas and Modern International Relations* (Progress, 1974) the phrase "peaceful coexistence" never once appears inside a quotation from Lenin across the whole book, and in *The Priorities of Soviet Foreign Policy Today* (Progress, 1981) it occurs ninety-four times and never inside one. The pedigree is asserted in the leader's own voice and attached to a Party congress, not to a citable line of Lenin's. That is not an accident of Brezhnev's speechwriting. It is because the doctrine, as a doctrine, is not Lenin's; the earliest attested Soviet use of the actual phrase is Chicherin's, in 1920, a fact one of the Progress authors themselves supplies.

The second claim concerns the state. Here the book makes a move that ought to stop any reader who has opened Lenin's *The State and Revolution* (1917). Brezhnev announces that the Soviet state has changed its nature: "the Soviet state, which originally was a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has become a people's state, a political organisation of the whole people with the working class playing the leading role." This is the "state of the whole people" doctrine of the 1961 Party Programme, and it is offered as the fulfilment of Lenin. But *The State and Revolution* argues the opposite trajectory. Lenin's book is about the withering away of the state — about the proletarian half-state that, from the day after the revolution, begins to dissolve itself: standing army and police replaced by the armed people, officials elected, recallable at any moment, and paid no more than a worker's wage, the business of government simplified until, in Lenin's deliberately provocative image, any literate person can take a turn at it. The direction of travel is toward less state, administered by fewer specialists, dispersing power downward.

Brezhnev's direction of travel is the reverse. In the same 24th

Congress report he calls, in the plainest terms, for the "further development of socialist democracy and consolidation of the Soviet state," and warns that "without a well-coordinated state machine, functioning smoothly in all its units, it is impossible to run the intricate and sensitive organism of a modern economy." Consolidation of the state machine; smoothly functioning units; a permanent, professionalised apparatus — this is the program of a ruling administration, and it is the antithesis of the pamphlet whose author he claims to be following. When Brezhnev defines democracy, he defines it as something granted from above: "We understand by democracy the involvement of the broadest working masses in social and political life, the provision of conditions in which they do indeed participate in running society." Involvement, provision of conditions, participation — the masses are invited in by a state that remains firmly other than them. Lenin's recallable, worker-waged, dissolving officialdom is nowhere. The word "course" in the title turns out to run in the opposite direction to the map.

The reflexive test: Czechoslovakia in his own words

The decisive material is what the speeches do with Czechoslovakia, and it is more damning than any paraphrase because Brezhnev says it himself, in public, to applause.

He does not hide the invasion; he defends it, twice, in two registers. The first is the general doctrine, stated at the June 1969 international meeting. After affirming that "the socialist countries stand for strict respect of the sovereignty of all countries," Brezhnev lays out the exception that swallows the rule: there are "general laws of socialist construction, deviations from which could lead to deviations from socialism as such," and "when a threat arises to the cause of socialism in that country, a threat to the security of the socialist community as a whole, that is no longer a problem only of the people of the country in question, but a general problem, the concern of all the socialist countries." From which follows the licence to intervene: "such an action as military aid to a fraternal country in warding off a menace to the socialist system is an extraordinary, an enforced measure." This is the Brezhnev Doctrine, in Brezhnev's mouth, before the phrase was coined for it in the West — the doctrine that a socialist state's sovereignty is conditional on its remaining, in Moscow's judgment, socialist.

What makes the passage remarkable is that a few pages later, in the very same volume, Brezhnev denies the doctrine exists. Bourgeois propaganda, he complains, opposes proletarian

internationalism to national independence, and for that purpose "imperialist propagandists have fabricated and put into circulation the notorious theory of 'limited sovereignty.'" The theory of limited sovereignty is an enemy invention — except that he has just stated it in his own name. The book contains both the doctrine and the disavowal of the doctrine, and the reader can hold them side by side.

The second register is the concrete defence, in the 24th Congress report. Here the "political crisis in Czechoslovakia" is addressed directly. The reform movement is redescribed as the work of "internal anti-socialist forces" and "Right-wing revisionism, which seeks, on the pretext of 'improving' socialism, to destroy the revolutionary essence of Marxism-Leninism." The invasion becomes an act of care: "we and the fraternal socialist countries then jointly took a decision to render internationalist assistance to Czechoslovakia in defence of socialism," compelled "by our class duty, loyalty to socialist internationalism." To seal it, Brezhnev quotes the post-invasion Czechoslovak leadership's own document, "Lessons of the Crisis Development," praising the occupation as an act that "saved the lives of thousands of men" and "blasted the hopes of the imperialist circles" — the conquered administration thanking its conquerors, read into the record as proof. He concludes that "the borders of the socialist community are immutable and inviolable."

This is the reflexivity test the series applies to every volume, and it fails it completely. Ask two questions of the book. Can the category it uses to condemn the enemy ever be turned on the author's own side? And is the charge attached to a described act that could be shown not to have happened? Brezhnev charges the Prague reformers with threatening "the security of the socialist community." But the only army that crossed a border in August 1968 was his. The only sovereignty violated was Czechoslovakia's. The "menace to the socialist system" is never specified as an act — no invasion planned by Prague, no capitalist restoration decreed, only reforms inside a Communist Party — while the counter-measure is the most specific act imaginable: half a million troops. The category points one way only. It is available to convict Dubček and unavailable, by construction, to describe what was done to him.

The reply

The Fourth International answered this argument the week it happened, not in retrospect. The United Secretariat of the Fourth International issued its statement on 22 August 1968, two days after the tanks moved, and Intercontinental Press

carried it on 2 September (vol. 6, no. 28). Against Brezhnev's "internationalist assistance," it set four words: the Fourth International "condemns the military occupation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic by the nations of the Warsaw Pact." Against his claim that socialism itself was in danger, it set the counter-diagnosis this whole tradition rests on: "Socialism is not endangered in Czechoslovakia except by the crimes of the bureaucracy." The reformers were not agents of imperialism; they were Communists who "took into account the opinion of the workers of their country," and the statement demanded their release and appealed to the soldiers of the five occupying armies to leave. Where Brezhnev heard a menace to socialism, the Fourth International saw a bureaucracy defending its monopoly of power against its own working class.

That diagnosis was not improvised in 1968. It is Trotsky's, worked out in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936), and it answers Brezhnev's doctrine of the state at its root. Trotsky's whole case is that the Soviet state did not do what Lenin's State and Revolution said it would. "It has not only not died away, but not begun to 'die away,'" he wrote of the state at the end of its second decade. "Worse than that, it has grown into a hitherto unheard of apparatus of compulsion. The bureaucracy not only has not disappeared, yielding its place to the masses, but has turned into an uncontrolled force dominating the masses." For the defence of privilege the workers' state had been "compelled to create a 'bourgeois' type of instrument — that is, the same old gendarme, although in a new uniform." Brezhnev's "state of the whole people" is that gendarme's later self-portrait: an apparatus that has grown, consolidated and professionalised itself for four decades, announcing that it has become the people. Trotsky's category — the bureaucracy as "the sole privileged and commanding stratum in the Soviet society," a caste that rules the masses rather than dissolving into them — explains both the invasion of 1968 and the doctrine used to justify it. A stratum whose power depends on the Party's monopoly cannot tolerate a reform that would open the monopoly, in Prague or anywhere else, and will call the tanks that defend it "internationalism."

On peaceful coexistence, the reply is equally precise and equally contemporary. Ernest Mandel, in "Peaceful Coexistence and World Revolution" (*International Socialist Review*, vol. 31, no. 2, March–April 1970), took up the exact manoeuvre this book performs. "Of late," Mandel wrote, "an attempt has been made to present Lenin as the father of the 'theory of peaceful coexistence,' and a parallel legend has been developed about Trotsky advocating 'instantaneous revolution' in all countries through military interventions of the Soviet

state. Neither myth has any foundation, either in the theories or in the practices of the founders of the Soviet system." Mandel did not deny that a coexistence of states could be sound policy; he granted that "in that most general and abstract sense, the theory is of course correct" — a necessary armistice with capitalist states while the revolution is unfinished. What he denied was the pedigree, and the use to which the pedigree was put: the conversion of a tactical breathing-space into a strategic renunciation, blessed with Lenin's name. This series' companion volumes on the world movement make the same point from the other side — *The Theory and Practice of Proletarian Internationalism* (Progress, 1976) and *Triumph of Lenin's Ideas* (Progress, 1978) both perform the identical substitution of Moscow's foreign policy for Lenin's internationalism, and *Socialism and Democracy* (Progress, 1974) offers the identical redefinition of democracy as something a state provides. Brezhnev's book is the source document those textbooks elaborate.

There is a further claim in the book that the reply tradition answered long before Brezhnev made it: the claim to lead a world communist movement. The June 1969 international meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, which fills a long stretch of this volume, was convened to reassert Moscow's authority over that movement at the moment it was fracturing — against the Chinese party above all, whose "ideological-political platform" Brezhnev denounces as "incompatible with Leninism," and against every current inclined to read the Prague intervention as he feared it would be read. But the authority to speak for the world revolution in the name of Lenin's Comintern is precisely what Trotsky contested in *The Third International After Lenin* (1928): the doctrine of socialism in one country, he argued there, had already converted the Communist International from an instrument of world revolution into an instrument of Soviet state policy, its member parties trained to execute turns dictated in Moscow. A movement so constituted could applaud an invasion and call it internationalism — which, at the 1969 meeting and in the pages that record it, is what a good part of it did, while others, notably the Italians, would not.

What is real, and rational, in the book

A series of denunciations teaches nothing, and this book is not only a defence of the indefensible. Its foreign-policy core — the Peace Programme of the 24th Congress — was a genuine turn, and much of it was sane. The relaxation of tension in Europe that the West came to call *détente* was real, and the Soviet Union under Brezhnev drove a substantial part of it.

The programme's concrete proposals were not empty: recognition of the postwar borders in Europe and the convening of an all-European security conference (which duly produced the Helsinki process); treaties putting a ban on nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons; an end to nuclear testing "by everyone and everywhere"; the dismantling of foreign military bases; a reduction of forces in Central Europe; negotiated cuts in military spending. The volume records the ratification of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Brezhnev even reaffirms the standing offer of "a simultaneous annulment" of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, or as a first step the dismantling of both blocs' military organisations. A world that had lived through the Cuban missile crisis had reason to welcome a Soviet leadership that wanted the arms race slowed and the German question settled by treaty rather than by confrontation. Where these initiatives were serious — and several were pursued and signed — they deserve to be credited as achievements of statecraft, not dismissed as camouflage.

The honest reading holds both halves together. The same book that defends the crushing of Czechoslovakia also proposes measures that reduced the risk of nuclear war, and both are Brezhnev's. *Détente* abroad and orthodoxy at home were not in contradiction for him; they were a single policy. A stabilised frontier in Europe and a recognised division of the continent were precisely the conditions under which "the borders of the socialist community" could be declared "immutable and inviolable" — the peace programme and the Prague doctrine are two faces of one settlement, in which the great powers agree not to disturb each other's spheres, and the peoples inside those spheres are not consulted. That is why the reader should neither swallow the book nor sneer at it. Its peace proposals were largely rational and partly realised. Its account of itself as Lenin's course was false, and it is false in a way the author, unusually, lets us verify against his own deeds.

Read it, then, for what it is: the testimony of a ruler, in his own words, at the moment of his greatest confidence. On the central question — is this Lenin's course? — the witness convicts himself. The man who invokes the author of *The State and Revolution* calls for the consolidation of the state machine; the man who invokes proletarian internationalism sends five armies across a socialist border and denies, in the same breath, the doctrine he has just proclaimed. Lenin wrote that officials should be recallable and the state should begin to wither the day after the revolution. Half a century after that revolution, this book is what its most powerful heir was actually building. The distance between the two is the subject of the whole series, and here, for once, we have it in the ruler's own hand.

MARXISM

LENIN about the press

Lenin on the press, the party newspaper and the journalist's trade, in a substantial compilation with the early Soviet decrees appended. Published in Prague in 1972, in the years when half the country's journalists were being put out of the profession.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

Introduction to the 1972 Edition

This is not a Progress Publishers book. The catalogue files it as one, and the words "Progress Publishers" do occur in it — exactly once, in the Publishers' Note, where the compilers explain that "The translations come from Progress Publishers' edition of V. I. Lenin's Collected Works in 45 volumes." That is the whole of Moscow's imprint on this volume. The colophon on the last page reads:

*Editor: M. Saifulin / Technical Editor: F. Masek /
Published by International Organization of Journalists,
Prague 1, Pařížská 9 / Printed: Svoboda, branch 2, Praha
1, Ostrovní 30*

It is a Prague book, printed in Czechoslovakia at the Svoboda works, and it was commissioned rather than written. The Publishers' Note says so plainly: "The present volume has been prepared by the Union of Soviet Journalists and the Union of German Journalists (G.D.R.) at the request of the International Organisation of Journalists." An editorial board of six is named — A. F. Berezhnoi, B. D. Datsyuk, E. Duziska, Y. N. Zassoursky, A. Z. Okorokov, B. Yanel — with three Soviet compilers, G. A. Golovanova, L. P. Yevseyeva and R. P. Ovsepyan, and an English-edition compiler, A. N. Burmistenko. The book runs to 483 pages. It is the third title in this series whose spine has been credited to a house that did not publish it.

Dating it from the inside is harder than usual, because the copyright page did not survive scanning. What survives points the same way as the spine. The latest work cited anywhere in the volume is its own Russian parent, the collection *Lenin About the Press*, Moscow 1959, from which the government decrees in the Supplement are taken; the next latest is *Decrees of Soviet Power*, Moscow 1957. The English Collected Works volumes cited run up to volume 36, which appeared in 1966, and the Publishers' Note describes the English set as complete at forty-five volumes, which it became in 1970. Nothing in the

book is dated later. 1972 is consistent with all of it, and I have argued from that date.

Take the year and the city seriously, because everything difficult about this book is in them.

In April 1972, in Prague, the reconstituted Union of Czech Journalists held a convention. Its new president, Josef Valenta, told 272 delegates representing 2,700 members that more than 1,200 journalists in the Czech lands had been dismissed from their jobs since the Warsaw Pact invasion of August 1968 — of whom, he said, 255 were "aggressive deviationists" and 150 their "fellow travelers". Intercontinental Press carried the report in vol. 10 no. 20, 22 May 1972, p. 581, under the heading "2,200 Journalists Fired Since 1968", sourcing Valenta's figures to *Le Monde* of 26 April and adding the Danish daily *Politiken*'s estimate of about a thousand more in Slovakia: "Thus the total for the country as a whole would seem to be 2,200 persons — out of 4,000 journalists, radio and TV personnel working in the profession at the time the Soviet-led armies moved into the country." And: "The dismissed journalists have not been allowed to return to their profession, and most have had to find unskilled jobs."

Half the journalists in a country lost their profession, and it was their own union that counted them. In the same city, in the same year, the International Organization of Journalists — which had been headquartered in Prague since 1947 — published a 483-page volume of Lenin whose fourth section is titled "Freedom of the Press."

The purge was not abstract in that year either. In February 1972, Ferdi Zidar, a former editor of the Italian Communist paper *l'Unità* and, according to James Feron in the *New York Times*, then secretary of the International Organization of Journalists itself, was expelled from Czechoslovakia on three hours' notice "on charges of having spoken with former party officials" in Prague; Feron added that "Western newsmen have

been quietly warned to stay away from former party officials and dissident newsmen" (Intercontinental Press vol. 10 no. 7, 21 February 1972). A year earlier, on 19 March 1971, sixteen young Czechoslovaks had been sentenced in Prague for organising a Revolutionary Socialist Party and printing leaflets; their leader, the twenty-nine-year-old teacher Petr Uhl, received four years, the rest one to two and a half. Reuters, reported in Intercontinental Press vol. 9 no. 12, 29 March 1971, p. 266, recorded that Uhl acknowledged writing the group's 1969 manifesto and "told the court that his views and activities were aimed not against socialism, society or the working class, but against the bureaucracy and the state apparatus." In May 1972 the chess grandmaster Ludvík Pachman was tried in Prague for discussing, in a Dutch radio interview, the four-year sentence passed on the journalist Vladimír Škutina; the trial was officially "public" and admitted his wife and six workers holding special cards.

That is the room this book was printed in.

And now the thing that a reader of this series will not expect, and which has to be reported as a result rather than smoothed away: the book itself does not falsify Lenin.

The method that has produced this project's sharpest findings is to take a Soviet anthology, find the Collected Works original of each excerpted item, and read past the closing quotation mark. Applied here, over a wide sample, it returns almost nothing. The volume has about 220 items, of which the contents page marks 109 as "(Extract)" or "(Extracts)" — a much heavier rate of excerpting than the 1947 Marx — Engels — Marxism, where eighteen items of forty carried the marker. But where that volume's cuts fell in a pattern, these do not. What is more striking is what survives whole.

"Party Organisation and Party Literature" (1905) is printed complete. This is the article the Soviet cultural apparatus spent decades repurposing as a general theory of literature, usually by quoting the passage about the "cog and a screw" and stopping. Here the whole thing is printed, including the paragraph that makes the repurposing impossible: "First of all, we are discussing party literature and its subordination to party control. Everyone is free to write and say whatever he likes, without any restrictions. But every voluntary association (including the party) is also free to expel members who use the name of the party to advocate anti-party views. Freedom of speech and the press must be complete." The volume even files the article under "Basic Principles of the Revolutionary Press"

rather than among aesthetics — which is where Lenin put it.

The letter to G. Myasnikov of 5 August 1921 — Lenin's answer to a Bolshevik metalworker who had demanded "freedom of the press, from the monarchists to the anarchists, inclusively" — is printed entire and unsoftened, down to "We have no wish to commit suicide, and therefore, we will not do this."

Lenin's speech on the press to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of 4 November 1917 is printed to its last sentence, and it twice says "Trotsky was right" — including in its opening line: "Trotsky was right: the officer cadets staged their uprising, and war was declared in Petrograd and Moscow for freedom of the press." "On the Significance of Militant Materialism" (March 1922) opens: "Comrade Trotsky has already said everything necessary, and said it very well, about the general purposes of Pod Znamenem Marksizma." Elsewhere the volume reprints a Bolshevik Central Committee announcement recording that "the Central Committee is enlisting the services of Comrade Trotsky, who has succeeded in establishing his own popular organ — Russkaya Gazeta." None of this is glossed. The Name Index gives Trotsky eighteen page references and no characterisation, exactly as it gives Zinovyev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov, Rakovsky, Preobrazhensky, Sokolnikov and Shlyapnikov theirs. Stalin appears in the body of this 205,000-word book once, as the addressee of a letter of 6 December 1912, and the index gives him a single page.

Nor does the selection flinch from Lenin's hardest positions. "The Tasks of the Revolution" (October 1917) is printed saying: "It is necessary to suppress the bourgeois counter-revolutionary papers (Rech, Russkoye Slovo, etc.), to confiscate their printing presses." "Our Thanks to Prince G. Y. Lvov" is printed saying: "They will close down the bourgeoisie's newspapers after openly declaring by law, by government decree, that the capitalists and their defenders are enemies of the people." "On the Significance of Militant Materialism" is printed all the way to its final paragraph, in which Lenin regrets that the working class "has not yet learned to utilise" its power, "for otherwise it would have long ago very politely dispatched such teachers and members of learned societies to countries with a bourgeois 'democracy'" — the sentence that anticipates the deportation of the philosophers six months later. A censoring editor would have cut that. This one did not.

The apparatus is correspondingly thin: no introduction, a Publishers' Note of about 120 words, and roughly thirty notes

signed "— Ed." across the whole book. There is nothing here resembling the operation performed by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in 1947, when it hung a 1,429-word footnote quoting Stalin onto Lenin's sentence about the state withering away. Nothing by a later hand is inserted into Lenin's text at all.

(A note in passing, for a running argument in this series. Counting the stem opportunis-, this volume uses it 128 times in 205,562 words — 6.2 per 10,000, against a pooled average of about 1.5 across the Moscow textbooks in this project's corpus, and 1.7 in the Fourth International's own Tenth World Congress documents. That is the second Lenin volume in a row to score four times the rate of the Soviet books published in his name. The argument that high frequency indicates ritual is dead, and Lenin keeps killing it.)

So where is the operation? It is in three places, none of them textual.

The first is the filing. The book has no chronology. It has nine timeless thematic sections — "Traditions of the Democratic and Proletarian Press", "Functions and Tasks of the Revolutionary Press", "Basic Principles of the Revolutionary Press", "Freedom of the Press", "The Bourgeois Press", "The Opportunist Press", "The Revolutionary Workers' and Communist Press", "The Tasks of the Press in Building a Socialist Society", "Principles of Editorial Work. Newspaper Style" — under which a letter to Plekhanov of 1901 about proof corrections and a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of 1917 become two instances of one doctrine. Twenty years of argument in changing circumstances are turned into a set of standing principles. Nothing is cut; the historical index is simply removed from the whole.

The effect is sharpest in Section IV. Appended to it, under the heading "Supplement", are eight government documents: the Decree on the Press, the decree on the Revolutionary Press Tribunal, the draft resolution establishing a commission on the ties between the banks and the newspapers, the decree on the state monopoly of advertising, the decree on the sale of Soviet publications in post offices, the decision founding the Russian Telegraph Agency, and two orders of the Council of People's Commissars. Every one of them falls between the end of October 1917 and the end of January 1918 — some thirteen weeks. They are the emergency measures of a government three months old, and they are printed under the heading "Freedom of the Press" as though they were it.

The second is the grammar of the Index of Periodicals, and this

is the finding that will bear weight. The index runs to about 4,000 words and roughly 150 entries; it is a real reference tool, describing each paper Lenin mentions. In the whole of it the phrase "closed down" occurs four times. Twice it names an agent, and both times the agent is somebody else: Pravda "was repeatedly closed down by the tsarist government", and Pravda and Soldatskaya Pravda were "closed down by the Provisional Government". The two Soviet closures the index does record are in the passive voice, and both concern papers of the extreme right — Novoye Vremya, "in October 1917, it was closed down", and Moskovskiy Vedomosti, "closed down after the October Revolution in 1917".

For everything else, there is a terminal date and no verb. Nineteen entries give a Russian title whose run stops in 1917, 1918 or 1919 and offer no reason at all. Among them: "Rech (Speech) — a daily newspaper, central organ of the Cadet Party, published in St. Petersburg in 1906 to 1918"; "Rabochaya Gazeta — central organ of the Mensheviks, published in Petrograd from March to November 1917"; Dyelo Naroda, organ of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, "from 1917 to 1919"; Gorky's Novaya Zhizn, "published in Petrograd between 1917 and 1918"; and "Russkoye Slovo (Russian Word) — a liberal bourgeois daily published in Moscow in 1895–1917". Every one of those five was closed by the Soviet government. The Menshevik central organ's terminal month is the month of the Decree on the Press that this same volume prints eighty pages earlier, and the index does not connect them.

That this is a choice, and not a limitation of the genre, can be shown from the very edition the translations come from. The Collected Works note on Russkoye Slovo — Progress Publishers, Moscow, the source the Publishers' Note credits — reads: "The paper was closed down in November 1917 for carrying slanderous anti-Soviet reports. From January 1918 on, it was published for a period under the titles of Novoye Slovo and Nashe Slovo. It was suppressed altogether in July 1918." The IOJ index says: 1895–1917. Moscow's own scholarly apparatus was more candid than the Prague reference tool built out of it.

****The third is the word censorship.**** It occurs twenty-three times in this book. Every single one refers to the tsarist censorship, to the Prussian censorship that suppressed Marx's Rheinische Zeitung, to the German military censorship of 1914–15, or to the Portuguese censorship of 1908. Not one refers to any censorship exercised by a socialist state. Glavlit — the Main Administration for Literary Affairs and Publishing, established in June 1922, which read every printed

page in the Soviet Union for the next sixty-eight years and had been doing so for half a century when this book went to press — does not appear.

This is the sharpened form of the test this series has come to rely on. Error is admissible; the category is not. A Soviet volume can concede that a Bolshevik was wrong about a date or a policy — this one prints Lenin conceding that the 1917 advertising decree was "naive and, to a certain extent, mistaken" and that "nothing came of" it. What cannot happen is that the classification turns inward. Censorship is a thing that other states do to us. There is no word in this book for what was being done, in the month it appeared, to the twenty-two hundred.

The single most remarkable page is the Decree on the Press of 27 October (9 November) 1917, printed in full. Its preamble explains that "temporary and extraordinary measures have been taken to stop the flow of filth and slander", and then says this:

As soon as the new order is consolidated, every administrative measure of restriction with regard to the press will be lifted; it will be granted a full freedom within the limits of its responsibility before the courts, in conformity with the broadest and most progressive press laws.

And its third and last article:

The present decree shall operate temporarily and be annulled by a special decree with the advent of normal conditions of social life.

The special decree was never issued. Instead came the Revolutionary Press Tribunal, whose founding decree this volume also prints entire — including its definition of a press crime as "any spreading of false or distorted information about public developments", and its schedule of penalties, which runs from a fine through suspension and "confiscation of printing-houses" to "deprivation of liberty", "banishment of convicted persons from the capital, particular areas, and deportation from the Russian Republic", and "deprivation of guilty persons of some or all political rights". Then Glavlit. Then fifty years.

The volume prints the promise and the instrument, side by side, and says nothing about either. Its own chronological appendix, "Lenin's Journalistic Work. Outstanding Dates" — a

substantial piece of work, nearly ten thousand words, which runs from the 1890s to Lenin's death on 21 January 1924 — records the government meeting of 9 November 1917 that "adopts the Decree on the Press" and never returns to it. There is nothing after January 1924 because there is nothing in this book after Lenin. The reader is left holding a temporary decree in a volume published fifty-five years into its operation.

None of which makes the book worthless, and it would be dishonest to leave that impression, because the honesty of the text is itself the reason to reprint it.

This is, simply as a Lenin reader on the press, the fullest thing of its kind in English. Nowhere else are the Iskra letters to Plekhanov, Axelrod, Lunacharsky and Gorky, and the seventy-odd notes to the editors of Pravda, Zvezda, Put Pravdy and Za Pravdu, gathered in one place — letters about proof corrections, about paying contributors, about tone, about the impossibility of running a paper from Cracow when the post takes a week. Section IX, "Principles of Editorial Work. Newspaper Style", is a working editor's book, and a very good one. "The Character of Our Newspapers" (1918) is printed complete, and it is Lenin at his most useful and least doctrinal: "Less politics... More economics", and then "Where is the black list with the names of the lagging factories which since nationalisation have remained models of disorder, disintegration, dirt, hooliganism and parasitism? Nowhere to be found." He goes on to ask how many scoundrels have been pilloried "even among the composers in Soviet printing works". The paper he wanted was not the paper that resulted, and this volume prints the evidence.

The two appendices are real scholarship. The chronology is a research instrument no reader could easily assemble alone. The Index of Periodicals is a genuinely useful guide to two hundred European and Russian newspapers, and I have criticised it above for what it withholds and not for what it contains, which is accurate. Whoever built these knew the material.

The reply to a book like this was written thirty-six years before it, and it named this exact operation in advance. In *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936), chapter 3, Trotsky notes that the Soviet leaders continue "to publish the works of Lenin (to be sure, with excerpts and distortions by the censor)" while never raising the question of the gulf between Lenin's programme and their state. On the evidence of this volume the charge

divides: distortion, no; excerpts, yes, and a great many; suppression of the surrounding history, comprehensively. That is a finer result than the blanket charge, and it is more damaging, because it means the compilers could read Lenin accurately and file him anyway.

Chapter 10, "In the Mirror of the New Constitution", is the direct answer to any volume that prints the phrase "freedom of the press" over Soviet material: the constitutional guarantee, Trotsky writes, means "a continuation of the fierce advance-censorship whose chains are held by the Secretariat of a Central Committee whom nobody has elected", and meanwhile Lenin's own "innumerable articles, speeches, and letters... ending in his 'testament'" remain locked up. And chapter 11 states the alternative that the anti-Stalinist left actually held, which was never the liberal one: not a market in newspapers but a "restoration of the right of criticism, and a genuine freedom of elections", assuming "a revival of freedom of Soviet parties, beginning with the party of Bolsheviks". That is the position against which Lenin's letter to Myasnikov has to be read, and it is not the position Myasnikov held either.

Contemporaneously, the answer was being given in the courts of the city where this book was printed, by people who had read the same Lenin. Petr Uhl and fifteen others went to prison in March 1971 for producing leaflets against the bureaucracy, in a state that would publish, the following year, a section called "Freedom of the Press". Uhl's own defence — that his activity was aimed "not against socialism, society or the working class, but against the bureaucracy and the state apparatus" — is the sentence this volume has no filing category for.

Read it, then, as two things at once. It is an honest and unusually complete edition of Lenin on the press: no sentence rewritten, no opponent misquoted, Trotsky praised where Lenin praised him, the harshest passages printed whole. And it is a book with no memory, published by a journalists' organisation in a city where two thousand two hundred journalists had just been put out of their trade, offering as a section heading the phrase that was the charge against them. The first is why the volume deserves to be back in print. The second is why nobody should read it without knowing where it was made.

INTERNATIONALISM

Leninism and Contemporary Problems of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism

The editor of World Marxist Review - Moscow's organ for directing the world's Communist parties, installed in Prague the year of the invasion - fixing what a party may and may not do with the theory of transition. The theoretical settlement of accounts after 1968.

Konstantin Ivanovich Zarodov

Introduction to the 1972 Edition

The name on the spine of this book — Konstantin Zarodov — was, in 1972, one of the most consequential in the international communist apparatus, though it was almost unknown outside it. Zarodov was editor-in-chief of Problems of Peace and Socialism, the theoretical monthly published in Prague and circulated in English as World Marxist Review — Moscow's central organ for coordinating the world's non-ruling Communist parties. He had been installed in that chair in 1968, the year Warsaw Pact tanks entered the city where his journal was printed. The book betrays his position on almost every page: its statistics are "computed according to... articles and materials published in the journal World Marxist Review"; its author reports conversations "with representatives of the journal, one of whom was the author of this book," with French Communist officials, with Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt. This is not a scholar's monograph assembled in a library. It is the considered doctrine of the man Moscow had put in charge of telling the world's Communists what Leninism required of them, written from the city where, four years earlier, a Communist party had tried to give that question a different answer and been stopped by force.

The date is not in doubt and needs no reconstruction. The latest events the book cites are the 24th Congress of the CPSU (spring 1971), the December 1970 crisis in Poland, and the Allende government's first year in Chile; its authorities are Brezhnev's 24th Congress speeches and the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties. The Russian and the English are effectively contemporaneous: this is a 1971 manuscript in a 1972 Progress jacket, and it reads exactly like what it is — the theoretical settlement of accounts after Czechoslovakia, issued at the moment of "normalisation."

What the book is for follows from this. It is not primarily an export primer for a sympathetic Western reader, though

Progress sold it as one. It is a charter. Its subject is "the general laws" and "national peculiarities" of the transition from capitalism to socialism, and its purpose is to fix, against all comers, what a Communist party may and may not do with the theory of that transition. The stakes are named in the author's own summary of his method: the whole history of the movement "strikingly demonstrates that in revolutionary activity success attends those who faithfully abide by the theory of Marxism-Leninism... and, conversely, that failure and error are the inevitable lot of those who depart from Marxism-Leninism or pervert it." The book, in other words, is an instrument for distinguishing the faithful from the deviant. Everything turns on where the line is drawn — and the line is drawn at the transition.

Here is the doctrine, stated as precisely as the book states it. There exist "general laws governing all countries taking the road of socialism," and among the laws "operating in the political sphere" the first is "the leadership of the working masses by the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party." The dictatorship of the proletariat is the form of the whole transition period; it is "the chief instrument for carrying out all the tasks of the transition period," and "socialism cannot be built without such a dictatorship." Deviation consists in "overestimation of the peculiarities of the development of individual countries" — in letting national circumstances dilute the general laws, of which the leading role of the party is one. The single most important thing to understand about this book is that the leading role of the party is not presented as a tactical necessity of Russian conditions, nor as a stage to be passed through, but as a general law of socialism as such, binding on every country and every phase of the transition. To question it is, by construction, to depart from Marxism-Leninism.

This is where the book must be read against the text it invokes and does not follow. Lenin's *The State and Revolution* — written in 1917, weeks before the seizure of power — appears

in Zarodov's list of the canonical works "on the transition." But its argument is nowhere developed, because its argument is the opposite of the book's. In *The State and Revolution* the dictatorship of the proletariat is not the consolidation of an apparatus but its dismantling: the workers, armed and organised in soviets, take administration directly into their own hands; the standing army and the bureaucracy are broken up; and the proletarian state, from its first day, "begins to die away and cannot help dying away." The transition is the process by which the working class, ruling directly, renders the state superfluous. Zarodov's transition is the reverse: the process by which the party, ruling in the workers' name, is made permanent and unchallengeable. The tell is lexical. In roughly 124,000 words, the verb "wither" occurs exactly once — and it is applied not to the state but to capitalism, "which is withering." The withering of the state, the organising thesis of the Leninist text on precisely this subject, has simply been dropped. In its place stands Brezhnev, quoted approvingly: "in one form or another the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., state leadership of the building of socialism by the working class, is inevitable during the entire period of transition." Note the gloss — the dictatorship of the proletariat redefined as "state leadership... by the working class," which is to say, by the party that speaks for it. The self-emancipation of the class has become the administration of the class by the state.

Trotsky drew out this substitution a generation before Zarodov codified it, and the standard against which this book should be read is *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936). Its third chapter turns *The State and Revolution* against exactly the operation Zarodov performs. Trotsky quotes Lenin's 1917 formulation — "the proletariat needs only a dying state — that is, a state constructed in such a way that it immediately begins to die away and cannot help dying away" — and observes that the criticism, once aimed at reformist socialists, "now attacks with redoubled force the Soviet idolators with their cult of a bureaucratic state which has not the slightest intention of 'dying away.'" He recalls that "the state as a bureaucratic apparatus begins to die away the first day of the proletarian dictatorship," and then records the fate of anyone who insisted on it: "when certain incautious Moscow theoreticians attempted... to infer the dying away of the state, the bureaucracy immediately declared such theories 'counterrevolutionary.'" That sentence, written in 1936, predicts this book's method with uncanny economy. For Zarodov does exactly this. He attacks, by name, the "theorists in Czechoslovakia" who had spoken of "the establishment of a socialist state of the whole people" — the notion that the state might begin to lose its coercive, class character — and he files their premature optimism under error. The dictatorship of the

proletariat, he insists, continues. The book does not defer the withering of the state to a distant communism; it treats any move toward it, here and now, as a symptom of deviation.

This is why the book is not, in fact, silent about Czechoslovakia — and the silence a reader might expect is not the finding. Czechoslovakia is named more than sixty times; "1968" appears throughout. The Prague Spring is present on almost every theme the book touches, always as the negative example, the thing the general laws exist to forbid. Zarodov quotes Gustáv Husák — installed to run the country after the invasion — at the 24th Congress: "the deviation from fundamental Leninist principles, from the general laws of socialist construction was the cardinal reason for the crisis development and cumulative offensive of the counter-revolutionary forces in Czechoslovakia in 1968." He attacks the Czech reform philosophers individually — Vítězslav Gardavský, whose remark that for Marx "socialism meant the realities and the historical process of the contemporary world" is dismissed as "a glaring falsification of Marxism"; Čestmír Císař; the authors of *50 Years of Socialism*. And in the single most revealing passage in the book, he names precisely what the reformers' crime had been. "First an attempt was made to divest the party of its advanced, vanguard role... Another thesis envisaged turning the party into an element of the political system which would include opposition parties." That is the whole indictment. The Prague reformers had proposed to make the ruling party one institution among several, answerable to others — to give the transition, in other words, a democratic content. Against that proposal the entire apparatus of "general laws" is mobilised. The book's doctrine and the tanks are two expressions of one decision.

Apply to it the test this series applies to every such volume: not how often it uses the word "opportunist," but whether the category can ever turn inward. Here the answer is unusually explicit, because Zarodov supplies the criterion himself. On the questions of democracy and dictatorship, he writes, "the answer to these questions is the criterion for determining who is an opportunist and who a Marxist-Leninist. These were the questions that were in the centre of the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968–1969." The category is a boundary marker, and it points in one direction only. Bolsheviks may err — the book concedes mistakes of tempo, of balance between the general and the specific, "as, for example, in Poland and Hungary." But no one who remained inside the apparatus is ever an opportunist. The classification never reaches the CPSU, the party leaderships, or the author. It is reserved for those on the far side of the line: the Czech reformers, the

"Left" Trotskyists, the Chinese "splitters," the social democrats. The label tracks which side of the 1968 divide a person stood on, never the content of what they did. That is the finding, and it does not depend on any count.

What the doctrine forbade in theory, the state was enforcing in practice as the book went to press — and here, for once, the reply is exactly contemporaneous. In the same months of 1972 in which Progress issued *Leninism and Contemporary Problems of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism*, the Fourth International's weekly *Intercontinental Press* was reporting from "normalised" Czechoslovakia. On 11 September 1972, under the headline "Forty-Six Sentenced in Three Weeks of Trials," Jon Rothschild described how "from July 17 to August 11, the regime headed by Communist party General Secretary Gustav Husak conducted nine witch-hunt trials," sentencing forty-six people — most of them Communists and socialists who had supported the reform — to prison terms of up to six and a half years, in proceedings closed to press and public in violation of Czechoslovak law. The only "illegal" written material the regime could cite, the report noted, was a leaflet distributed before the November 1971 elections "reminding Czechoslovak citizens of their constitutional right not to vote." An earlier issue (22 May 1972) recorded that 2,200 journalists had been dismissed since 1968. This is the "democratic content" of Zarodov's transition, observed from the ground: a party made the general law of socialism, jailing socialists for a leaflet. The doctrine in this book and the sentences in those courtrooms are the same proposition, stated once in the language of theory and once in the language of the penal code.

The same doctrine governs the book's international chapters, where "the general laws" become the constitution of the whole "socialist world system" — the theoretical charter for the states of the socialist camp and, at its edges, for those on the "non-capitalist path." Zarodov devotes an approving passage to the multi-party "national fronts" of the European People's Democracies — the National Front in Czechoslovakia, the Fatherland Front in Bulgaria — and presents them as proof of Communist pluralism: "The experience of this co-operation in the People's Democracies between the Communist and other parties supporting the line of socialist construction completely refutes the slander that the Communists cannot be good partners and do not permit the existence of other parties after they come to power." But the sentence a few lines earlier states the condition on which those parties exist: they "recognise the leading role of the Marxist parties of the working class." The other parties are tolerated exactly insofar as they accept subordination in advance. This is not a refutation of the charge

that the Communists forbid genuine opposition; it is a restatement of it in emollient language. And it collapses entirely against the book's own evidence, for the thing the Czech reformers had proposed — a party that was "an element of the political system which would include opposition parties" in the ordinary sense, answerable rather than commanding — is precisely what the National Front was designed to prevent, and what its members were being jailed in 1972 for having wanted.

The book's handling of Trotsky belongs to the same operation and shows the same method — attack a position by describing it wrongly. "Trotsky's theory of 'permanent revolution,'" Zarodov writes, "was also a variety of opportunism. He argued that the peasants were incapable of revolutionary action... and should seize power without delay and in future count solely on the internationalist support of the proletariat of other countries." This is the standard caricature, and it inverts the theory's actual structure. What Trotsky argued was that the completion of the revolution could not be confined within the national arena — that a workers' state in a backward country could begin socialist construction but could not consummate it in isolation. The theses of *The Permanent Revolution* distinguish the beginning of the revolution on the national stage from its completion on the world stage; the Soviet polemic collapses the two, so that Trotsky is made to say that socialist construction in Russia was impossible and should not be attempted — a claim he never made. The book reaches for Isaac Deutscher as a modern proxy and quotes him accurately (from *The Unfinished Revolution*, 1968) to the effect that "socialism in one country" expressed "the national narrowness of its authors," then treats the quotation as self-evidently absurd. But the tradition it is caricaturing had already given the constructive answer. In *The USSR and Problems of the Transitional Epoch* (1938), part of the founding programme of the Fourth International, Trotsky wrote that the degeneration of the Soviet state into "a weapon of bureaucratic violence against the working class" was "the most convincing refutation — not only theoretically, but this time, practically — of the theory of socialism in one country." The prognosis was not that the USSR was not a workers' state but that it was a degenerated one, whose bureaucracy would either be overthrown by the working class or would itself restore capitalism. That the second alternative is what eventually occurred is not a point this introduction needs to press; it is enough to say that the book answers a Trotsky it has invented, and never the one who wrote. The tradition's own mature, constructive reply to the doctrine defended here — that genuine workers' power requires the plurality of parties and tendencies the book forbids — was set out programmatically

in the Fourth International's resolution Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Socialist Democracy, drafted by Ernest Mandel and adopted in 1979 and, in revised form, in 1985. It postdates this book and is named here as the tradition's considered answer, not a contemporaneous one; but its target is precisely the doctrine that a single party expresses the unity of a classless society.

None of this means the book is worthless, and to say so would discredit the criticism that precedes it. Where Zarodov expounds Lenin on the transition itself — as distinct from turning Lenin into a warrant for the party-state — the writing is substantial and, on its own terms, honest. His account of the New Economic Policy is a fair one. He presents NEP correctly as a retreat undertaken "with the purpose of strengthening the worker-peasant alliance, which is an indispensable condition for successful socialist construction," describes the replacement of grain requisitioning by the tax in kind, the reopening of the market to the peasant's surplus, the concessions to foreign capital, and Lenin's willingness to use state capitalism because, "with the key positions in the hands of the proletarian state, this revival did not harbour much danger." He is right that Lenin regarded state capitalism as no threat to a working class that held power, and right to root the co-operative plan and the whole NEP in the worker-peasant alliance — the *smychka* — rather than in coercion. The chapter on the transition period restates Marx's proposition from the Critique of the Gotha Programme accurately, and correctly rebukes those (Zarodov names Rykov) who denied that a transition period exists at all. On the law of uneven development, on the interdependence of the world revolutionary process, on the peasant question as Lenin actually posed it, the book is a competent guide to the doctrine. A reader who wants to know what the Soviet establishment of the early 1970s taught about Lenin and the transition, in its own words and at its most coherent, will find it here set out clearly.

The irony is that this genuine material is exactly what the book's central argument cannot digest. Lenin's NEP was a retreat premised on the self-activity of the working class and its alliance with the peasantry — a wager that socialism could be built by the workers and peasants, gradually, through their own economic institutions, with the state contracting as they grew. Zarodov reports all of this faithfully in Chapter 5 and then, in the same book, makes the permanence and unaccountability of the party the general law of the whole enterprise. The two propositions do not cohere, and the book never reconciles them, because they cannot be reconciled. The living content of Lenin on the transition — the alliance, the

gradualism, the co-operatives, the insistence that the state was to be a "dying" state from the first day — pulls against the conclusion the book exists to defend. That tension is the most instructive thing in the volume, and it is present precisely because Zarodov was too able an expositor to suppress the sources entirely.

So the book's honesty is finally in its title. It is Leninism, applied to the contemporary problem of the transition — and on the one question that decides everything, it turns Leninism into its opposite. Where Lenin made the transition the self-emancipation of the working class and the withering of the state, this book makes it the consolidation of the party that rules in the workers' name and the permanence of the state that Lenin said should begin to die on its first day. It was written in Prague, in the shadow of an invasion, by the man Moscow trusted to police the doctrine, in the same season that the courts a mile from his office were sentencing Communists for a leaflet. Read it, as this series recommends its companion volumes be read — V. Chkhikvadze's *The Soviet Form of Popular Government and the Machulsky–Topornin Socialism and Democracy*, both of which defend the same identification of the party with the class — as the most articulate statement available of what the largest state claiming descent from October taught about the road it had taken, and as a document of the moment that road was closed to any other traffic.

INTERNATIONALISM

Maoism Unmasked: Collection of Soviet Press Articles

Fourteen articles from the Soviet press, each footnoted to its source, arguing that Mao substituted will for conditions. Rummyantsev's philosophical essay - tracing Mao's dialectics back through Bogdanov to Herbert Spencer - is a real piece of criticism.

Vitaly Fyodorovich Feoktistov

Introduction to the 1972 Edition

The subtitle is doing more work than it looks. Maoism Unmasked is not a book somebody wrote; it is fourteen articles lifted out of Soviet journals and bound together, and every one of them carries its origin at the foot of its last page. That habit — rare enough in this literature to be worth praising — lets a reader do something the volume never intended, which is to date it. Fedoseyev's opening essay comes from *Kommunist* no. 5, 1967. Rummyantsev's philosophical attack is *Kommunist* no. 2, 1969. Ivanov on Confucius and Batalov on practice are *Voprosy filosofii* nos. 7 and 3 of 1969; Titarenko is *Filosofskiy nauki* no. 4, 1969. The economic section runs through *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodniye otnosheniya* (1967), *Politicheskoye samoobrazovaniye* (1968 and 1969), *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta* (May 1969) and one piece of newspaper journalism, Sladkovsky in *Izvestia* of 27 April 1970. The foreign-policy section is *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn*, 1968 and 1969.

That is the whole range: April 1970 at the latest, and the bulk of it 1969. The spine says 1972. In the two years between the newest article here and the English edition, Lin Biao — named in these pages as Mao's spokesman and the author of the "world village" thesis — died fleeing China, and Richard Nixon shook Mao's hand in Peking. Neither event appears. A companion volume in this series, the Konstantinov and Sladkovsky *Critique of Mao Tse-tung's Theoretical Conceptions*, was still being adjusted in early 1972 and footnotes the Peking reception; this one was simply reprinted. Read it, then, as a document of 1969, exported in 1972 to hold ground that had already moved.

Who wrote it matters here more than usual, and two of the names should stop a reader of this series cold. A. Rummyantsev, who supplies both the philosophical demolition of Mao's dialectics in Part I and, with A. Sterbalova, the long economic

study that opens Part II, is the same Rummyantsev who fifteen years later edited *A Dictionary of Scientific Communism* — the volume with no biographical entries at all, a thousand words of hostility under "Trotskyism", and the Terror of 1936–38 rendered as a passage in which "socialist changes during the second five-year-plan period (1933–37)... eliminated the internal forces that wanted to restore capitalism." E. Batalov, whose essay "Destruction of Practice" is the best piece of philosophy in this book, is the Batalov who six years later published *The Philosophy of Revolt*, a genuinely learned study of Marcuse and the Western New Left in which the words Czechoslovakia, Khrushchev and Twentieth Congress do not occur. Sladkovsky, director of the Institute of the Far East, is a responsible editor of the Konstantinov volume. Fedoseyev was an Academician and vice-president of the Academy of Sciences, a man who had run Bolshevik in the late 1940s and the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in the 1950s. Kapitsa was a diplomat-sinologist. Others — K. Ivanov, A. Vladimirov, N. Kapchenko — appear as an initial and a surname and cannot be securely identified at all.

So this is the Soviet philosophical and area-studies establishment, at close to full strength, prosecuting a single charge. And the charge is the interesting thing. It is not primarily that Mao's policy failed. It is that Mao substituted will for conditions. "It has rejected the materialist understanding of history in favour of voluntarism," Fedoseyev writes; the "magnification of the role played by the subjective factor is ultimately reduced to the influence of a 'great' personality on the social process." The book returns again and again to Mao's 1958 image of the Chinese people as "a sheet of clean paper" on which "one can write the newest and most beautiful words, and draw the newest and most beautiful pictures" — for these authors the single most damning sentence Mao ever uttered, because it treats a society as material with no properties of its own.

Is the argument good? In places it is very good indeed, and a reader should know where.

Rumyantsev's *Kommunist* essay is a real piece of philosophical criticism. He tracks Mao's account of contradiction from the 1937 Yan'an lecture into the edited text of "On Contradiction" in the *Selected Works*, notes that "this text had been edited and does not at once reveal what he really means", and shows that the earlier version said flatly that opposites "are enemies hating each other". He shows that Mao's schema — equilibrium, disturbance, new equilibrium — is not dialectics but the mechanistic theory of equilibrium under another name, and traces it back through Bogdanov's *Philosophy of Living Experience* to Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*. He is right that Mao's examples collapse the distinction between genuine dialectical opposites and any pair of contraries whatever; the passage where Mao lists "above" and "below", "misfortune" and "good fortune", landlords and tenants, bourgeoisie and proletariat as instances of one relation is quoted in full, and it does not survive the quotation. The essay is unkind but not unfair on Mao's formation: that he came to Marxist philosophy in 1933 through textbooks and popularisations, that many of his Lenin citations are second-hand, and — the sentence with the sting — "Mao Tse-tung knows no foreign language."

Batalov's essay is better still, and it is the reason to keep this book. Working from the Chinese texts and from Mori Nobushige's Japanese critique, he argues that Mao severs perceptual from rational knowledge, ties practice only to the perceptual, and so strips practice of thought: "Practice degenerates into blind, unconscious, thoughtless activity." What is left for ordinary people is obedience — the individual "reduced to the blind performance of the will of the 'great leader', to that of a 'stainless cog' of a mammoth machine, set in motion personally by the 'helmsman', who ruthlessly 'changes' these 'cogs' if they begin to 'rust', i.e., to think." He then defends the intelligentsia, at length and without embarrassment, against a state that had decided intellectuals were a problem to be solved: he objects to the "brainwashing" campaigns, to the practice by which "it became customary to send intellectuals to the countryside for long periods of 're-education through labour'", and to a political climate in which "critical thinking and an uncompromising attitude to shortcomings were assessed as counter-revolutionary; any accomplishment distinguishing a person from the masses was qualified as egoism and egocentrism and, consequently, as 'revisionism'." He quotes Gramsci, in Italian, from the 1949 Rome edition, against the reduction of ordinary people to their own common sense. Whatever else this is, it is not hackwork.

Titarenko supplies the moral argument, and one paragraph of it is a theory of bureaucracy in miniature. Petty-bourgeois adventurists in power, he writes, "after gaining control of the instruments of compulsion... make them self-contained, independent and free from control from below and turn them into weapons, which the regime uses to preserve itself and extend its authority." Against that he sets Marx on the Commune: leadership must act "in bright daylight, with no pretensions to infallibility, not hiding itself behind circumlocution offices, not ashamed to confess blunders by correcting them." Both sentences were printed in a Soviet philosophy journal in 1969, a year after the tanks entered Prague.

The economic half of the book is where the reporting is, and it is largely sound. Rumyantsev and Sterbalova reconstruct the tiny weight of the industrial working class in Chinese society — under one per cent of the employed population in 1949 — and are candid that no reliable statistics exist, saying so in a footnote to their own table. They date the quarrel to the mid-1950s: infringements of workers' economic rights became "a bone of contention in the Party and in the trade unions", strikes broke out, and "those who championed the interests of the proletariat were again accused of economism." They report that after the recovery of 1962–65 "wages remained at the 1956 level of 40 to 60 yuans a month" against a Peking cost of living of 59–60. Vyatsky reconstructs the workers' resistance to the Cultural Revolution: the Shanghai factories' protest to the Central Committee, the Red Guard detachments (*chihweitui*) formed against the *tsaofan* rebels, and a strike wave which "according to the foreign press... involved over 7 million workers in 60 towns", where "in most cases the workers demanded higher wages and better working and living conditions." That is a workers'-movement account of 1966–67, and in its essentials it is correct. It is also, as the introduction to *Maoism Through the Eyes of Communists* in this series notes of the parallel material there, the same account the Fourth International reached from the same Chinese sources.

One thing in the economic section is badly understated and should be named. On the famine that followed the Great Leap, the book will say only that in 1959–60 "the food situation in China sharply deteriorated", that "in 1961 some areas were on the verge of famine", and — almost in passing — that by the mid-sixties "only the most urgent problem, that of famine, was settled." The best modern estimates of excess deaths in 1959–61 run from roughly fifteen to forty-five million; the range is genuinely contested, the floor is not. These authors had every polemical incentive to say so and did not. It is difficult to read that reticence as anything but an unwillingness

to establish, in print, that forced collectivisation followed by famine is a thing that happens in states like theirs.

Which brings us to the question the book exists to avoid. If the offence is that a leader's will was put in place of material conditions, that one man's writings became the measure of theory, that cadres were destroyed on invented charges and intellectuals sent to the fields — the reader does not need to be prompted.

Begin with a count. In 82,000 words denouncing the personality cult, Stalin's name appears exactly once, and not in a Soviet sentence: it occurs inside a quotation from Jenmin Jihpao and Hungchi of May 1967, in which the Chinese assert that "Lenin and Stalin enlarged on Marxism". Lenin is named more than two hundred times. There is no Twentieth Congress here, no Khrushchev, no 1937, no Short Course. Stalin's own *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* of 1938 — for a generation of communists from Prague to Peking simply the thing Marxism was — is not cited, discussed or named. The Konstantinov volume at least brushed against the problem by measuring Mao's borrowings against Mitin's 1933 textbook. This book does not even name the source. Rumyantsev writes that Mao's works contain "Marxist propositions borrowed mainly from the popular Soviet literature of the 1930s" and leaves it there. The reader is told that Mao's philosophy is a digest of Soviet manuals, and is not told what was in them or who wrote them or what they were for.

Bukharin fares worse. He appears once, correctly identified as the exponent of the theory of equilibrium and described as "one of the most active adversaries of Marxist dialectics". That was written in 1969. Bukharin had been shot in March 1938 after the third Moscow Trial; he would not be rehabilitated until 1988. Rumyantsev's readers in Turin and Tokyo are given the philosophical charge and nothing else — not the trial, not the confession, not the execution — as if the man had merely lost an argument.

The deepest irony is structural rather than a matter of omission, and it belongs to Rumyantsev's own analysis. His explanation of Maoism is that Marxist theory is liable to be displaced by petty-bourgeois substitutes precisely "in countries that are extremely backward economically and politically, where the working class is numerically small and peasants and other petty-bourgeois strata are the main force of the revolution, where for one reason or another no link exists with the international working-class movement and where no proletarian party steeled in class battles exists." He and Sterbalova add that the Chinese proletariat was concentrated in

industrial centres that were islands in an ocean of peasant households, and that this permitted "the propagation of a kind of 'peasant' Marxism in the CPC". This is a theory of how a revolution in a backward country produces a doctrine that flatters its own leaders and a regime that rules in the name of a class it has silenced. It is a good theory. It is also, word for word, the argument the Left Opposition had made about the Soviet Union — and these men were writing in a state that had been isolated, blockaded, overwhelmingly peasant, and had lost most of its proletariat in the civil war. The category is precise and it points only outward.

There is a second, narrower silence, and it is the more damning because Rumyantsev walks right up to it. Listing Mao's early errors, he writes that "at the 3rd Congress of the CPC he adhered to a line" combining a pessimistic view of the proletariat with adventurism, and that "in 1927 Mao Tse-tung put his stake on the theory of 'permanent revolution.'" The Third Congress of the Chinese Communist Party met in June 1923 and adopted, on Comintern instruction, the policy of entering the Kuomintang. That policy, and the "bloc of four classes" built on it, is what the Left Opposition held responsible for the massacre of the Shanghai workers in April 1927 and the destruction of the Chinese party as a workers' organisation — the disaster after which what remained of the CCP went to the countryside, and out of which the peasant party these authors deplore was actually made. Whose line it was at that congress, Rumyantsev does not say. He also assigns "permanent revolution" to Mao without ever mentioning the man whose theory it was; Batalov, in the same volume, calmly attributes the doctrine of the uninterrupted revolutionary process to "Marx or Lenin". Fifteen years later Rumyantsev's own dictionary would perform the same trick at greater length, printing "Uninterrupted Revolution" as authentic Marxism and "Trotskyism" as its caricature, four hundred pages apart.

The reply exists and can be read. Trotsky's *The Third International After Lenin*, written for the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1928, devotes its third chapter to exactly this: the subordination of the Chinese communists to the Kuomintang, the Canton insurrection as "a virtual laboratory experiment on a colossal scale", and — the point that bears directly on this volume — the doctrine behind it, that "beginning with 1924... Stalin advanced the formula of the 'two-class workers' and peasants' parties for the Eastern countries.'" The "peasant Marxism" Rumyantsev and Sterbalova identify in the CPC had an author, and he was not in Yan'an. And the specific genre of this book — the theoretical journal of the CPSU turning its philosophical apparatus on a heresy — was being read in the

West as it appeared. George Saunders's "Moscow Still Haunted by Trotskyism", in *Intercontinental Press* vol. 7 no. 33 of 13 October 1969, went through *Kommunist* no. 12 of that year, in which P. Pospelov surveyed four new Soviet books against Trotskyism published in a single twelve-month period, among them an article by M. Basmanov whose later *Progress* volume also appears in this series. *Kommunist* no. 2 carried Rumyantsev against Mao; *Kommunist* no. 12 carried Pospelov against the Fourth International. Same journal, same year, same department.

One more thing should be said about how the book uses its witnesses. Its Chinese authority against Mao is Wang Ming, quoted for the judgement that the Cultural Revolution was a "counter-revolutionary upheaval" — Wang Ming, leader of the Moscow-trained faction Mao had defeated in the 1930s, by then living in the Soviet Union. Its French authority is Jean-Émile Vidal, quoted twice and well: Vidal's question, whether socialist foundations can guarantee a socialist future "in a country where the working class has been deprived of the possibility to act as leader, where one man or a group of people has destroyed everything that enabled the people to control, criticise and express their will", is the best sentence in the volume and belongs to somebody else.

And then there is the ending, which no editor can have looked at twice. The last article, Kapitsa's, from *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn* in 1968, closes by warning that American strategists — it names a Professor "Cyrus H. Peacke" writing in the *New Republic* of 17 August 1963, along with Bill Moyers and Hubert Humphrey — were proposing to abandon the doctrine that the road back to China ran through war, on the argument that "this road lies through the utmost Western support for Chinese nationalism and anti-Sovietism". The suggestion, Kapitsa writes, amounts to "turning China into an anti-Soviet force". That was published in 1968. It was reprinted, without a word of revision, in an English-language book that reached its readers in the year Nixon flew to Peking. The prediction was right, and the volume that made it could not say so, because saying so would have required an account of why it happened — and that account would have had to be about two bureaucracies, not one.

MARXISM

Marxism–Leninism on War and Army

The Soviet officer corps's own course on the theory of war, translated for allied armies: one-man command, the Warsaw Pact exercises, the armies of seven socialist states - and a genuinely good long reading of Clausewitz through Lenin's marginalia.

B. Byely and others

Introduction to the 1972 Edition

Nobody wrote this book. That is not a figure of speech: in a hundred and fifty thousand words there is no author, no editorial board, no institute of origin and no preface signed by anyone. The front matter names two people — Donald Danemanis, who translated it, and Victor Kuzyakov, who designed it — and then gives the Russian title and stops. The copyright page, with whatever printing history it carried, has not survived into the text we hold, so the usual first question of this series cannot be answered from the book itself.

The date can be. The text cites the 24th Congress of the CPSU from the Novosti edition of 1971, and the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency's World Military Expenditures, 1970, published in Washington in 1971. Its appended chronology of wars and armed conflicts runs to September 1969. Its opening paragraphs are about Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. This is therefore that rarity in the Progress list, a book whose text is genuinely of its date: a Russian original of about 1971, in English in 1972, with no detectable lag. Readers of the other volumes in this series, several of which turn out to be reprints of texts a decade or two older than their spines, should note the difference. Whatever else is wrong here is wrong in 1971, not inherited from 1957.

Who it was for

The house question — who commissioned it — has an answer in the apparatus, and the answer is not "the export market". This is a course. Eight chapters, each broken into numbered sections, each section broken into named sub-topics: "The Role of Politics in Preparing and Unleashing the War", "Objective Criterion of the Social Characteristic of Wars", "Mechanism of Action and Utilisation of the Laws of Armed Struggle". That is a syllabus, not a chapter list.

And the worked material is Soviet-internal to a degree the export volumes never are. It cites the Field Regulations of the

Armed Forces of the USSR (Voyenizdat, 1962); the Law on Universal Military Service; the Programme of the CPSU on what the Soviet Union needs an army for; the duties of a commander of the Soviet Army and Navy; the mechanics of one-man command and its history from dual command in 1918 through its introduction in 1928 to the wartime reintroduction of commissars and their removal in October 1942. Chapter Seven contains a section on "Moral-Psychological Training of Troops on a Scientific Basis". Chapter Eight is about the relation of dialectical materialism to Soviet military science and Soviet military doctrine. This is the philosophy-and-sociology-of-war course taught to Soviet officers and political workers, translated.

Translated for whom, though? For the other armies. Chapter Three ends with a section titled "International Importance of the CPSU's Experience in Defending the Socialist Motherland"; Chapter Five surveys the formation of the armies of Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the GDR and notes, with an administrator's eye, that "in the Hungarian People's Army, the Party leadership is carried out not by political bodies, but by elected Party committees". It names the Warsaw Pact exercises by codename — October Storm in the GDR, Vltava in Czechoslovakia, Rodopy in Bulgaria. The book is an English-language cadre text for allied and friendly officer corps, and secondarily a polemic aimed at named Western strategists. Its enemies are specific and current: Herman Kahn, Morton Halperin, Hans Speier, General Dale O. Smith, Senator Fulbright, the French sociologist Claude Delmas, the West German W. R. Schramm in the Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau. And, running through it, "the Chinese splitters" — the Introduction announces that "A more vigorous struggle should be waged against the anti-Marxist views disseminated by the Chinese leaders on questions of war and peace." That is the commission: a doctrine manual for the socialist bloc's armies, armed against Washington, Bonn and Peking simultaneously.

What is good in it

A great deal, and it should be said before anything else, because the failure of this book is not a failure of intelligence.

The long treatment of Clausewitz — twenty-six mentions, concentrated in the first chapter — is the best thing in it and among the better things in the whole Progress military list. It begins where Lenin began, with Lenin's notebook on On War, and it quotes him with the marginalia intact: on the transformation of war after 1789, "Lenin wrote out, underlined and marked 'correct!'" the proposition that "these changes emerged from the new politics that emerged from the womb of the French revolution". The book knows the difference between using Clausewitz and agreeing with him. It grants the debt plainly — Clausewitz's "formula about war being a continuation of politics by violent means" was "an indubitable contribution to the development of military thought of that time" — and then states the disagreement with precision: "Clausewitz said that politics represents the interests of society as a whole, he denied its class nature", he "understood by politics only foreign policy", and he "did not extend the concept of war to the civil wars of the popular masses against the exploiter classes and their state".

That is not a caricature of Clausewitz; it is close to what the best Anglophone commentary would later say. And the polemical use of it is sharper still. The book identifies two opposite abuses of the same author. On one side, the strategists who canonise him: it quotes Schramm — "We too must develop Clausewitz's theory into an instrument of world political and philosophical controversy" — and General Dale O. Smith on massive retaliation, and Kahn, "the 'Clausewitz of the nuclear age'", who wrote that "war is a terrible thing, but so is peace". On the other, those who declare him obsolete: it quotes Fulbright saying that "there is no longer any validity in the Clausewitz doctrine of war as a carrying out of policy with other means. Nuclear weapons have rendered it totally obsolete." Against both it insists that a nuclear war would still be somebody's policy, chosen by somebody, for reasons that can be named. Whatever one thinks of the framework, the observation was correct and it was not the fashionable position in 1971 in any capital.

The chapter on the origin and class essence of the army is straight, competent historical materialism, and its central proposition is the one this introduction will end up using against the book. Armies, it argues, are not free-standing technical instruments; they are made by the societies that raise them and reproduce those societies' divisions inside

themselves. "A distinctive feature of the army of an exploiter state is that it is isolated from the people and serves as an instrument for their enslavement." "In all antagonistic formations the army is created and developed by the ruling class for the purpose of strengthening the exploiter system and suppressing the masses." And, decisively: "The socio-political functions of the army determine the composition of its commanding echelon and the method of recruitment and organisation... At all times, however, the commanding posts were held exclusively by the ruling classes."

It is honest about the internal function of armies in general, quoting Lenin — "Everywhere, in all countries," Lenin wrote, "the standing army is used not so much against the external enemy as against the internal enemy." It is honest about British India and the Opium Wars and about the American campaign in the Philippines, where it notes that Tolstoy and Mark Twain protested. Its chapter on the economics of war is ordinary Leninism but well-executed, and it uses Galbraith on the American federal budget rather than inventing figures. Its section on morale, drawing on Clausewitz's "it is the moral magnitudes that permeate the whole element of war", is thoughtful about danger and cohesion in a way that military sociology in the West was arriving at independently. And one sentence in the section on commanding personnel is worth the price of the book: "Contrary to pseudo-scientific racist theories about 'superman' the qualities of the commanding personnel depend on the social environment, historical experience, political and moral education."

Hold on to that sentence.

Where the method stops

The book applies its own analysis to every army on earth except one. At the Soviet frontier the sociology switches off and is replaced by definition.

The armies of the socialist states, we are told, "are armies of a new type", "fully determined by the nature of the socialist system, are samples of it". Their popular character is expressed "in its social make-up and in the relations between men and officers". And then the sentence that the rest of this introduction exists to answer: "In bourgeois armies there exists a social division between the officers and the rank-and-file, while the armies of socialist states are monolithic. All officers and men are working people; they have identical interests and the relations between them are therefore founded on mutual understanding and mutual respect." (The scan reads "monolythic". Where this introduction quotes the book,

obvious scanner damage — broken words, footnote markers dropped into the middle of a sentence — is repaired silently rather than marked with a sic, since the errors are the digitiser's and not the translator's.)

Set that beside the book's own rule — that the composition of an army's commanding echelon is determined by the social functions of the army, and that commanding posts are always held by the ruling class — and the exemption is visible as an exemption. Either the principle is general or it is not a principle. The book does not argue that Soviet society had no privileged stratum; it does not raise the question. It simply asserts identity of interest between officers and conscripts and moves on.

The same switch operates on the army's internal function. "The victory of socialism in the USSR put an end to the function of the Soviet Armed Forces having to do with the suppression of the resistance of exploiters in the country by military means, and the army now has the sole purpose of defending the socialist country against attacks by imperialist aggressors." And it quotes the Party Programme: "In terms of internal conditions," the Programme of the CPSU says, "the Soviet Union needs no army."

Three chapters earlier the same book had written: "Sometimes it is necessary to use arms also to suppress counter-revolutionary mutinies against the already established proletarian dictatorship, as was the case in Hungary in 1956."

Hungary is named. It is named again in the appended chronology, as "Counter-revolutionary uprising in Hungary". Czechoslovakia in August 1968 is not named anywhere in the book. It appears in the chronology only as the object of a German seizure in 1938–39, and in the text as the site of the Vltava exercises and of a people's militia. The chronology is otherwise remarkably inclusive about armed force used by socialist states: it lists the "Counter-revolutionary mutiny in Kronstadt and its suppression by the Red Army" and the "Suppression by the Red Army of anti-Soviet kulak-Socialist-Revolutionary mutiny in the Tambov Gubernia (Antonov gangs)". Its date column runs 3 October 1968, 12 October 1968, 19 November 1968 — coups in Peru, Panama and Mali — and on into 1969. Between the Israeli offensive of June 1967 and the Peruvian coup of October 1968 there is nothing. In a Moscow chronology of the world's wars, armed uprisings and military conflicts, compiled some two or three years after the event, half a million Warsaw Pact troops entering an allied country left no entry. The other absence in the same list is 17 September 1939: the Soviet-Finnish war of

1939–40 is there, under that name and without comment, and the Soviet entry into Poland is not.

The answer had been published in English within a fortnight of the tanks crossing. The United Secretariat of the Fourth International's statement of 22 August 1968, "End the Soviet Occupation of Czechoslovakia!", printed in *Intercontinental Press*, vol. 6 no. 28, 2 September 1968, made the argument this book's Chapter Five is designed to forestall: "What the Soviet bureaucracy demonstrated in fact by its military intervention in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is the incompatibility of its dictatorship, power and privileges with any form of workers democracy." And, in a single line that answers the entire apparatus of counter-revolutionary mutinies and armies of a new type: "Socialism is not endangered in Czechoslovakia except by the crimes of the bureaucracy." Joseph Hansen, writing in the same issue, put the political point about the troops: the Czechoslovaks "met military force with political weapons", approaching the soldiers "as comrades who had been misinformed", and "the Kremlin may be suddenly concerned lest its 350,000 missionaries with bayonets prove unduly receptive to conversion into countermissionaries."

There is a further test of "the armies of socialist states are monolithic", and it took place on the Baltic coast while this book was being written. In December 1970 Polish workers rose in Gdańsk and Szczecin and were fired on. Gerry Foley's report in *Intercontinental Press*, vol. 9 no. 1, 11 January 1971, assembled the eyewitness accounts: *Expressen's* correspondent in Gdańsk found that "only a few soldiers used their weapons" — "When they were ordered to shoot, they shot into the air. Many of them threw down their weapons and said they could not shoot at their fellow countrymen." In Szczecin, where the tanks were "filled with young military servicemen, many with just a few months' experience", the Swedish radio reporter Anders Tunborg found slogans like "We are workers, not roughnecks" "written on house walls and tanks", and youngsters gathered in front of the tanks "shouting 'The soldiers for the people!'" A people's army had been ordered against the people, and a good part of it had refused. On the book's account this could not happen, because the interests are identical. On its own account of every other army, it is exactly what would be expected to happen, and what it means.

Silence is the book's characteristic instrument, and the largest silence is the one it cannot avoid, because it is a book about the Red Army.

Two silences, compounding

The Red Army was created by Leon Trotsky. He was People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs and chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council from 1918 to 1925; he built the army, ran it through the civil war, and fought and won the internal argument about what kind of army it should be. His name does not occur in this book. Neither does Stalin's — a fact worth pausing on, since it shows the silences are not simply pro-Stalin. Stalingrad is in the book five times; Stalin is in it none. This is the Brezhnev settlement: the 20th Congress is never mentioned either, and the phrase "cult of the individual" does not appear. The 1930s have been vacated rather than rewritten.

But the argument Trotsky won cannot be vacated, because the book needs its result. Here is how it handles it:

Before the October Revolution and immediately after its triumph, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government did not intend to create a regular army, but were guided by the Marxist proposition of replacing the regular army by a socialist militia. The armed intervention of international imperialism and the vast scope assumed by the Civil War made it necessary to revise this proposition. It was Lenin's great merit that he was the first Marxist courageously to advance and to lay a theoretical foundation for the idea that the Soviet state needed a regular army.

And then, on the opposition:

The Soviet Armed Forces were created while desperate battles were waged against numerous enemies coming on from all sides. The lack of any experience in this field posed additional difficulties to the Party and was responsible for some mistakes: there were people who did not understand that the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army would be unable to fulfil its historical mission without strict military discipline and a centralised command.

At the Eighth Party Congress Lenin and his followers decisively rebuffed the "army opposition", which was against strict discipline and centralised command of the army, insisted on a continuation of the partisan tactics inherited from the past, and thus obstructed the setting up of a regular army. The views of the "army opposition" were rejected and branded wrong and harmful. The Congress adopted Lenin's proposal to set up a regular Red Army.

"There were people who did not understand." "Lenin and his followers." Every proper noun on both sides of a real and bitter argument has been removed. The Military Opposition at the Eighth Congress in March 1919 was directed against Trotsky

personally and against his policy of employing ex-tsarist officers under commissar supervision, and Voroshilov — made a Marshal in 1935, and one of the two of that first five to die in bed — was among its supporters. Stalin's exact relation to it is disputed by historians and I will not settle it here; what is not disputed is where the milieu was. Trotsky named the place in *The Revolution Betrayed*: "The principal centre of these moods was Tzaritzyn (now Stalingrad), where Budenny, Voroshilov, and afterward Stalin, began their military work." The book cannot say any of this, so it produces an argument with no participants.

What it also cannot say is that Trotsky was making the regular-army case in public, in the language the book itself uses, a fortnight before that congress opened. On 2 March 1919, reporting to the First Congress of the Communist International on the Communist Party and the Red Army, he explained why the Red Guards had failed on contact with regular German regiments, and then set out the principle:

Now, our program calls for a "people's militia." But it is impossible even to talk of a people's militia — this demand of political democracy — in a country where the dictatorship of the proletariat is in power, for an army is always intimately bound up with the character of the reigning power. War, as old Clausewitz says, is the continuation of politics by other means. The army is the instrument of war and it must therefore correspond to politics.

Clausewitz, from Trotsky, in March 1919, doing exactly the work the book's first chapter praises Lenin for doing with him. On the specialists — the policy the Military Opposition attacked and the book records only as the anonymous "weeding out" of "alien and unworthy commanders" — Trotsky was equally direct:

But we could not bide our time until Red generals arose out of our Red ensigns, inasmuch as the enemy did not extend us such a breathing spell; and we had to turn to the old commanding personnel and find capable people among these reserves... On the one side, we have the best and the most honest elements among the old officers corps, whom we surround with sensible Communists in the capacity of Commissars; and on the other, the best elements from among the soldiers, workers and peasants in the lower commanding posts. It is in this manner that we compounded our Red commanding personnel.

That is the dual-command system the book describes at length

and attributes to nobody.

It is worth adding, because this series does not exist to flatter its own tradition, that Trotsky would have been unimpressed by the book's central intellectual claim. Speaking to the Military Science Society at the Red Army's Military Academy on 8 May 1922, he attacked precisely the enterprise of deriving a military doctrine from Marxism:

But even if one grants that "military science" is a science, it is nevertheless impossible to grant that this science could be built by the method of Marxism, because historical materialism is not at all a universal method for all sciences.

To try and construct a special domain of military affairs by means of Marxist method is a very great delusion, no less a one than that expressed in trying to include military affairs among the natural sciences.

Marxism, he said in the same speech, can explain why the peasant wears bast shoes, but "one can't plait bast shoes with the aid of Marxism. Nothing will come of that." His 1921 polemic *Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism* makes the case at length: "We approached military questions with, as our starting-point, not any 'military doctrine', as a sum-total of dogmatic postulates, but a Marxist analysis of the requirements for the self-defence of the working class". A reader who wants the strongest objection to Marxism-Leninism on War and Army as a genre will find it there, written by the man who had just built the army, thirty years before the genre was invented.

The other silence

Then the officer corps was destroyed. Between May 1937 and the following year the command of the Red Army was decapitated: three of the five Marshals of the Soviet Union created in 1935 were shot — Tukhachevsky, Yegorov and Blyukher — along with Yakir, Uborevich, Kork, Eideman, Feldman, Primakov, Putna, and thousands of others; Gamarnik, head of the army's political administration, killed himself. The numbers are genuinely contested and should be given as a range. Trotsky's own contemporaneous figure, repeated by the Fourth International's press throughout the war, was about 30,000 officers "shot, discharged and deported" — a total that mixes executions with dismissals, many of the dismissed being later reinstated, and modern estimates of those actually shot vary by an order of magnitude. What is not contested is that the top of the army was destroyed, and that it happened four years before the German

invasion.

The word *purge* occurs twice in this book, both times about something else. 1937 appears five times: the Spanish Civil War, a comparison of industrial output, the renaming of the Chinese Red Army, per-capita military spending in capitalist countries, and a date in the chronology. There is no reference of any kind to what happened to the army's command.

And here the two silences compound in a way that is genuinely remarkable. Tukhachevsky is in the book. He appears once, in the opening section of Chapter One, as an authority:

M. N. Tukhachevsky, analysing the experience of the Civil War, noted that war "is not exhausted by military operations. The actions of the armed forces are supplemented by organised and combined pressure and blows on all the fronts of the struggle (economic, political, etc.)..."

The footnote sends the reader to volume 2 of his *Selected Works*, published by the Ministry of Defence house in Moscow in 1964 — that is, after his rehabilitation. The only other Soviet soldier named in the entire book is Frunze, the man who replaced Trotsky at the head of the military establishment in 1925 and died that October, cited once for the proposition that "the best commander will be the one who fulfils his task without resorting to repressive measures".

Two names, in a hundred and fifty thousand words about the army. No Zhukov, no Konev, no Rokossovsky, no Vasilevsky, no Chuikov, no Shaposhnikov, no Voroshilov, no Budyonny — no Chapayev. The word *Marshal* does not occur in the book at all. A long section titled "Commanding Personnel", explaining what qualities a Soviet officer must have, does not name one. Tukhachevsky is present as a footnote and absent as a man: available to be quoted, unavailable to have been shot. He analyses the experience of the civil war in a book that will not say who commanded it, and he is silent about the experience that killed him.

The consequence shows up where you would expect. The book's account of 1941 is entirely military-technical. The Germans "enjoyed a considerable numerical superiority (on the main sectors this superiority was four or five to one)", the Red Army "fought in pockets of resistance", "the absence of a continuous defence line" allowed the enemy to bypass them, and "these and other circumstances were among the main reasons for the forced retreat of the Soviet troops in the beginning of the war". Afterwards "the Soviet Command took the mistakes committed in the initial period into account" —

the mistakes being nobody's, the Command being nobody in particular. A book that has just explained, correctly, that the qualities of the commanding personnel depend on the social environment and the historical experience, declines to notice the largest thing that had happened to its own commanding personnel within living memory of most of its readers.

And this was a choice, not a prohibition. Twelve years later Progress Publishers itself issued, in French, the memoirs of Marshal Vasilevsky, the wartime chief of the Soviet General Staff: *La Cause de toute une vie*, Moscow, 1984, from a Russian edition of 1975. Mandel, reviewing the rehabilitations of the glasnost years in *International Viewpoint* no. 128, 26 October 1987, noticed what was bound into it. The volume, he wrote, "includes, after p.80, a group photo entitled, 'The first marshals of the Soviet Union,' showing M. Tukhachevsky, S. Voroshilov, A. Yegorov, S. Budyenny and V. Blücher in 1935. Stalin had three of these marshals shot in 1937." (Voroshilov's initial was K., and *International Viewpoint* prints the marshal's own name as "Vasilevski"; both slips are the journal's, not the scanner's.) Mandel's point in that article was that the army's dead were the most openly commemorated of Stalin's victims: unlike the civilian defendants, "the military chiefs rushed to include pictures of their comrades murdered by Stalin in the memoirs they were publishing and in history textbooks". Soviet marshals were putting the faces of the shot into their books. The philosophy course would not print the names.

The doctrine of victory

One more thing has to be set down, because it is the point at which the book's philosophy becomes dangerous rather than merely evasive.

Having argued at length and rather well that nuclear war would still be a continuation of policy, the book goes further and says it would be "even more 'political'", citing Lenin's marginal note that "war seems the more 'warlike', the more political it is". It then concedes, quoting the 1969 Moscow meeting of communist parties, that a world conflict "would spell the death of hundreds of millions of people". And then:

In the new war, if it should be allowed to happen, victory will be with the countries of the world socialist system which are defending progressive, ascending tendencies in social development, have at their command all the latest kinds of weapons, and enjoy the support of the working people of all countries. The balance of forces between the two systems, the logic of history, its objective laws, prescribing that the new in social development is

invincible—all this predicts such an outcome.

The historical laws will decide the outcome of a thermonuclear exchange. Nothing in the book's Clausewitz material licenses this; it is the one place where the Marxism stops being an analysis and becomes an assurance. The book is careful to add that Marxists-Leninists "decisively condemn nuclear war, consider it the heaviest crime that could be committed against humanity", and it attacks the Chinese for treating a world war as a means of accelerating the revolution. Both things are said, and they do not fit together. This was a live argument inside the Soviet establishment in exactly these years, between the political leadership's line that a nuclear war would have no victors and a military-academy tradition that could not concede defeat as a possibility. The book sits on the fault line and reproduces both sides without noticing.

The reply, and where to find it

Almost all of it was written before the events this book cannot describe were over.

The direct answer to the treatment of the army is *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936), chapter 8, "Foreign Policy and the Army", whose two central sections are titled "The Red Army and Its Doctrines" and "The Abolition of the Militia and the Restoration of Officers' Ranks". Trotsky is more honest about the compromise than the book is: "The Red Army was created from the very beginning as a necessary compromise between the two systems, with the emphasis on the regular troops." He records that the Eighth Congress the book invokes had also resolved that "We are shifting the militia to a class basis and converting it into a Soviet militia", and that by the mid-1920s "74 per cent of the army was reorganized on a militia basis" — a fact the book's flat account of the militia's inferiority cannot accommodate. Then, in September 1935, "civilized humanity, friends and enemies alike, learned with surprise that the Red Army would now be crowned with an officers' hierarchy, beginning with lieutenant and ending with marshal", and Trotsky calls the decree "a still more deadly blow to the principles of the October revolution". His objection is sociological, not sentimental: "The reform pursues a purely political aim: to give a new social weight to the officers." He quotes Tukhachevsky, then the effective head of the war department, defending the change — which is worth noticing, since it means one of this book's two Soviet military authorities was on the record on the question the book will not raise, two years before he was shot.

And the general principle Trotsky states there is the same one

the Soviet textbook states and then suspends: "The army is a copy of society and suffers from all its diseases, usually at a higher temperature." In chapter 3 he puts it more sharply still — "It is not the tasks of defense which create a military and state bureaucracy, but the class structure of society carried over into the organization of defense" — and records the outcome: the army "has given birth to a privileged officers' caste, crowned with marshals". Against "the armies of socialist states are monolithic. All officers and men are working people; they have identical interests", that is the argument, made thirty-six years earlier from published Soviet decrees.

Chapter 8 also recovers the argument that followed the civil war, which this book has erased even more thoroughly than the one at the Eighth Congress. Trotsky's opponents in the early 1920s over "unified military doctrine" were, he writes, "A school of 'proletarian military doctrine' to which belonged or adhered Frunze, Tukhachevsky, Gussev, Voroshilov, and others" — a list that contains both of the two Soviet soldiers this book is willing to cite. The men it quotes as settled authority were parties to a dispute it does not tell its readers took place.

On the purge itself the tradition's contemporaneous record is substantial. Trotsky wrote about the executions six weeks after they happened, in "The Crimes of Stalin" of 27 July 1937, listing the accused one by one — Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, Yakir, Uborevich, Eideman, Kork — and noting the absurdity: "The military representatives of France, Great Britain and Czechoslovakia had only recently paid tribute to the Ukrainian maneuvers held under the direction of General Yakir. It turns out that Yakir was preparing for the seizure of the Ukraine by Hitler." By March 1939 he was giving a figure — "He exterminated the flower of the General Staff. He shot, discharged and deported about 30,000 officers" — and on 2 September 1939, the day after the German invasion of Poland, he wrote the sentence the whole subsequent argument turns on: "The Red Army is decapitated. This is not phraseology but a tragic fact."

The fullest thing he wrote on it was for a long time unreadable in English, and the story of that is worth telling because it bears directly on how this book came to be written. In July–August 1937 the *Bulletin of the Opposition*, the Left Opposition's own journal, printed Trotsky's article "The Decapitation of the Red Army" (no. 56–57). Written for the commercial press and refused by it, it appeared only in Russian, apart from an excerpt in *The Militant* of 4 October 1941. The complete English translation, by George Saunders, was first published in *Intercontinental Press*, vol. 8 no. 9, 9

March 1970 — under the cover line "First Time in English", two years before this Progress volume appeared. Its argument was that the frame-ups were not a policy but a symptom: "It would be too superficial, however, to explain the murderous and suicidal measures of Stalin only by his lust for power, cruelty, vindictiveness, and other personal qualities. Stalin long ago lost control over his own policies. The bureaucracy as a whole lost control over its own self-defense reflexes."

The editorial headnote to that translation dates the reason for its timeliness with some precision, and the date is this book's: "At the height of de-Stalinization in the late 1950s and early 1960s, many Soviet historians and military writers elaborated on the points Khrushchev had made, without carrying the analysis deeper... In the late 1960s, the official Soviet press began to run articles tending to 'rehabilitate' Stalin as a military leader." That is the turn in Soviet military writing that Marxism-Leninism on War and Army embodies. It does not rehabilitate Stalin; it does something quieter and more complete, which is to write the whole question out.

The Soviet reply had begun too, from inside the profession. In November 1969 *Intercontinental Press* printed a long extract from Pyotr Grigorenko's samizdat study of the 1941 collapse — Grigorenko being a former Major General who, IP records, "held high command positions during the second world war" and "taught cybernetics at the Frunze military academy until 1961, when he was fired for accusing Khrushchev of following in Stalin's footsteps" ("Stalin as Generalissimo: Why Hitler Was Able to Overrun the USSR", vol. 7 no. 37, 10 November 1969). Grigorenko's charge is against the doctrine as doctrine: the official account of 1941, he wrote, was a "shameless falsification" converted by "Stalinist toadies" into "Stalin's brilliant doctrine on active defense, which for a long time killed any creative thinking in the realm of military matters and in the study of military history". His method is exactly the one our textbook refuses: "the real causes of the defeats must be sought where certain people are reluctant to look for them, in the subjective factors, in the persons who directed the preparation of the country's defenses". IP notes that he had been arrested by the secret police in May 1969, as he was preparing to defend the Crimean Tatars — not, that is, for the military study; but it was the same man, and by the time this book went to press in Moscow he was in custody. Grigorenko's question is the one Marxism-Leninism on War and Army was written not to ask.

One further honest note about the archive. The English-language selection from *Biulleten' Oppozitsii* held here — only a fraction of a journal published overwhelmingly

in Russian — contains nothing on the destruction of the Red Army command; the selection thins out sharply after 1936 and the June 1937 executions fall in a gap. The nil is in our translation record, not in what the Opposition said, and the IP text of 1970 is the proof of it. But a reader who goes looking in the English Bulletin will not find it there, and should be told so.

The most sustained analysis in the wartime press is John G. Wright's "Trotsky and the Red Army", in Fourth International, vol. 2 no. 8, whole no. 15, October 1941 — written four months into the German invasion, when nobody knew how it would end. The title alone is the review this book requires: it is the sentence Marxism-Leninism on War and Army is built to make unwriteable. Wright's account of the 1935 reforms is precise:

In September 1935 sweeping changes were introduced in the Red Army. The militias were greatly restricted. This weakened the direct ties between the army and the populace. The arsenals formerly in each factory were taken over by the GPU. Another terrible blow was dealt to the principles of October by the restoration of a privileged officers' caste.

And on the purge:

In the space of a single year — May 1937 to May 1938 — the Red Army was stripped almost to a man of all those commanders who had been recruited in the period of the Civil War. Purged too were those Civil War fighters who had risen from the ranks in the course of the next 15 years. The flower of the Red Army command was either shot or imprisoned as "enemies of the people" in the period of the infamous Moscow Frameups.

Wright's judgement of the men — "Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, Yakir, Uborevich, Bluecher, Primakov... had continued, even under Stalin, to build the Red Army on the foundations laid down by Lenin and Trotsky. These men had modernized and mechanized the Red Army" — is a claim about military substance, not only about injustice, and it is the claim later Western military historiography broadly upheld. His companion piece, "The Soviet Union at War" (Fourth International, vol. 2 no. 7, whole no. 14, August 1941), made the institutional argument the Soviet textbook's account of one-man command needs and cannot bear: "By restoring all the reactionary practices of the Czarist army, from the creation of ranks to the military salute, Stalin opened an unbridgeable gulf between the officers corps and the rank-and-file."

A year later, in "Stalin Bolsters His 'New' Tradition" — printed in Fourth International, vol. 3 no. 7, July 1942, according to the article's own provenance line, though the surviving index heading misdates it to the June issue — A. Roland set out exactly the operation this 1972 textbook is still performing. Stalin, he wrote, must forget Blyukher against Dutov, Yakir in Bessarabia, Putna at Kazan, "Tukhachevsky so brilliantly retook Simbirsk. Above all let nobody even whisper the name of the creator of the Red Army and its victories, L.D. Trotsky. The tradition of these men is sealed to Stalin by their blood." Thirty years later the name was still unwhispered.

On the Soviet-Finnish war, which this book lists in its chronology as a bare title with no comment, the reply is Trotsky's "Balance Sheet of the Finnish Events", written 25 April 1940 and published in Fourth International, vol. 1 no. 2, June 1940 — and it is not a simple denunciation. Trotsky refused both the defencist and the abstentionist positions: "Stalin's assault upon Finland was not of course solely an act in defense of the USSR. The politics of the Soviet Union is guided by the Bonapartist bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is first and foremost concerned with its power, its prestige, its revenues. It defends itself much better than it defends the USSR." He drew the conclusion that the whole Fourth International tradition has kept: the failure of the Soviet regime to attract the Finnish workers meant not that the USSR should be surrendered to imperialism "but only that the USSR must be torn out of the hands of the bureaucracy".

The mature counterweight is Ernest Mandel's *The Meaning of the Second World War* (Verso, 1986), which should be read against this volume's whole apparatus of just and unjust wars. Mandel's answer to the question the Soviet textbook settles by taxonomy is that the Second World War cannot be characterised as one war at all: it "must be grasped as a combination of five different conflicts" (ch. 3, "The Social Forces", p. 45), of which the second is "A just war of self-defence by the Soviet Union against an imperialist attempt to colonize the country and destroy the achievements of the 1917 Revolution", alongside an inter-imperialist war for world hegemony and three wars of colonial and occupied peoples. He keeps the category the book keeps — "By 'just wars' are meant wars which should have been fought, and which revolutionaries supported then as they do now" — and refuses the political conclusion the book draws from it, that a just war obliges the working class to subordinate itself to the state waging it. On 1941 Mandel is blunt where the textbook is passive: Stalin's purges and diplomacy "decapitated the Red Army, disorganised the defences of the country, delivered Poland and Europe to Hitler, and facilitated the Nazi attack on

the USSR", while industrialisation "enabled the Soviet Union to survive in the end" (ch. 2, "The Immediate Causes", p. 33). And on the "planned retreat" legend he is worth quoting because Soviet accounts of this vintage lean on it: "At the end of the war crude attempts were made to present the Red Army's defeats of 1941-42 as the products of a strategy of calculated retreat, deliberately drawing the Wehrmacht into the Russian interior only to destroy it in a series of counteroffensives. There is no substance whatsoever in such claims" (ch. 5, "Strategy", p. 61).

Mandel is not exempt from correction. His own text dates the Secret Additional Protocol of the Nazi-Soviet Pact to 27 August 1939; it was signed on the night of 23 August. This series records that where it appears, rather than working around it quietly, on the principle that a tradition which corrects Moscow's dates must correct its own.

Two bookends, finally, from either side of this volume's own decade. In 1976 Mandel, contributing to the Sakharov debate, put the question in the single sentence that states this book's problem as a question: "Why is it that the works of L.D. Trotsky, the organizer of the October insurrection, the creator of the Red Army, the man designated in Lenin's last testament as the CPSU's most capable leader, are not freely available in the USSR?" (Intercontinental Press, vol. 14 no. 34, 13 September 1976, from a piece written for the West German monthly *Das Da*.) And in 1988, when *Pravda* ran extracts from General Dmitri Volkogonov on Trotsky and Stalin, Livio Maitan judged the result still "essentially negative" — but noted the change that had made it necessary: "in the age of glasnost the arguments of the Stalin-era manuals can no longer be used" (International Viewpoint no. 148, 3 October 1988). *Marxism-Leninism on War and Army* is a Stalin-era manual in the strict sense Maitan meant. It does not praise Stalin. Its arguments are simply the arguments that remain available once everything Stalin's period made unsayable has been removed — and they lasted, in this form, until *Pravda* itself gave them up.

How to read it

Read the first chapter for the Clausewitz. It is the genuine inheritance, it is handled with care, and the polemic against Kahn and Fulbright is a real argument that a serious reader can still learn from. Read the chapter on the class origin of the army and the chapter on the economics of war as competent, unoriginal, honestly executed Marxism. Read the chapters on the armies of the people's democracies as a first-hand institutional record, hostile and self-serving but detailed, of

how those armies were actually built between 1944 and 1948 — the dates, the retention of "vestiges of bourgeois discipline" until 1948, the Party committees in Hungary, the codenames of the exercises. That material is not falsified; it is simply told from the top, by the side that did it.

Then read the passage about the Eighth Party Congress, and the section on commanding personnel, and the chronology, and count the names.

A book that argues, correctly, that every army is a copy of its society, and that the character of a commanding echelon is determined by the social order that produces it, has written a hundred and fifty thousand words about one particular army and named two of its commanders: the man who took over from its founder, and a man it will not say was shot. The method is sound. It was simply not permitted to point at the object in front of it. That is not a flaw in Marxism-Leninism on war and the army; it is what the phrase had come to mean.

INTERNATIONALISM

Contemporary Trotskyism

Moscow's book-length answer to the post-1968 growth of the Fourth International, written to a Central Committee directive - and, unlike most of its kind, one that quotes its opponents from their own press. Introduced from the tradition it attacks.

Mikhail Ivanovich Basmanov

Introduction to the 1972 Edition

A book about Trotskyism, written in Moscow in 1972 and introduced now from within the tradition it sets out to bury, is an unusual object. Most of the volumes in this series are Soviet works on some other subject — philosophy, the war, the national question — against which a reader from the anti-Stalinist left has particular corrections to enter. Mikhail Basmanov's *Contemporary Trotskyism* is different. It is an attack on us: on Trotsky, on the Fourth International, on "permanent revolution," on the small revolutionary organisations that were growing across France, Latin America and beyond as it went to press. The whole apparatus of this series — the question of who is quoted and who is only characterised, the question of what a book cannot bring itself to say — was built for exactly this book. So it is worth stating the result at the outset, and stating it honestly, because the honest result is sharper than the easy one.

The book, and its year

Contemporary Trotskyism was published in English by Progress in 1972, and its text is genuinely of that year — this is not one of the catalogue's disguised reprints. The latest Party congress it cites is the Twenty-Fourth (March–April 1971); its freshest periodical references run to 1971 (Workers' Press of June 1971, *Sous le drapeau du Socialisme* No. 55 of 1971). Nothing in it postdates the copyright line. Date the text, not the spine: 1972 is right.

The author signs as Mikhail Basmanov, C.Sc. (Hist.) — a Candidate of Historical Sciences — described on the colophon only as "the author of topical works on history, some of which were translated into other European languages." That is all the book will source about him, and it is all this introduction will assert; he went on to produce further volumes in the same line (Where Are the Trotskyites Leading the Youth?, 1973, and, with B. M. Leibzon, *The Revolutionary Vanguard*, 1977). He was, in short, a professional in this genre. And the genre had

just received its instructions. In *Kommunist* No. 18 of 1971, Boris Ponomarev — Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and chairman of the editorial commission behind Progress's later multi-volume *International Working-Class Movement* — directed cadres to expose Trotskyism's "kinship with open anti-Communism, with opportunism of right and 'left' persuasions," scare-quotes included in the directive itself (reported in *Intercontinental Press*, 24 January 1972). Basmanov cites Ponomarev's own edited volume, *The International Revolutionary Movement of the Working Class*, in his notes. *Contemporary Trotskyism* is that directive executed at book length.

Why a fresh anti-Trotsky book in 1972 at all, when the Left Opposition had been destroyed forty years earlier? Basmanov answers the question himself, and the answer is the most reliable thing in the book. "In the twenties and thirties," he writes, "Trotskyism was routed, both ideologically and organisationally ... and for a long time it lingered in the backwaters of history. But now, since the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, the Trotskyites have begun to raise their heads." The image he reaches for is unlovely and revealing: "Like dried infusoria which revive in a drop of muddy water, the Trotskyites bestirred themselves at the first signs of petty-bourgeois 'ultra-Left' hostility towards communism." A book does not devote 70,000 words and several hundred footnotes to dried infusoria. The energy of the polemic is a measure of the thing it is answering — the real growth of the Fourth International and the far left among the students and workers of the post-1968 years. This is a defensive book about a revival, and its anxiety is its most candid witness.

The citation test

The first instrument this series applies to a Soviet attack on an opponent is simple: does the author quote the opponent from the opponent's own works, so the reader can check him — or does he characterise, paraphrase and attribute doctrine with no

verifiable source? On the drafted volumes of Ponomarev's International Working-Class Movement, the answer was damning. Volume 3 (1905–17) does not cite a single work by Trotsky even once; the doctrine put in his mouth sits inside quotation marks with no reference, while Luxemburg's *Gesammelte Werke*, Kautsky and *Die Neue Zeit* are cited scores of times. Opponents who are cited can be checked; opponents who are only characterised cannot.

Basmanov is not that book, and the difference must be reported plainly, because credibility on the hard findings depends on honesty here. Contemporary Trotskyism cites its subject copiously. Trotsky's *The Permanent Revolution* is quoted repeatedly and by name; so is his autobiography *My Life*; so is a 1938 passage from the *Bulletin of the Opposition*. More striking still, the book quarries the living Fourth International from its own press on almost every page — *Quatrième Internationale*, the *American International Socialist Review*, the *British Fourth International* and *The Newsletter*, the *French Lutte ouvrière* and *Sous le drapeau du Socialisme*, *La Vérité*, the *Latin American Revista Marxista Latinoamericana*, the *European Marxist Review*. Against twenty-six citations of Lenin's *Collected Works*, there are dozens upon dozens of citations of Trotskyist periodicals in five languages. Whatever else this is, it is not the IWCN procedure of doctrine-without-source. Basmanov read his enemies, or at least their journals.

But the citation test does not end at the footnote; it ends at the source. And chased to the source, Basmanov's citations do something the vol. 3 method never risked: they refute him. Two instances carry the point, and both are decisive because they turn on documents anyone can now read.

The first is *The Permanent Revolution* itself. Basmanov's central charge, returned to in every chapter, is that "permanent revolution" means leaping over the necessary stages of the revolution — that Trotsky "completely ignored the proposition on the development of the revolution in stages." To prove it he quotes the book: "It is nonsense to say that it is impossible in general to leap over stages. A living historical process always leaps." The quotation is roughly accurate to Trotsky's text (which reads, in the standard English, "It is nonsense to say that stages cannot in general be skipped. The living historical process always makes leaps over isolated 'stages'..."). What Basmanov does not tell his reader is that the second chapter of the very book he is citing is titled "*The Permanent Revolution Is Not a 'Leap' by the Proletariat, but the Reconstruction of the Nation under the Leadership of the Proletariat*," and that Trotsky wrote in it: "It is boring, and even embarrassing, let

me confess, to cite quotations proving that I never even talked of a 'leap' from autocracy into Socialism." Basmanov has taken a passage about the unevenness of historical development in backward countries and pinned it to the exact caricature — the proletariat vaulting over the democratic revolution — that the book was written to demolish. He cites the refutation as though it were the offence.

What the theory actually says is contained in its concluding theses, which Basmanov never quotes. Thesis 9: "The conquest of power by the proletariat does not complete the revolution, but only opens it." Thesis 10: "The socialist revolution begins on the national arena, it unfolds on the international arena, and is completed on the world arena." The argument is not that power cannot be taken in a single country — the workers of Russia took it — but that a socialist society cannot be completed in one country in isolation from the world economy. Basmanov systematically collapses completion into beginning, so that a theory about the international horizon of the revolution becomes a theory of "defeatism" and "lack of faith in the possibility of a proletarian victory in one country." The reader who takes his word for the doctrine has been sold the opposite of the doctrine.

The second instance is sharper still, and it is the book's signature. In Chapter III, Basmanov builds his most lurid indictment — that the Trotskyists actively want a nuclear war — around the Argentine Trotskyist Juan Posadas. He quotes Posadas holding that "the most destructive of wars will necessarily have the most progressive consequences," and that "Communist society could rapidly be constructed on the wreckage." Both phrases are footnoted to the *International Socialist Review* No. 4 of 1963, pages 132 and 134. That article is Farrell Dobbs and Joseph Hansen's "Reunification of the Fourth International" (*ISR* vol. 24 no. 4, Whole No. 165, Fall 1963) — the founding document of the reunified Fourth International, and precisely the text that explains why Posadas is not in it. Read the page Basmanov cites: "The differences with Posadas occur on two points... Posadas, in contrast, believes that a 'communist society' could rapidly be constructed on the wreckage." And the second phrase: Posadas "carries it to the absurd conclusion that the most destructive of wars will necessarily have the most progressive consequences." Basmanov has lifted both sentences from the Fourth International's own repudiation of Posadas, stripped the words "in contrast" and "carries it to the absurd conclusion," and presented the result as the view of "the Trotskyites." He has quoted the prosecution's brief and passed it off as the defendant's confession.

So the citation test on this book yields something better than a nil. Basmanov quotes; the quotation, checked, convicts him of the falsification his own tradition named. There is a supporting tell in his handling of Isaac Deutscher, whom he cites four or five times — but only ever to mine an admission against Trotsky ("Trotsky's attempts ... proved unsuccessful," "political adventurism"), while denouncing Deutscher in the same book as an "anti-communist" and "bourgeois falsifier" wherever Deutscher praises his subject. The source is a witness when it hurts Trotsky and a slanderer when it does not.

The amalgam, and the word "objectively"

The Stalinist case against Trotskyism is not an argument but an identity, assembled by equation: Trotskyism = objectively counter-revolutionary = agent of imperialism = anti-communism = handmaiden of the bourgeoisie. Basmanov builds it in the open, and the hinge on which each equation turns is a single adverb: objectively. Trotsky's views after October "objectively came very close to the arguments of imperialist reaction"; at the time of the insurrection he "took up a position which objectively helped the enemies of the revolution"; on the eve of war the Fourth International's line meant that "objectively this stand of the Trotskyites actually helped nazism." The device is borrowed from Lenin — Basmanov quotes his "In your objective role, you are a tool of imperialist provocation" against the Left Communists of 1918 — but in Lenin the charge is attached to a named policy in a dated dispute, and in Basmanov it becomes a universal solvent. Subjective intention is conceded and then declared irrelevant; whatever a Trotskyist believes he is doing, his "objective role" is to serve the enemy. Chapter V completes the identity by title alone — "How Bourgeois Propaganda Uses Trotskyism for Anti-Communist Aims" — and the book's last sentence states the programme without embarrassment: "The final defeat of Trotskyism will come all the more quicker the more energetically it is shown up to be the servant of imperialist reaction." The task is not to establish that Trotskyism serves imperialism but to show it up as doing so; the conclusion is the premise.

The amalgam also has a target of the moment. In 1972 the Sino-Soviet split was the central fact of Communist politics, and Basmanov folds Maoism into the indictment without quite arguing the connection: "In some ways the Chinese leaders have simply taken over certain Trotskyite doctrines; in others their views objectively coincide" — the adverb again — and both, "from their own peculiar positions and for their own selfish purposes, undermine the struggle against imperialism

by fighting against the Communist parties." The equation Trotskyism $\approx$ Maoism was a useful one for a Soviet author of 1972, and it required overlooking a great deal, not least the Trotskyist movement's own sustained opposition to Peking's line; but its function is structural, not analytic. Everything hostile to the CPSU is drawn toward a single pole, and the poles are made to touch. This is what Ponomarev's directive meant by exposing Trotskyism's "kinship" with deviations of "right and 'left' persuasions": the various enemies are not analysed separately, they are consolidated into one.

There is a fine reflexive irony buried in Chapter V's own evidence. Basmanov offers, as proof that the bourgeoisie promoted Trotsky, the fact that "the big Berlin publishing house, Granat, obligingly published in a rush his book *The Permanent Revolution in Russian in 1930*" — a book, he adds, meant for illegal distribution inside the USSR. The detail he cannot see is that Trotsky's *Permanent Revolution* had to be printed abroad and smuggled in because it was banned at home. The censorship of the largest Marxist library on earth is here converted into evidence of its author's treason. That a book was unpublishable in the workers' state is offered as proof that its author served the bourgeoisie.

What the book cannot say

Which brings us to the reflexive point in its purest form, and to the correction that matters most. This is a book that calls Trotskyism the servant of imperialist reaction, written and published by the state that had physically exterminated the Trotskyists.

The test this series applies to a candid book is narrow and exact: error is admissible, but the category is not. A Soviet author may concede that a Bolshevik erred on a date or a vote; what never happens is that the classification turns inward — no one who stayed inside the Party is ever an "opportunist," an "agent," a "servant of reaction." Basmanov does not even reach the threshold of admitting error. In his account the CPSU is only ever the combatant of Trotskyism, never the subject of any charge; the labels flow one way. And the discriminator is not a matter of tone. It is a matter of an absence so total that it has to be counted to be believed.

Contemporary Trotskyism narrates the history of the Trotskyist movement across exactly the years 1936 to 1940 — the founding of the Fourth International near Paris in September 1938, the manifestos of 1940. Across all 70,000 words of it, the following names do not appear even once: Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rakovsky, Pyatakov, Radek.

The words "Moscow trial" do not appear. The word "execution" does not appear. The year 1936 figures only as the year "Trotsky again gathered together a small group of supporters" — not as the year of the first Moscow Trial, at which sixteen Old Bolsheviks were shot and Trotsky and his son were sentenced to death in absentia. The Great Terror, in which the entire surviving Left Opposition inside the USSR was killed, is not mentioned. Trotsky's own assassination in Mexico in August 1940 — by an agent of the state publishing this book — is not mentioned; the reader who knew nothing else would not learn from Basmanov that Trotsky died at all, still less how. Christian Rakovsky, who led the Opposition and was shot in 1941, is absent. A book that can quote Trotsky ordering, in 1938, that the USSR's policy "is the chief obstacle on the road to the liberation of backward and oppressed peoples" — and present it as wickedness — cannot register that 1938 was the year of the Bukharin trial, or that the man it quotes had by then had his co-thinkers, his secretaries and most of his family killed.

The killing was not confined to Soviet territory, and the reply corpus documents it in the movement's own contemporaneous voice. The International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, in Fourth International of June 1947, recorded that the Indochinese section had been "deprived by the criminal hands of Stalin's GPU of many of its leading elements, among them the heroic figure of comrade Ta-Thu-Thau" — the Vietnamese Trotskyist leader whose "Struggle" (Tranh Dau) group had been recognised in 1939 as the Vietnamese section of the International, and who was murdered in 1945 in the wake of the August revolution. The massacre is confirmed in *Intercontinental Press* of 9 April 1979 ("Trotskyists who opposed this were massacred by the VCP, including the popular Trotskyist leader Ta Thu Thau") and revisited on 23 September 1985. Basmanov's book calls this movement the agent of counter-revolution. The murders are its silence.

This is not a distortion to be argued over clause by clause. It is the constitutive fact of the book, and it is why the reflexivity test rather than any vocabulary count is the right instrument here. The category — "counter-revolutionary," "agent of imperialism" — is turned outward at a movement whose members the author's own state shot, and it can never be turned toward the shooting. A book that cannot name the Terror is in no position to adjudicate who served reaction.

Two smaller corrections belong beside the large one. On "socialism in one country," Basmanov treats permanent revolution as a denial that socialism could be built in the

USSR and lets the matter rest with the assertion of Soviet success. The serious answer is not that the USSR failed to industrialise but that industrialisation was carried through by a privileged bureaucratic caste that had expropriated the working class politically — the argument Trotsky made in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936), the standing counter-text to every Soviet self-portrait in this catalogue, and the book Basmanov's silence about the bureaucracy most conspicuously avoids. And on the pre-revolutionary record: Basmanov's Trotsky is built almost entirely out of quarrels with Lenin before 1917 — the 1910 postcard, the 1913 letter to Chkheidze, Lenin's epithet "Judas Trotsky" — while the years in which Trotsky organised the October insurrection and the Red Army are compressed to treachery or passed over. That method has a name, and Trotsky gave it one: *The Stalin School of Falsification* (1937), which is precisely the anatomy of how the epigones mined the old disputes and suppressed the record after 1917. It is the direct methodological reply to this book, and it was in print thirty-five years before it.

What survives, and what the book inadvertently proves

This series does not deal in blanket denunciation, and a reader told that everything here is worthless learns nothing. So it should be said that some of what Basmanov reports is real, and that he did not invent the disarray he describes. The Fourth International of the 1950s and 1960s was genuinely fractured; the very document he abuses over Posadas — the 1963 "Reunification" — exists because there had been a decade-long split, and the Posadas and Healy currents he lumps together with the reunified International were in fact its bitter opponents. The movement argued in public, in journals Basmanov could simply read, and its arguments were sometimes wild. An introduction that pretended the post-war Trotskyist movement was a model of unity would be doing to the reader what Basmanov does. It was not; it said so itself.

But the deepest thing the book proves is one it did not intend. To sustain 70,000 words and a bibliography in five languages, Basmanov had to document the reach of the thing he calls negligible. The "dried infusoria" turn out to publish theoretical reviews in French, English, Spanish and Italian; to hold congresses; to have sections in Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, France, Britain, the United States; to be winning, as he complains, "some young people" who could not at first "distinguish the anti-revolutionary character of their pseudo-Left speeches." The Ponomarev apparatus did not commission a fresh, book-length, heavily documented attack

in 1972 on a corpse. It commissioned it on a revival — and the book's own footnotes are the inventory of that revival. Read against the grain, *Contemporary Trotskyism* is a Soviet estimate, made in the year of its greatest anxiety, of how far the Fourth International had come back.

There is a final irony the book could not have known in 1972 but its reader can. The movement Basmanov damns as the hired agent of imperialism would, within a few years, produce the most rigorous Marxist anatomy of the Western Communist parties' drift into parliamentary reformism — Ernest Mandel's *From Stalinism to Eurocommunism* (1978), which traced the Italian, French and Spanish parties' abandonment of revolution and of the dictatorship of the proletariat back to the very theory of "socialism in one country" this book exists to defend. Moscow attacked Eurocommunism too, when it dared, but hollowly and from the right, unable to say that the disease was its own child. The Trotskyists Basmanov calls counter-revolutionary were the ones who diagnosed the counter-revolution inside Western Communism — and diagnosed it from the left. The tradition this book was commissioned to bury outlived it, and did the analysis the apparatus could not.

The reply

A reader who wants the other side of every claim in this book has, unusually, the primary texts to hand. On the theory Basmanov caricatures, Trotsky's *The Permanent Revolution* (1930) and *Results and Prospects* (1906) — and, on the international completion of the revolution he collapses into "defeatism," theses 9 and 10 of the former. On "socialism in one country" and the fate of the Soviet state, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936). On the world movement whose official history Basmanov inverts, *The Third International After Lenin* (1928). And on the method of the book itself — the mining of old quarrels, the suppression of the record, the quotation cut at the turn — *The Stalin School of Falsification* (1937), which answers Basmanov's procedure more exactly than any refutation written since. For the contemporary movement he attacks, the reply is in the very journals he cites: the *International Socialist Review's* "Reunification of the Fourth International" (Fall 1963) will tell a reader in two pages what Basmanov spends a chapter concealing. And for the men and women the book cannot mention, the record kept by their own comrades — from Fourth International of June 1947 to Intercontinental Press across the 1970s and 1980s — is where the missing ending is written down.

ANTI-IMPERIALISM

Leninism and the Battle of Ideas

The head of the Academy's sector for the criticism of anti-communism - and a former intelligence officer who ran the NKGB's English desk - mapping the Western apparatus of ideological production, with names, institutions and funding, across 1,087 footnotes.

Yelena Modrzhinskaya

Introduction to the 1972 Edition

This book carries 1,087 footnote markers across 128,026 words. Eighty-five of them cite Lenin's Collected Works directly, with a further 132 Ibid. references trailing behind them. Marx and Engels are cited twenty-two times. Herbert Marcuse gets page numbers from *An Essay on Liberation and One-Dimensional Man*; Zbigniew Brzezinski, Daniel Bell, Sidney Hook, Stefan Possony, Gustav Wetter, Innocent Bochenski, Roger Garaudy, Henri Lefebvre and the Yugoslav Praxis philosophers Gajo Petrović and Mihailo Marković are all cited by title, place and year. J. Edgar Hoover is cited. A papal encyclical is cited.

Leon Trotsky is not cited once.

He is named, and named as the principal enemy. Trotskyism, the author writes, "with its ultra-revolutionary catchwords, its lack of faith in the strength of the working class, its political adventurism, and neglect for the concrete historical reality, was undoubtedly the most dangerous enemy against which the CPSU had had to fight long and hard." That is a strong claim about a body of writing. Nowhere in the book is a sentence of that writing reproduced. There is no footnote to *The Permanent Revolution*, none to *The Revolution Betrayed*, none to *Results and Prospects*, none to any article, speech or letter. The most dangerous enemy is the only figure in the volume who is never allowed to speak.

That absence is the interpretative key to the whole book, and it is worth being precise about what kind of absence it is. It is not that the author refuses to name living opponents. She names a great many, at some risk to them: Petrović and Marković, three years before they were driven out of the University of Belgrade; Kolakowski, already in exile; Garaudy, expelled from the French party in 1970; Lefebvre, whom she calls "the renegade". These people were alive, contactable, and identifiable, and she quotes them. It is Trotskyism alone that is attacked without a single named adherent and without a single

quoted line. The Fourth International — which in 1972 was publishing a weekly in English out of New York, holding world congresses and reporting on Soviet affairs every week — appears in these pages exactly once, and then as the Fourth International Sociological Congress, a gathering of academic sociologists. The organisation is not mentioned at all.

The commission

Progress Publishers titles were commissioned, and this one can be traced to its office. Yelena Dmitrievna Modrzhinskaya (1910–1982) headed the sector for the criticism of anti-communism at the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences from 1953 until her death; she took her doctorate in philosophy in 1964 and was named an Honoured Scientist of the RSFSR in 1970. This book is that sector's flagship product, and the book itself half-says so: it cites the international theoretical conference on "The Growing Role of Leninism in the Modern Epoch and the Criticism of Anti-Communism", held in Moscow from 19 to 23 January 1970, and names two of its speakers, V. Okulov and L. N. Velikovitch, as colleagues working the same seam.

Her earlier career explains the book's method better than her academic one does. Modrzhinskaya was a foreign intelligence officer. A graduate of the international law department of Moscow State University, she rose to major of state security, ran the referral department under Beria, was stationed in Warsaw in 1940–41 under the codename "Maria", and after the 1941 reorganisation was given the English sector of the NKGB's analytical directorate by Pavel Fitin. In that post she wrote the report — dated April 1943 in Nigel West and Oleg Tsarev's *TRIPLEX: Secrets from the Cambridge Spies* (Yale University Press, 2009), where it is printed — arguing that Philby, Burgess, Blunt and their circle were producing too much good material to be genuine, and were therefore British double agents. She was wrong, and she was promoted.

Read with that in view, *Leninism and the Battle of Ideas* stops

being a bad philosophy book and becomes a rather good target study. Its organising question is not whether an argument is true but who is paying for it, through what institution, and to what end. Chapter Three, the longest sustained stretch in the volume at some 18,500 words, is an inventory of the Western apparatus: the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford, where she notes that "The Institute's 'advisory committee' includes executives from giant corporations like the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, Republic Steel Corporation, T. Mellon and Sons, and others, whose contributions make up almost 70 per cent of the Institute's budget"; the Center for Strategic Studies in Georgetown; Columbia's Research Institute on Communist Affairs and its Russian Institute; the West German Ostforschung network, institute by institute, from the East European Institute at the Free University in West Berlin to the Federal Institute for the Study of Marxism-Leninism in Cologne. She puts a figure on it — "The cost of ideological struggle and anti-communist propaganda comes to over \$500 million a year" — and names the agencies: "The State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon, the Peace Corps, the United States Information Agency and many other outfits are engaged in organising anti-communist political and ideological acts."

This is the part of the book that deserves to be taken seriously, and it should be conceded plainly. A great deal of Cold War Sovietology was commissioned and paid for exactly as she says, by foundations and corporations with a direct interest in the conclusions, and it produced a great deal of dishonest scholarship. Her chapter on neocolonialism is better still: the oil extraction figures she gives for the Middle East (15.7 million tons in 1937, 468.3 million in 1966) and her reading of David Shepard of Standard Oil telling a Columbia audience that rising living standards in poor countries were excellent ground for private enterprise are the work of someone who has actually read the trade literature. She quotes Arnold Toynbee's 1966 cable to a Montreal anti-war meeting, and Bertrand Russell on American world ambitions, and she does not flatten them: she notes that such critics "frequently stop short of going to its social roots." On racism, on the Vietnam war, on the poverty statistics that Kennedy and Johnson themselves conceded, she is landing real blows on real targets, and she knows where the targets are because finding them had been her job.

The irony sits in a footnote. In her chapter on convergence theory she sources an argument to *Encounter*, 1963, no. 6, without comment. By 1972 it had been public for five years — since the Ramparts disclosures of 1967 and the resignations

that followed — that *Encounter* was funded through the Congress for Cultural Freedom with CIA money. The one journal in her bibliography that was demonstrably an intelligence operation is the one she cites as an ordinary source. A book whose whole claim to authority is that it can follow the money did not follow it.

The date

Unusually for this series, the date on the spine is close to the date of the text. The copyright page reads only "First printing 1972", with the Russian original title legible under the scanning damage as *Ленинизм и современная борьба идей* — literally, *Leninism and the Contemporary Struggle of Ideas*. The latest datable material is the Report of the Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the CPSU (Moscow, 1971), the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (May 1971), and an issue of *Problems of Peace and Socialism* from 1971; the evidential spine of the argument is the cluster of speeches given at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses on 21–22 April 1970 for the Lenin centenary. The Russian text was therefore finished in 1971 and translated at once by Yuri Sdobnikov. There is no earlier edition hiding behind this one. It is a book of the 24th Congress, written to the 24th Congress's specifications.

That matters, because the 24th Congress is precisely where the record shows the line hardening. Intercontinental Press reported in its issue of 1 February 1971 that Soviet officials expected the coming congress to rescind the Twentieth Congress's denunciation of Stalin outright; its year-end review of 25 December 1972 concluded that "In 1971 the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Soviet Communist party ratified a decision to reverse the partial easing of controls that had been granted in the years following Stalin's death."

What the book says about Stalin, and what it does not

The word Stalin occurs twice in 128,026 words. Both times it is a commendation.

Upon Lenin's death, Trotsky started ideological subversion in an effort to supplant Leninism with Trotskyism. The Party and its Central Committee, headed by J. V. Stalin, safeguarded Leninism and, in face of tremendous difficulties, ensured the victory of socialism in the Soviet Republic. Without the long and energetic struggle of the Party under the leadership of V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin,

against the Right-wing deviationists and Trotskyites, it would have been impossible to win in the Great October Socialist Revolution, to consolidate this victory, to build socialism and to safeguard it during the Great Patriotic War.

Read the last sentence again. It makes the struggle against "Trotskyites" a precondition of winning in October 1917 — an event at which Trotsky was chairman of the Petrograd Soviet and of the Military Revolutionary Committee that organised the insurrection, and at which the factional divisions of 1923–27 did not yet exist. This is the amalgam in its purest form, and Trotsky had already dismantled the machinery that produced it. In *The Stalin School of Falsification* (1937), replying to the invention of a "practical centre" for the insurrection from which he had supposedly been excluded, he pointed out that Stalin, "with the help of the Yaroslavskys", had built a legend on a committee "of which, if you please, Trotsky was not a member. Neither was Lenin a member of that committee."

The Twentieth Congress of 1956 is not mentioned. The phrases "cult of the individual" and "personality cult" do not occur. Neither do the Moscow Trials, the Terror, or the year 1937 in any sense other than an oil production statistic. The single admission anywhere in the book that anything went wrong in a socialist country is not the author's own: it sits inside a quotation from János Kádár about Hungary in 1956, referring to "the now well-known mistakes that really occurred", which are not specified and which the surrounding sentences subordinate to a "bloody counter-revolutionary putsch". A book published in Moscow in 1972 that rehabilitates Stalin in two clauses and never once concedes an execution is not an accident of emphasis. It is the 24th Congress line, delivered by the sector responsible for delivering it.

The characterisations, tested

The house method for this series is to take an attribution and go to the source. Modrzhinskaya makes four checkable claims about Trotsky. Every one of them can be tested against books she does not cite.

First: "Trotsky said the success of the revolution in Russia depended on whether or not it would be supported by a simultaneous uprising of the European proletariat." Trotsky's own summary, in the concluding theses of *The Permanent Revolution* (1930), says the opposite about simultaneity: "The socialist revolution begins on the national arena, it unfolds on

the international arena, and is completed on the world arena." The claim is not that the revolutions must be simultaneous but that a national revolution cannot be completed alone.

Second: he "erected a dogmatic antithesis between Lenin's conclusion that the proletariat could initially win out in a few countries or even in one individual country". The same theses state: "Backward countries may, under certain conditions, arrive at the dictatorship of the proletariat sooner than advanced countries, but they will come later than the latter to socialism." Trotsky affirms the very proposition he is said to deny. The dispute was over the completion of socialism in one country, not over which country could take power first — and by collapsing the two, the charge disposes of an argument that was never made.

Third: he "did not believe in the possibility of an alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and advocated a harmful policy in respect of the peasantry". Point three of the same theses: "Without an alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry the tasks of the democratic revolution cannot be solved, nor even seriously posed."

Fourth, and this one is almost comic in its precision: Trotskyism is defined, in the chapter on Maoism, as a set of "Trotskyite conceptions (the stake on artificially whipping up history, executing leaps and permanent revolution)". Chapter two of *The Permanent Revolution* is titled "The Permanent Revolution is Not a 'Leap' by the Proletariat, but the Reconstruction of the Nation under Leadership of the Proletariat", and states in the text: "The permanent revolution is no isolated leap of the proletariat; rather it is the rebuilding of the whole nation under the leadership of the proletariat."

Four attributions, four refutations available in a single short book, long in print in English and in Modrzhinskaya's four working languages besides Russian. The point is not that Modrzhinskaya was lazy. It is that the genre does not require the check, because in this genre a characterisation is not a description of a position but an assignment to a category — and the categories are what the book is really made of.

The vocabulary bears this out. The stem *opportunism* occurs 103 times, just under eight per ten thousand words, against a corpus average of about 1.5 across the 195 Progress volumes in this project — among the highest rates recorded. And the sorting is asymmetrical in the way the corpus predicts. "Right" opportunism and "Right" revisionism are written plainly, twenty-nine and twenty times respectively. Their left-hand counterparts appear five and eight times, and the word "Left"

carries scare quotes on all thirty of its occurrences in this construction, while "Right" never does. The typography does the argument: a right deviation is a deviation of the left, whereas a "left" deviation is not really of the left at all. From there it is a short step to the book's use of Trotskyism as a solvent — Maoism, we are told, "has adopted ideas which are akin to Trotskyism", and the Chinese party is "being built as Maoist-Trotskyite, anti-Leninist"; petty-bourgeois nationalism "as a rule it links up with Right-opportunist revisionism and Trotskyism"; and West German Social Democrats promoting "the ideas of Karl Kautsky, Otto Bauer, Leon Trotsky and similar other men" are doing anti-communist work. Trotskyism has become a property that can be attributed to Peking, to Bonn and to Belgrade at once. A term that explains everything explains nothing, which is why it needs no citation.

The silence, and where it was loudest

The book's subject is ideological subversion inside the socialist countries. It devotes fifty-six references to Czechoslovakia, quoting Brezhnev at length on the August 1968 invasion — "It was an attempt to strike in this way at the positions of socialism in Europe as a whole" — and reprinting the post-invasion Czechoslovak Central Committee document "The Lessons of the Crisis Development", which calls the entry of five armies "an act of international solidarity". Alexander Dubček is not named. Neither is Ota Šik, nor any other Czechoslovak reformer. Sixty-four references to a country, and no Czechoslovak protagonist.

The deeper silence is domestic. In a book about how imperialism smuggles hostile ideas into Soviet society, published in Moscow in 1972, the following words do not occur: samizdat, Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, Sinyavsky, Daniel, Medvedev, Grigorenko, dissident. All of them were available to her. Solzhenitsyn had taken the Nobel Prize in 1970. Sakharov's *Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom* had circulated worldwide from 1968. These are absences of the kind that count: the author had the facts, had every professional reason to use them, and left them out — because to describe the opposition would have been to concede that it had arguments.

What makes this precisely datable rather than merely notable is what was happening in the same months. Vladimir Bukovsky was tried in Moscow on 5 January 1972 and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and five years' exile, largely for having sent abroad the psychiatric records documenting the confinement of dissenters in special

hospitals. Between 24 April and 26 June 1972, while Modrzinskaya's book was going through the press at 21 Zubovsky Boulevard, Intercontinental Press — the weekly of the movement she was assigned to refute — serialised the full transcript of that trial across ten issues, having already printed the appeal to UN Secretary-General Waldheim signed by fifty-two Soviet citizens, with all fifty-two names. The appeal's own words: "The groundless and inhuman conviction of Vladimir Bukovsky compels us to appeal to you."

The reply that already existed

The strongest single demonstration that this book's method was a choice rather than a necessity is Marcuse. Modrzinskaya's charge is that he is "a typical example of this brand of bourgeois anti-communist ideologist", fulfilling "the monopolies' 'social order'", and that he "says that it is meaningless to look for any specific historical agents of revolutionary change in the advanced capitalist countries."

The underlying observation is correct, and it was not hers alone. Four years earlier, in the *International Socialist Review* of November–December 1968 — the theoretical journal of the American Socialist Workers Party, on the Fourth International's side of the 1940 split — Robert Langston published a long study making the same central criticism: that Marcuse had come to doubt the working class as the agent of transformation, and that in doing so he "departs from the method of historical materialism." But Langston reached it by quoting *One-Dimensional Man* at length, by tracing Marcuse's route from Heidegger through the 1932 essay on the Paris Manuscripts, and by granting what was true — that *Reason and Revolution* (1941) is "possibly the best book on Hegel yet written in English", and that "Marcuse shares with Marxists the conviction that the only potentially, ultimately world-transforming agency in the modern world is the working class." Same diagnosis; opposite intellectual operation. One engages a thinker and disagrees with him. The other classifies him and stops.

On Czechoslovakia, the answer was also in print and also from the left. The Ninth World Congress of the Fourth International, whose documents the ISR carried in May–June 1969, recorded that "In Czechoslovakia the student movement played a central role in initiating the struggle for socialist democracy during the spring and summer of 1968", and listed "the Sino-Soviet conflict, the Cuban revolution, the Vietnam war, and finally the invasion of Czechoslovakia" among the causes of "the disintegration of Stalinist monolithism". (The transcription reads "Sine-Soviet"; the word is Sino.) That is a judgement

Modrzhinskaya's readers were not permitted to see, and it was made not by the CIA but by an organisation that supported the Vietnamese revolution as unambiguously as she did.

And on the accusation she treats as self-evidently a slander — Marcuse's talk of the Soviet Union's "repressive bureaucracy" — the reply is older than the Cold War. *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936) described the Soviet bureaucracy as having "risen above a class which is hardly emerging from destitution and darkness", and concluded that "It is in the full sense of the word the sole privileged and commanding stratum in the Soviet society." That analysis may be right or wrong. It cannot be answered by being called imperialist propaganda, because it was written by a man the imperialists were quite happy to see murdered.

What the book is for

Read for its philosophy, this is a weak volume: the chapters on the "crisis of bourgeois ideology" and the falsifiers of Marxism-Leninism restate a syllabus. Read as an institutional document, it is valuable and should be kept in print. It is the fullest English-language statement of what the Academy of Sciences' anti-anti-communism sector believed its job to be in the year after the 24th Congress, written by the officer who ran that sector for twenty-nine years and who had learned her trade deciding which foreign informants were lying. Chapter Three remains a usable inventory of Cold War institutional funding, and a reader who wants to know how the Soviet state mapped its ideological adversaries in 1971 will not find a better single source.

But the map has a blank on it, and the blank is the shape of this series. Modrzhinskaya could name and quote a Yugoslav philosopher, a French Catholic, an American FBI director and a pope. She could not name one member of the Fourth International, or reproduce one sentence written by the man she called the most dangerous enemy the Party ever faced. The analyst who once concluded that intelligence too good to be true must be false had, by 1972, arrived at a method in which no evidence needed to be examined at all — because the category was settled in advance, and the category was the finding.

Theories of Surplus-Value, Part One (Volume IV of Capital)

Marx's critical history of economics, written in 1862-63 and unpublished for forty years - Part One takes it from the Physiocrats through Adam Smith, with his own contents map of the whole work.

Karl Marx

Introduction to This Edition

This is the first of the three volumes of what Marx meant to be the concluding, historical part of Capital. Between January 1862 and July 1863, in the middle of the vast manuscript from which the whole of his great work would later be quarried, he filled notebook after notebook with a critical history of the theory that stood at the centre of his own — the theory of surplus-value, of where the extra wealth of capitalist society actually comes from. He did not live to shape it into a book. What he left was the longest and most fully worked-out section of the 1861–63 draft, and it slept in his papers for forty years, until Karl Kautsky, then the foremost theorist of German social democracy, first gave it to the world between 1905 and 1910 under the title Marx had used in passing — *Theorien über den Mehrwert*, Theories of Surplus-Value — and fixed it in the tradition as "the fourth volume of Capital." The edition in your hands is not Kautsky's but the English of Progress Publishers in Moscow, prepared by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism from a re-ordering of the notebooks meant to follow Marx's own plan more faithfully; this Part One was translated by Emile Burns and edited by S. Ryazanskaya, first printed in 1963, and co-issued in Britain by Lawrence & Wishart. Being the opening volume, it carries the general Preface and Marx's own "Contents of the Manuscript" — the map of the whole work.

Part One is where the history begins, and it moves from the Physiocrats — the eighteenth-century French school who were the first to look for the origin of surplus in production rather than in cheating at exchange — through Adam Smith, whose honesty Marx admired even where he thought him wrong. But its living centre, the part that has echoed loudest down the following century, is the long analysis of what Smith had called productive and unproductive labour. Here Marx does something the reader does not expect. Productive labour, he insists, has nothing to do with whether the worker makes a solid object or performs a fleeting service, nothing to do with

the usefulness of the work or the dignity of it; under capitalism, "only that labour is productive which creates a surplus-value." Productive labour is a relation — labour exchanged against capital in such a way that it returns more value than it costs — so that the very same activity is productive in one setting and unproductive in another. He drives the point home with a mischief that has never lost its edge: "A philosopher produces ideas, a poet poems, a clergyman sermons, a professor compendia and so on. A criminal produces crimes" — and, he goes on, produces the whole industry of police, courts and moralists that lives off crime, and is in that sense as "productive" as any of them. The joke is a scalpel: it cuts the word productive free of the thing produced and ties it to the social form.

An honest introduction must say plainly what this volume is and is not. It is not a finished work, and it does not read like one. It is a set of working notebooks, brilliant in flashes and slack in the stretches between, circling back on itself, breaking off, arguing with minor authors at a length their importance does not justify. Its very order is a construction — first Kautsky's, then the Institute's, neither of them Marx's own hand — so that the architecture the reader follows is partly the editors'. The famous discussion of productive and unproductive labour, for all its depth, Marx never brought to a settled conclusion, and it has generated more than a century of confusion among his followers. This is a quarry of extraordinary richness, not a monument — and it is a better book for being read as the former.

The confusion was not only among scholars. The state that canonised Marx built its entire system of national accounting on a hardened, materialist misreading of these very pages. Where the capitalist West would come to measure its output as Gross National Product, counting services and government and finance alike, the Soviet Union measured "net material product" — a figure that counted the making of physical goods as the creation of national income and treated the labour of the teacher, the nurse, the shop assistant and the clerk as, at best, a

deduction from wealth produced elsewhere. This Material Product System, exported to every planned economy and defended as strict Marxist orthodoxy, took Marx's careful account of productive labour as a social relation and flattened it into a fetish of the tangible object — the very fetishism of the material product that these notebooks exist to dissolve. The tonnage cult of the Five-Year Plans, the steel and the cement counted and the human services discounted, had its theoretical licence here, in a doctrine that read Part One of the fourth volume of *Capital* exactly backwards, mistaking Marx's joke about the criminal for a rule about the carpenter.

None of this is a reproach to Marx, and none to the revolution that first raised his name as a banner. A backward, invaded, blockaded country genuinely had to drag itself up from a low base, and had to count something; the tragedy is that the counting was done by a caste that had usurped the workers' power and could not permit the texts it recited to be read against itself. The degeneration lay in that isolation and that usurpation, not in the doctrine — and it is worth remembering that the man who edited the first edition of this very manuscript, Kautsky, was by the 1920s the Soviet Union's favourite word for a renegade, so that the official Marxism owed the existence of its fourth gospel to a heretic it spent its life denouncing. It was Trotsky, in *The Revolution Betrayed*, who turned the categories homeward and asked what surplus the plan was pumping and into whose hands; and it was Ernest Mandel, whose *Marxist Economic Theory* draws deeply on these chapters, who used the productive/unproductive analysis as the living instrument it was meant to be rather than the accounting rule the manuals made of it.

So what is this difficult, unfinished, magnificent volume worth now, past the state that mined it for a statistical dogma? A great deal — perhaps more than when it was written, because its central question has come round again. What counts as productive labour is once more a live and bitter argument, in a world of care work and platform work and the vast unwaged labour on which every economy floats, and Marx's insistence that the answer lies in a relation and not in the substance of the product cuts against the productivists of every camp — the ones who worship the factory and the ones who worship the app alike. His method, too, endures: to take his predecessors at their strongest, to honour the science in the Physiocrats and in Smith, and to show exactly where it turns into confusion or apology. Cleared of the material-product fetish the plan extracted from it, and of the catechism that froze it into a fourth gospel, this opening volume of Marx's history of a science is also a warning against every economics that takes the visible surface of its world for nature. The living current in

these notebooks is simply Marx's critical history put back to work.

Theories of Surplus-Value, Part Two (Volume IV of Capital)

Marx on Ricardo at full stretch - rent, profit, and the sustained demolition of the doctrine that general overproduction cannot happen. The volume every later theory of crisis has drawn on.

Karl Marx

Introduction to This Edition

This is the middle volume of the three that make up Theories of Surplus-Value, the historical fourth volume of Capital. Marx wrote the whole of it in a single sustained effort between January 1862 and July 1863, as the longest and most elaborated part of the manuscript from which all of Capital was later drawn, but he never lived to turn it into a book; it was first published posthumously by Karl Kautsky between 1905 and 1910, and reaches the reader here in the English of Progress Publishers, Moscow — this Part Two translated by Renate Simpson from the German and edited by S. Ryazanskaya, first printed in 1968, and co-issued in Britain by Lawrence & Wishart. Where Part One took the story from the Physiocrats through Adam Smith, Part Two is the Ricardo volume. It is dominated by the towering figure of David Ricardo, the last and greatest of the classical economists, and by the two questions on which Marx thought the fate of the whole science turned: the theory of rent, and the possibility of crisis.

Read on its own terms, this is the volume where Marx's powers as a critic are at their height. His treatment of Ricardo is a model of what criticism can be — not the dismissal of an enemy but the honouring of a great mind, taken at his strongest, followed step by step through his own logic to the exact point where it breaks, and shown why it breaks. Marx works through Ricardo's theory of rent and sets his own against it, disentangles the differential rent of better soils from the absolute rent that landed property as such can command; he separates, as Ricardo could not, surplus-value in general from the particular form of profit; and in the chapter on accumulation he mounts his most sustained assault on the comfortable doctrine, inherited from Jean-Baptiste Say, that a general glut of the market is impossible because every sale is also a purchase and supply creates its own demand. That doctrine, Marx shows, rests on treating the circulation of commodities as mere barter — on what he mocks as the

"metaphysical equilibrium of sellers and buyers" — and it dissolves the moment money is allowed to be what it is, a store of value that can be withheld. Yet he refuses the opposite temptation of the underconsumptionists just as firmly: "The word over-production in itself leads to error," he warns, for so long as real human needs go unmet there can be no over-production of useful things — only an over-production of capital, of commodities that cannot be sold at a profit. Crisis is a disorder of the social form, not of abundance.

An honest introduction must also mark where the volume is unfinished and unsure, and here the duty is plain. This is a draft, a set of notebooks whose very order was imposed by its editors rather than by Marx, and it shows: the argument circles, breaks off, and buries its best insights in long quarrels with forgotten men. Above all, the crisis theory that generations have quarried from these pages is scattered and suggestive rather than systematic. The great chapter on general crises that a reader keeps expecting was never written; what we have are the materials for it, brilliant and incomplete, from which Marxists have built rival theories — underconsumption, disproportion, the falling rate of profit — each able to claim a paragraph of Part Two as its warrant. To read the volume as Marx left it, rather than as any school later tidied it, is to feel the questions still open.

Which is where the strange career of this book in the state that made it scripture begins. Part Two was mined above all for its crisis theory, pressed into the doctrine of the "general crisis of capitalism" — the promised final breakdown of the West forever announced and forever deferred, a barometer of loyalty to Moscow more than an analysis of anything. But the volume's categories, turned homeward, were awkward in the extreme. Marx's theory of differential rent had made the differing fertility and location of land into a precise instrument for understanding why some producers earn a surplus that others cannot; it was exactly the tool that Soviet planners, forbidden on principle to charge rent for land, oil or ore, could not bring themselves to use — and so they priced their

continent's soil and minerals at nothing and squandered them on a scale the capitalist rentier would have found insane. The demonstration that crises are a disorder of the value form — of production for profit rather than for need — could be aimed outward at the West with relish, but never inward at an economy whose chronic shortages, unsaleable stockpiles and idle capacity were plainly disorders of its form of production too. The state that canonised the anatomy of capitalist rent and crisis forbade anyone to ask whether its own unpriced rents and its own recurrent disproportions wore any of the same features.

None of this is a charge against Marx, and none against the revolution that first raised his work as a banner. A backward and blockaded country genuinely had to accumulate from a low base, and the tragedy is that a real necessity was administered by a bureaucracy that had usurped the workers' power and could permit no rival reading of the texts it recited. It was Trotsky, in *The Revolution Betrayed*, who turned Part Two's own question — whose surplus, and by what disproportions? — on the Soviet economy itself; and it was Ernest Mandel, whose *Late Capitalism* built its whole theory of long waves and crises on these chapters, who did with them what the manuals forbade, using Marx's unfinished crisis theory as a living tool rather than an embalmed slogan.

So what is this Ricardo volume worth now? More, perhaps, than when it was written. We live in the age its crisis chapters anticipated — of gluts amid unmet need, of idle capacity and demand propped up by debt, of the "metaphysical equilibrium" of Say's Law resurrected under new names every time an economist insists that markets clear themselves. Marx's refusal of both the complacency that denies crisis and the underconsumptionism that mistakes it for mere shortage is still the sanest starting point we have. His rent theory, too, has outlived the socialism that would not use it: in an age of resource depletion, of oil and land and now the very atmosphere treated as free gifts to be exhausted, the analysis of who captures the surplus that scarce nature commands is more urgent than ever. And his way of reading Ricardo — with the generosity that honours a science and the rigour that finds its limit — is worth more than any dogma built on him. Cleared of the catechism that froze it into a barometer of the West's collapse, this middle volume of Marx's history is not the charter of any plan but the anatomy of the economy we still inhabit, its crises and its rents alike.

Theories of Surplus-Value, Part Three (Volume IV of Capital)

The break-up of the Ricardian school - the apologists who hollowed it out, the socialists who turned it against capital - closing with Marx's sharpest statement on the fetishism of economic relations.

Karl Marx

Introduction to This Edition

This is the last of the three volumes of Theories of Surplus-Value, the historical fourth volume of Capital. Marx wrote the whole work in one sustained effort between January 1862 and July 1863, as the longest and most elaborated part of the manuscript from which all of Capital was later drawn, but he never lived to make a book of it; it was first published posthumously by Karl Kautsky between 1905 and 1910, and reaches the reader here in the English of Progress Publishers, Moscow — this Part Three translated from the German by Jack Cohen and S. W. Ryazanskaya, edited by S. W. Ryazanskaya and Richard Dixon, first printed in 1971, and co-issued in Britain by Lawrence & Wishart. Where Part One took the history from the Physiocrats through Adam Smith and Part Two was the volume of Ricardo, Part Three is the volume of the aftermath: the disintegration of the Ricardian school, the "vulgar" economists who came after, the opposition that turned Ricardo's own weapons against capital, and — in its closing addenda on "Revenue and its Sources" — Marx's most concentrated statement of what he called the fetishism of economic relations.

Read on its own terms, Part Three is the volume where Marx's history of a science becomes a history of its decline. He watches the great edifice Ricardo built dissolve in two directions at once. On one side stand the epigones — McCulloch, James Mill and their kind — who kept Ricardo's forms while emptying them of their content, until, in Marx's account, the science curdled into apologetics, a defence of the existing order dressed in the language of the laws it no longer sought to explain. On the other stand the men Marx found far more interesting: the Ricardian socialists and the radical pamphleteers who took Ricardo's own demonstration that labour is the source of value and drew from it the conclusion Ricardo had refused — that the profit of capital is a deduction from the product of the worker. And in the addenda that crown the volume, Marx anatomises the deepest illusion of all, the

one he named the trinity formula: the way capital, land and labour come to appear as three natural sources each yielding its own natural return — profit, rent, wages — so that the divided spoils of exploitation present themselves as the just earnings of three cooperating "factors." "The form of revenue and the sources of revenue," he writes, "are the most fetishistic expression of the relations of capitalist production" — the surface on which a social relation of exploitation is made to look like a fact of nature.

An honest introduction must also say where the volume falls short. Like its companions it is a draft, a set of notebooks whose order was imposed by its editors, and it shows the strain: the argument breaks off and resumes, and the long polemic against Malthus in particular runs hotter than cold analysis requires, its contempt sometimes outrunning its demonstration. The distinction between "classical" and "vulgar" economy on which the whole volume turns is a powerful one, but Marx wields it more as a verdict than as a settled criterion, and it can slide toward a charge laid against anyone who describes the surface of the economy at all. This is a quarry, not a monument — richest where it is least finished.

And yet its central charge is the one that returns, with an irony no censor could edit out, to the state that made Marx into scripture. For what Marx accused the vulgar economists of doing — taking the surface categories of their economy for natural facts, and dressing that acceptance as science in order to justify the order those categories served — is precisely what Soviet political economy came to do with its own. The plan, the plan-price, the output norm, the labour quota became self-evident givens, a second nature no more to be questioned than rent and profit and wages had been for the apologists Marx flayed; and the economists of the Soviet state, required to prove that whatever the bureaucracy decided was the lawful unfolding of socialism, became the vulgar economists of their own regime. The volume that dissects the fetishism of revenue-and-its-sources became the charter of a new fetishism. When Stalin conceded in 1952 that the law of value still

"operated" under socialism, and when the reformers of the 1960s tried to smuggle profit back as an index of enterprise success, they were living inside the contradiction Part Three had diagnosed in advance: categories they had declared abolished, reasserting themselves through the surface of an economy whose apologists were forbidden to name them.

None of this is a reproach to Marx, and none to the revolution that first raised his name as a banner. A backward, invaded, blockaded country genuinely had to build from a low base, and the tragedy is that a real necessity was administered by a caste that had usurped the workers' power and could permit no rival reading of the texts it recited. It was Trotsky, in *The Revolution Betrayed*, who refused both the liberal verdict that the doctrine was the original sin and the official myth that the state embodied it, and located the degeneration where it belonged — in isolation, backwardness and bureaucratic usurpation; and it was Ernest Mandel who, drawing on these very chapters, kept the distinction between a critical and an apologetic economics alive against a Marxism that had itself gone vulgar. The canonised text, here as everywhere, is the measure of the betrayal, not its cause.

So what is this closing volume worth now? A great deal, because the fetishism it anatomises is the common sense of our own age. We live surrounded by economic categories that present themselves as facts of nature — the "return" to capital, the "reward" of the entrepreneur, the yield of the rentier and the platform-landlord booked as the wages of innovation — and Marx's demonstration that these surface forms are the most fetishistic expression of a social relation, not its explanation, is still the deepest answer we have to the naturalisation of what capitalism distributes. His recovery of the radicals who turned Ricardo against capital is a reminder that the classics can be read for emancipation as well as apology; and his distinction between a science that seeks the hidden relation and a "vulgarity" that rests content with the surface is a standing challenge to every economics, Western or Soviet, that mistakes the appearance of its world for its truth. Cleared of the catechism that froze it into a fourth gospel, this last volume of Marx's unfinished history is not the charter of any plan but the anatomy of a fetishism we still inhabit — and the tools to see through it.