



PROGRESS QUARTERLY

Critical Introductions to the Reissued Classics

VOLUME III · NUMBER 4

ПРОГРЕСС · МОСКВА

XII

IN THIS ISSUE

IN

THE WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

PE

U. S. BUDGET AND ECONOMIC POLICY

HI

THE OCTOBER STORM AND AFTER

IM

LENIN'S IDEAS AND MODERN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

and 3 more · introductions by Dmitry Chasovennikov

Volume III, Number 4

IN	THE WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT Vadim Valentinovich Zagladin	3
PE	U. S. BUDGET AND ECONOMIC POLICY Valentin Markovich Usoskin and others	9
HI	THE OCTOBER STORM AND AFTER Anatoly Vasilyevich Lunacharsky	13
IM	LENIN'S IDEAS AND MODERN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS Dmitry Georgievich Tomashevsky	18
HI	A SHORT HISTORY OF THE WORLD, VOLUME I Albert Zakharovich Manfred	23
HI	A SHORT HISTORY OF THE WORLD, VOLUME II Albert Zakharovich Manfred	27
FI	THE IRON FLOOD Alexander Serafimovich	31

INTERNATIONALISM

The World Communist Movement

The Kremlin's handbook for the fraternal parties, written inside the Central Committee department that managed them: alliances, fronts, the peaceful road, work in the unions. The 1969 Moscow Meeting's line, codified for export.

Vadim Valentinovich Zagladin

Introduction to the 1973 Edition

The premise on which this volume was approached was that it would be the book where the accounting finally happened. A companion introduction to the 1939 Short Course established that the word "Comintern" does not appear in that textbook even once — a manual for the world movement containing no history of the world movement. Here at last, thirty-four years later, is a Progress volume actually called *The World Communist Movement*, running to some 158,000 words. Surely this is where the gap gets filled.

It is not. The gap is not filled; it is enlarged and furnished. "Comintern" occurs eleven times in the whole book and "Communist International" seven. Set against that: the name Stalin appears zero times. So does Hitler. So does Dimitrov. So does the year 1943, and the year 1937, and the word Cominform. There is no chapter on the history of the Communist International, no narrative of its congresses beyond passing citation, no account of its dissolution, no mention of the split with Yugoslavia, and no acknowledgement anywhere that a single communist was ever killed by a communist state in Europe. What the reader gets instead is a doctrinal handbook: eleven chapters of strategy, tactics, alliances, work among women, work among Catholics, work in the trade unions. The past enters only as a supply of usable precedents.

That is the finding, and it is worth being precise about what kind of finding it is. The Short Course falsified. This book, for the most part, does something different and in some ways more effective: it declines to narrate at all. You cannot catch it lying about 1933 because it never mentions 1933.

What the book was for

The Russian original, *Международное коммунистическое движение*, was produced by a collective — V. V. Alexandrov, Y. V. Dobrotin, S. S. Gililov, V. B. Knyazhinsky, I. I. Lunev,

N. G. Sibilev, V. V. Sukhanov, V. A. Trofimov and V. V. Zagladin, with five further contributors named in the preface — and translated into English by Julius Kalzer. The name that fixes the book's institutional address is Zagladin's. Reporting from Moscow in June 1972, a year before this volume appeared, Hedrick Smith of the New York Times — in a passage *Intercontinental Press* reprinted that July — identified Vadim V. Zagladin as "deputy chief of the Central Committee's department for relations with other Communist parties", and had him publicly answering a North Vietnamese army newspaper that had accused the Kremlin of setting its own "national interests against the interests of world revolution". This is not a work of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, still less of the Academy of Sciences. It is a product of the department that handled the fraternal parties, written for them, by one of the officials who handled them.

Its occasion is stated openly in the preface: the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969, whose concluding Document is quoted on almost every second page, together with the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU (1971) and Brezhnev's *Following Lenin's Course*. The 1969 Meeting was the last of its kind, convened after the Sino-Soviet rupture and a year after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and it did not go smoothly. Its purpose was to reassert Moscow's authority over a movement that was visibly fragmenting. This book is the codification of that meeting's line, packaged for export in the language of international circulation. Its enemies, in order of the space allotted, are the leadership of the Communist Party of China, "Right-wing revisionism" in the socialist countries, and "neo-Trotskyism". Its détente-era register is unmistakable: the August 1970 treaty with West Germany is praised, peaceful coexistence and the peaceful road to power are affirmed at length, and the tone throughout is that of a great power explaining itself to allies rather than a general staff issuing orders.

The record it will not keep

Take the episodes in turn.

The Third Period and Germany. The phrase "social fascism" appears nowhere. Neither does "Third Period". Neither does Hitler, nor the KPD, nor the Reichstag, nor 30 January 1933. The entire catastrophe is compressed into two sentences in the chapter on strategy:

Thus, errors were made in this question in the late twenties and the early thirties, at the beginning of the struggle against fascism. At that time, the opinion was widespread in the ranks of the communist movement that it was Social-Democracy which was the main enemy and was splitting the forces of the working class.

Read the grammar. Errors were made. The opinion was widespread. No one adopts the line, no body promulgates it, no country suffers from it. Elsewhere the same events are attributed to "sectarian elements in some of the Communist Parties and in the Comintern" — elements, unnamed, plural, diffuse. In fact the line was not an opinion that spread. It was adopted at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 and hardened at the Tenth Plenum of its Executive in 1929; it was enforced from Moscow on parties that had little say in it; and it held that social democracy and fascism were twins, so that a united front against Hitler was ruled out as a matter of principle. The German party polled close to six million votes in November 1932 and was destroyed within months of Hitler taking office, its cadres killed or driven abroad, without a general strike being called. The most sustained contemporary argument against that line — written while it could still have been reversed — is Trotsky's German writings of 1930–33, collected as *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, of which the 1932 pamphlet *What Next?* is the central text. Nothing in this book engages with them, because nothing in this book concedes there was anything to engage with.

1935. The Seventh Congress is the one Comintern event the book genuinely values, and it values it as an exoneration: the "sectarian errors were roundly condemned by the Comintern's Seventh Congress in 1935, which fully restored and further developed Lenin's views on working-class unity. Since then the communist movement has unswervingly followed this policy." Unswervingly is doing enormous work. It has to cover August 1939 — the Nazi–Soviet Pact, which appears in this book not at all; the words Molotov and Ribbentrop are absent, as is any reference to a non-aggression treaty. It also has to

cover Spain. Spain is mentioned sixteen times, always as a country under Franco where communists work underground; the civil war appears once, as an instance of Soviet solidarity ("aid to the Spanish people in the civil war against the fascists in 1936–1939"). The POUM is not named. Neither is the CNT. The suppression of the Barcelona left in May 1937, and the murder of Andreu Nin, have no place in a book about the world communist movement.

1943 and 1948. The dissolution of the Communist International in May 1943 is simply not in the book; nor is any reason for it, good or bad. The Cominform, founded in 1947 and wound up in 1956, is not mentioned. The 1948 expulsion of Yugoslavia — the campaign of denunciation, the show trials of "Titoists" in Hungary, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia that followed from it — is absent, and this produces the volume's strangest passage. Yugoslavia appears three times, and never as a country with a history: once in a list of places where the world bourgeoisie backs a deviation, once as a place where "revisionist and anti-Party elements" do harm, and once through Milovan Djilas, "the Yugoslav revisionist and renegade from communism". Between the second and the third, "Josip Broz Tito, Chairman of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia" is reported at length, by name and full title and with evident respect, on the need to strengthen the League. The post-1955 reconciliation is thus registered in the book's manners while the quarrel that made reconciliation necessary is erased. A reader in Lima or Lagos in 1973 would close the book with no idea that Yugoslavia had ever been expelled from anything.

China. Here the book is voluble. A full section, "The Anti-Leninist Course Followed by the CPC's Leaders", sets out the Soviet case: great-power nationalism, the substitution of the "rural world" for the working class, "military-bureaucratic" rule, anti-Sovietism as a programme. Much of this polemic lands. But it is polemic without chronology — no date is given for when the dispute began, and no document is cited from either side. The border is the sharpest case. The book reports that "a meeting of heads of government was held in Peking in September 1969 on the initiative of the USSR, and border talks are in progress"; it never says what happened on that border in March and August of 1969 to make talks necessary. The words Ussuri and Damansky do not occur. As with Yugoslavia, the reconciliation is registered and the quarrel that required it is deleted. And the argument reaches for the tradition's oldest reflex: the Chinese leaders are convicted of advancing "the Trotskyite thesis that socialism cannot be fully victorious" until world revolution triumphs. Forty-five years after the fact, socialism in one country remains the test of orthodoxy, and its

denial remains a police category rather than a proposition.

One sentence in this section deserves to be quoted for what it inadvertently concedes. Of the Cultural Revolution: "with many Party veterans and Marxist-Leninist internationalist cadres and hundreds of thousands of Communists falling victims to repression." That is the only place in 158,000 words where communists are described as victims of a communist party's repression — and it is about China. The same book's account of the crimes of Stalinism amounts to a formula borrowed from the 1960 Meeting: a grave threat is presented by "the personality cult, which is connected with a departure from Leninist principles of Party and state leadership, and with considerable infringements of socialist legality". No cult is named. No legality is specified. And the illustration offered immediately afterwards is, again, Mao.

So the Comintern's own foreign cadres are nowhere. The Polish Communist Party, dissolved by the Comintern's executive in 1938 with its leaders — Adolf Warski, Maria Koszutska, Julian Leński among them — shot or dead in Soviet custody, is unmentioned; Poland appears twice in this book, both times in connection with the multi-party systems of the 1940s. Béla Kun, who led the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, is not named at all — though that republic is narrated here warmly and at length, with Lenin's greeting quoted, as a model of the peaceful transfer of power. Kun was arrested in Moscow in 1937 and executed. The book celebrates his revolution and cannot pronounce his name.

1956 and 1968. Both are present, and both appear only as lessons in vigilance. The characteristic formulation is parenthetical: the 1969 Meeting concluded, "with due account of the events in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968", that socialism's victory is guaranteed only by "internationalist co-operation between the fraternal Parties". On Czechoslovakia the book's verdict is that "the root cause of the political crisis and the mounting counter-revolutionary pressure in Czechoslovakia in 1968 was the deviation from the fundamental Leninist principles". Note how the intervention itself is rendered. The Warsaw Pact armies entered on the night of 20–21 August 1968; the book calls this "immediate outside help from the USSR and our other allies" (quoting the Czechoslovak party's own 1970 self-condemnation) and "fraternal help from the other socialist states, who were performing their class and internationalist duty". The phrase "Soviet troops" does not occur in this volume. The Soviet Army occurs five times — destroying Nazism, standing in the liberated states of eastern Europe in 1945, and once as the standing guarantor of "the socialist gains of the entire socialist

community", "ready at any moment to come to the aid of the fraternal countries in the struggle against imperialism and counter-revolution" — but never in Czechoslovakia. The Warsaw Treaty Organisation is named twice, both times as a co-ordinating centre for foreign policy. So the doctrine that justified August 1968 is stated in full, in the abstract, on one page, and the event it justified is described on another as help. Dubček is not named, nor is Nagy.

The Fourth International is not named once. Trotskyism is discussed across a dedicated subsection, but always as "neo-Trotskyism", "grouplets", "a hotch-potch of groups and grouplets whose membership does not as a rule exceed several dozen people". An organisation founded in 1938 with sections on four continents is thereby denied even the dignity of an existence, which is the same technique applied to the Comintern's own history, run in the other direction: what cannot be discussed is not given a name.

The vocabulary of the verdict

A book that will not narrate must still classify, and this one classifies harder than almost anything else Progress printed. Opportunism and its cognates occur 203 times in 158,578 words — 12.80 per ten thousand, against an average of 1.55 across the 195 volumes measured for this series, and second only to volume 3 of *The International Working-Class Movement*. Around it sits the rest of the family: revisionism 122 times, sectarian 48, dogmatism 32. This is not incidental usage. The preface announces it — the book "deals with current problems in the Communist and Workers' Parties' struggle against Right-wing and 'Left'-wing opportunism" — and chapter X, forty-odd pages of it, is titled "The Communist Parties' Struggle Against Right- and 'Left'-Wing Opportunism", with a section apiece for the sources, the Right-wing forms, the "Left"-wing forms, and the kinship between them.

It would be easy, and wrong, to make the count itself the charge. When the Fourth International held its Tenth World Congress and Intercontinental Press printed the documents entire — 129,943 words in the issue of 23 December 1974 — the same word family occurs there at 1.69 per ten thousand, against the Progress corpus's 1.55. On frequency the two traditions are indistinguishable. Anyone who argues from the tally is making an argument his own side loses.

What can be tested is what the word is asked to do. Two questions settle it. Is the accusation attached to an act specific enough that it could be shown not to have happened? And

could the category, as the book defines it, ever be turned on the author's own side?

On the first, the book gives two different answers depending on which way the accused is said to have deviated, and the split is the finding. Against Right-wing opportunism it is exact, and it is checkable. Roger Garaudy is named; the theses attributed to him are stated — a "new historical bloc" of brain and manual workers, and the notion that the concept of a political party is "obsolete"; the body that condemned him is named and dated, the Nineteenth Congress of the French Communist Party in 1970; his opponent is quoted from an identified occasion, Waldeck Rochet at the FCP Central Committee plenum of October 1969, footnoted to *L'Humanité*; and the outcome is stated — expulsion. Ernst Fischer and Franz Marek get the same treatment, with their book *Was Lenin wirklich sagte* cited in a full footnote down to the publisher and the year, and their alleged claim quoted: that Marx "was primarily a theoretical thinker" while Lenin was at best "merely a strategist and tactician of the revolution". A reader who thought this unfair could go and read Fischer and Marek and decide. The book can produce a refutable accusation when it wants to.

Against "Left"-wing opportunism it produces nothing of the kind. Trotskyism has its own subsection and its own charge sheet, and there is not a document, an organisation, a date or a citation in it. The Fourth International, as noted, is never named. Trotsky himself is named four times, all four within a single passage, and no work of his is cited anywhere in the volume — although the passage refers to "the counter-revolutionary writings of Trotsky and his adherents", a category of writing large enough to be worth one title. The doctrinal charge is a single sentence: "Trotsky is known to have championed the idea of bypassing certain stages of the revolution." Known to whom, and from where, is not said. It happens to be answerable. Trotsky spent most of *The Permanent Revolution* (1930) on exactly that accusation, and wrote there that Lenin "in no way identified the permanent revolution with ignoring the peasantry or skipping over the agrarian revolution, as is the rule with the ignorant and unscrupulous epigones" — a book the reader of this volume cannot know exists. And where the Right-wing opportunists are convicted of stated propositions, the "Left" ones are convicted of an essence: neo-Trotskyism "covers up its ideological nakedness with ultra-Leftist verbiage", and "ultra-revolutionary phraseology is a typical feature of 'Left'-wing opportunism". Phraseology is not an act. Nothing could count against the claim, which is the point of putting it that way.

One of the book's specific charges is worth following, because it can be checked and it fails. The neo-Trotskyists, we are told, "reject the leading role of the working class in the revolution, and bank on sections that stand outside of production, such as college students, the jobless". The Fourth International's Ninth World Congress had adopted a resolution on precisely this question in 1969 — the year of the Meeting this book codifies — printed in the *International Socialist Review* for July–August 1969 under the title "The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International". It describes the student radicalisation as "a transmission belt speeding the development of a radical political consciousness among other social layers", and complains that "Many of the radical student currents failed to recognize, or denied, the decisive historic role of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard party". Whatever one makes of that resolution, it is the opposite of the position ascribed to it — refuted in print four years before this book went to press. Because no document is named, no reader of this book can find that out.

The second question — whether the category can ever run the other way — has a flatter answer. Six passages in the book put opportunism within a line or two of the CPSU, and in every one the Party is the physician rather than the patient: "The CPSU agrees with the position of the fraternal parties whose documents have drawn attention to the need to fight the danger of opportunism"; "The experience of the CPSU's struggle against anti-Leninist factions has shown that the danger of opportunism arises wherever it is not combated." Opportunism is something that happens to other parties, or to individuals inside other parties, and is then corrected by them; it has no purchase on the party that supplies the diagnosis. The same test applied to the Fourth International's own congress documents of December 1974 returns the other result. Those documents record a section's dated self-criticism — "The POR accepted that criticism in its self-criticism of April 1, 1972" — call one of that section's own leaders "the opportunist Lora" for having "effectively adapted to the Torres regime", and warn that cadres may "transmit into the Fourth International itself the pressures coming from a petty-bourgeois social origin". They call the policy of the two Indian Communist parties "ultraopportunist" and then say what they mean by it — "a policy of governmental collaboration, alliance with the possessing classes": named organisations, a specified behaviour, a claim one could go and test.

That is the difference, and it is not about the word. Both traditions used it. One of them could imagine it landing on itself.

There is a last piece of evidence about where this vocabulary came from, and it is unusually direct. In the closing weeks of 1971, a year or so before this book appeared, Ponomarev — signing under his rank as Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee — published a twenty-one-page article in *Kommunist* no. 18 instructing theoretical and propagandist cadres "to profoundly lay bare the anti-Leninist essence of Trotskyism, its ideological and political kinship with open anti-Communism, with opportunism of right and 'left' persuasions". The scare quotes around "left" are in the directive itself. *Intercontinental Press* of 24 January 1972 reported the article and translated the passage. Now turn to the contents page of the volume in your hands: chapter X, section 4, page 433, "The Ideological Kinship Between Right- and 'Left'-Wing Opportunism". The noun, the pairing and the punctuation, executed to order within about a year. What reads as doctrinal habit turns out to have a printed instruction behind it, issued by name.

And the name recurs. Progress's own front matter for *The International Working-Class Movement* — the seven-volume history whose third volume is the only book in this catalogue that uses opportunism harder than the one in your hands — opens with "The General Editorial Committee: B. N. Ponomarev, Chairman", identically worded in the volumes of 1980, 1981 and 1983. Progress advertised him in the back of volume 1 as "Secretary of the CC CPSU, Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences". So the man who told the cadres in 1971 what to expose, and in what words, is also the man whose name stands at the head of the committee that produced the flagship history executing it. That is not an inference about Soviet publishing. It is printed on the pages of the books themselves.

Worth noting where the book departs from its catalogue. Across the Progress volumes the right-wing variety of opportunism outnumbers the "left" by roughly three to two. Here it is the other way round: fifty-four uses of the "Left"-wing form against thirty-seven of the Right. That is what a book written for the world movement in 1973 looks like — the enemy is no longer social democracy but Peking and the far left, and the classifier has been turned around to face them.

What holds up

A reader told that all of this is worthless learns nothing, and it is not worthless. Three things in it are genuinely useful.

First, the statistical and sociological material, which is the

work of people with access to fraternal party returns and to serious labour statistics, and which is largely checkable against other sources. The count of parties over time (ten in 1918, thirty-four in 1921, sixty-one in 1935, eighty-nine at the time of writing, with a claimed membership of "almost 50 million"); the proportion of wage earners in the employed population of the developed capitalist countries in 1969–70; the frank note that across most of Western Europe socialist party membership exceeds communist membership, "the respective figures being 9,500,000 and 2,500,000". This is what the apparatus actually believed about the balance of forces, stated in numbers, and it is a valuable document for that reason alone.

Second, the Latin American chapter is real reporting. The account of Popular Unity in Chile — the 1952 and 1956 antecedents, the founding of the CUTCH in 1953, the FRAP, the composition of Allende's government, the local Popular Unity committees — is detailed, sourced to Luis Corvalán and Rodney Arismendi in the *World Marxist Review*, and substantially accurate. So is the survey of the *Frente Amplio* in Uruguay and of the *Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos*, whose founding at Rosario on 21 November 1970 and whose leadership — Communists alongside Peronistas, People's Radicals and Christian Democrats — the book sets out accurately, and whose programme it cites to the Buenos Aires edition of 1969. (The text as digitised prints "Encuento"; a reader searching the correct Spanish will find nothing.) The book takes Latin American communism seriously as a subject rather than an illustration.

Third — and this is unexpected in a Moscow volume — the account of the 1969 Meeting admits its own failure. It records that the Communist Party of the Dominican Republic refused to adopt the concluding Document at all; that the Italian, San Marino, Australian and Réunion delegations endorsed only the anti-imperialist section; that Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Sudan and Morocco signed with reservations; and that the British and Norwegian parties signed only in part. That is a remarkably candid ledger of dissent for a book whose thesis is unity, and it tells the attentive reader more about the state of the movement in 1969 than the surrounding four hundred pages of affirmation.

There is also a defensible core to the book's treatment of the anti-fascist war. Its claim that the Communist International "rendered outstanding services to the cause by evolving the strategy and tactics for a united front of workers and the peoples of all lands, against fascism and war", and that this was "the basis for the unity of anti-fascist forces during World

War II", is a fair description of what communists did in the Resistance in France, Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece, whatever one thinks of the policy that governed them afterwards. Communist parties supplied the largest and bravest single component of armed resistance to German occupation in Europe. That should be said plainly, and this book says it.

Where the answer was written

The reply to these arguments exists, in print, contemporaneously, and the archives that accompany this series hold much of it.

On the Sino-Soviet dispute, Livio Maitan's "Problems and Prospects of Our Time in the Mirror of the Sino-Soviet Polemics" appeared in Fourth International no. 11 (the archive used here holds no printed issue dates for that run; marxists.org files the piece to September 1960). It names both parties' positions, which this book does not. Maitan returned to the ground in the same journal, no. 13, with "A Revolutionary Criticism of the Theses of the Moscow Conference", a clause-by-clause reading of the resolution of the 1960 Meeting of eighty-one parties — the direct ancestor of the 1969 Document this volume codifies, and treated there as a text with arguments in it rather than an authority to be quoted. On China itself, Tom Kerry's "A Mao-Stalin Rift: Myth or Fact?" ran to twenty-two pages of the International Socialist Review for September–October 1969, the year of the Moscow Meeting; it works through the record of 1925–27 in detail, which is exactly what our volume's chronology-free polemic against Peking declines to do. On Czechoslovakia, Intercontinental Press carried the United Secretariat's "For a Government of Workers Councils in Czechoslovakia" on 13 May 1968, and, in the issue dated 2 September 1968, "End the Soviet Occupation of Czechoslovakia!" and "Defend the Right of the Czechoslovak Workers and Peasants to Self-Determination!" On the framing of communists as agents, see the United Secretariat's declaration of 21 January 1970, "On the 'Trotskyite Plot' in Czechoslovakia" (IP, 9 February 1970), which observes that the criminal charges had been "rehashed from the Moscow trials". On the silence that is this book's method, IP of 13 March 1972, commenting on an admission by Gustáv Husák, noted of Soviet publications since 1956 that "the Moscow trials are not mentioned" — written a year before the volume in your hands went to press and describing it exactly.

On Yugoslavia, where our text has an erasure, see Ernest Mandel's "Tito and the Yugoslav Revolution" and, in the same IP issue of 31 March 1980, "International Brigades for

Yugoslavia in 1950", which recovers what the 1948 break looked like to communists outside both apparatuses. On the Comintern cadres who vanish from this volume, the fortieth-anniversary assessment of the Fourth International (IP, 9 October 1978) lists by name the party founders and members of the Comintern's Executive Committee who went into opposition — Rakovsky, Preobrazhensky, Ch'en Tu-hsiu, Nin, Andrade, Rosmer, Sneevliet, Pouliopoulos, Ta Thu Thau — and records that "nearly all were killed by the fascist, Stalinist, or imperialist terror".

And on the book's showpiece, there is an irony that no polemic could improve. The World Communist Movement presents Chile as the demonstration case for the peaceful road. While it was in production, Hugo Blanco was filing from Chile for Intercontinental Press: "Fascist Threat Mounting in Chile" on 7 May 1973, on the organisation of Patria y Libertad; "New Workers Bodies Challenge Reformists" on 18 June; "In the Aftermath of the Attempted Coup" on 10 September, on the rise of workers' combativity in Santiago after the abortive coup of 29 June. On 11 September 1973 the Chilean armed forces bombarded the presidential palace, Allende died in it, and Corvalán — repeatedly quoted with approval in these pages, from his speeches to the 1969 Meeting and to the CPSU's Twenty-Fourth Congress — was imprisoned for three years. The United Secretariat's statement of 19 September, "Solidarity With the Chilean Workers!", ran in IP on 1 October 1973.

Read this book, then, not as a history of the world communist movement, which it never attempts to be, but as a full-dress statement of what the Soviet state wanted that movement to think in the year the Chilean road ended. Its silences are not gaps in the research. They are the argument.

U. S. Budget and Economic Policy

Soviet economists anatomise the US federal budget from the Americans' own sources - the Budget Message, the Congressional hearings, Musgrave and Weidenbaum. Written as Bretton Woods collapsed, and sound on why the dollar was going.

Valentin Markovich Usoskin and others

Introduction to the 1973 Edition

U.S. Budget and Economic Policy is a study of how the world's richest state raises and spends its money, written by three Soviet economists who had plainly read almost everything the Americans themselves had published on the question. V. Usoskin, R. Entov and S. Tarasenko — specialists in Western economics, working in the tradition of Soviet scholarship that took capitalism seriously enough to master its own literature — produced a book whose two hundred pages rest on the Economic Report of the President, the annual Budget Message, the Statistical Abstract of the United States, the hearings of Congressional committees, and the academic public-finance writing of Richard Musgrave, Murray Weidenbaum, Robert Haveman and their contemporaries. It is a serious piece of work, and the first honest thing to say about it is that on its own subject — the American federal budget as an instrument of class rule and of war — a great deal of it is simply correct, and is documented from sources a reader can go and check.

For once in this series the date on the spine can be trusted. Progress translations usually lag their Russian originals by years, and several volumes we have republished carry a copyright date that belongs to a different decade than the argument inside them. This one does not. The text closes on the news of early 1973: it quotes the New York Times of 29 January 1973 and works through "the latest (1973) Presidential Budget Message" — the budget for fiscal years 1973–74, submitted that same month. It welcomes "the end of the war in Vietnam," which the Paris accords had just formalised, and "the agreements between the USSR and the USA on the limitation of strategic defensive and offensive arms" — the SALT I treaties signed in Moscow in May 1972. This is a book of the high détente moment, written in the first weeks of 1973 and printed the same year. Its real date and its stated date are the same, which makes it a cleaner historical witness than most of its shelf-mates.

That moment matters, because the manuscript was finished at the exact hinge of postwar economic history and it knows it. The subject that animates the book — over and above the tax tables and the appropriations charts — is the crisis of the dollar. The authors describe, accurately, the "massive 'flight from the dollar' which started in 1970–1971 due to fear of its devaluation," the shift of dollar holdings from private hands into the reserves of foreign central banks, and the way "a large deficit in the US federal budget serves as a sign of the further worsening in the international position of the dollar." What they were watching was the collapse of the Bretton Woods system — the postwar arrangement, built at a New Hampshire conference in 1944, under which the dollar was fixed to gold and every other major currency fixed to the dollar. On 15 August 1971 President Nixon had closed the gold window, ending the dollar's convertibility; the currency was formally devalued that December and again in February 1973, and by March 1973 the fixed-rate system was gone for good and the major currencies were left to float. The book was written into the last of that, and its instinct — that the twin American deficits, in the budget and in the balance of payments, were dragging the whole monetary order down with them — was sound. Where a reader must supply the correction is in the book's implied cause. It presents the dollar crisis as a symptom of capitalist disorder as such; the more exact account is that the crisis was the unwinding of a specifically American privilege, the right to run deficits in the world's reserve currency, a privilege that the Vietnam War and the "guns and butter" spending of the 1960s had finally exhausted.

The strongest chapters are the two that give the book its edge: the anatomy of military spending, and the class distribution of the tax burden. Neither is Soviet boilerplate. On the military side, the authors take Eisenhower's own coinage — "the military-industrial complex, for which the maintenance of military appropriations at a stable high level is of vital importance" — and fill it out with American testimony about how the complex works on the budget: the "interconnected aggregate of military men and political representatives of regions with large military bases, war industry corporations

and also scientists and analysts working on military projects," each of whom "thinks that an increase in military spending is in his personal interests." They note, correctly and against their own side's practice, that military spending "by its very nature involves a waste of national wealth," and that the countries which grew fastest in the postwar decades — Japan, West Germany, Italy — were precisely those where "the arms race until now has been conducted on a comparatively smaller scale." That is a real economic argument, and it is one the book's own state could not comfortably hear.

The tax analysis is better still, because it is quantitative and it is turned against the official American self-image. The authors show that the federal income tax, which in 1913 "was paid only by a very small part of the population (less than 1 per cent)," had by the 1970s reached "about four-fifths of all Americans," and that each upward step in the tax curve coincided with a war. They trace how the burden was pushed downward. Citing the American economist David Davies, they show that sales taxes on food take 2.14 per cent of the income of a family earning under a thousand dollars a year and only 0.69 per cent from a family earning over ten thousand — so that "the burden of these taxes borne by the poorest population is 2–3 times heavier than by rich families." Drawing on the estimates of R. Herriott and H. Miller, who added up all federal and local taxes together, they reach the finding that damns the system's own claim to fairness: "the actual tax burden more often does not increase but decreases as the economic possibilities of the taxpayers rise." And they see clearly that the social-insurance payroll tax — "one of the most regressive forms of taxation" — was being raised precisely as income-tax relief was handed to the top, so that "the basic change in the system of individual income tax rates ... adds up to increased taxes paid by the mass of working people, while the rise in taxes on big incomes performs the function of a political 'safety valve'." A reader who wants a Marxist account of why the American fiscal state distributes its costs downward and its reliefs upward will find one here, sourced and numbered.

Underneath the detail runs a general thesis, and it too is worth taking seriously. The book treats the budget not as neutral housekeeping but as "a condensed expression of the government's policy," a document that "reflects as a mirror the changing pattern of socio-economic priorities." Its account of state-monopoly capitalism — the Marxist term for the merging of the largest corporations with the power of the state into a single mechanism — is not a slogan but a description of something real: the postwar American state had indeed become, as the authors put it, an apparatus that "ultimately

ensures the interests of the ruling upper crust of the capitalist class." Their reading of Keynesian economics is unusually fair for a Soviet text. They grant that the market "in principle cannot ensure either an adequate (optimal) distribution of resources and incomes," concede that this is now admitted by "the overwhelming majority of economists, with the exception of the most conservative wing," and locate the real function of Keynesian management with precision: government intervention "makes it possible to impose on the entire society economic decisions which are especially beneficial in the first place to the capitalist class." The conclusion quotes, as a confession, the Presidential Budget Message's own admission that "for almost two postwar decades the US economy had been unable to achieve the goal of high employment and prosperity for American citizens without inflation and war." That is a genuine indictment, drawn from Washington's own paper, of the political economy of the warfare state.

So the book does real work, and this introduction is not written to take that back. It is written because of what the book cannot do, and the limit is not a matter of this or that error of fact. It is structural, and it is the same limit that runs through every volume in this series that turns a Marxist X-ray on the United States. The instruments are excellent. They are pointed in one direction only.

Consider what the whole argument depends on. The book can dissect the American budget — can show where the money comes from, whose shoulders it rests on, how much goes to arms, how the priorities are set and by whom — because the United States publishes the documents that make such dissection possible. The Budget Message, the Economic Report of the President, the Statistical Abstract, the Congressional hearings, the studies by Musgrave and Weidenbaum and Haveman: every one of these is a public record, produced by the state under examination or by scholars free to examine it, and every one is cited by name in the notes. The authors' method is entirely parasitic on American fiscal openness. Their two hundred pages are, read a certain way, a two-hundred-page tribute to the fact that in the United States the budget is a public quarrel conducted in public documents that a foreign critic can buy and quote.

Now ask the question the book never asks of itself. Was the Soviet budget such a document? It was not, and the authors knew it was not. The Soviet state budget was among the most opaque fiscal instruments of any major power. Its true military share was concealed inside a single undifferentiated line — the published "defence" figure understated real military outlay by a large multiple, with the remainder scattered through the

civilian ministries and the investment accounts, as the Soviet government itself would begin to admit only under Gorbachev at the end of the 1980s. There was no Budget Message setting priorities open to challenge, no Council of Economic Advisers publishing its forecasts, no Congressional committee taking adversarial testimony, and — decisively — no legislature with the power to reject the budget put before it. The Supreme Soviet ratified; it did not decide. The fiscal transparency that this book implicitly demands of Washington, and relies upon to write a word of its own analysis, is exactly the transparency the Soviet Union denied its own citizens.

The book does not merely omit the comparison; at one point it steps up to the line and turns away. In its survey of Western theories of planning it notes, with a flick of disapproval, that Western writers find it "the proper thing" to "regard with disapproval the system of planning existing in socialist countries." The authors defend Soviet planning against that disapproval. What they never do — what the genre forbids — is subject the Soviet budget to the class analysis they have just performed so ably on the American one. The tools that reveal whose interests the American budget serves are laid down at the border. The one budget in the world that this Marxist study of budgets will not read as "a condensed expression of the government's policy," reflecting "the acuteness of class and social conflicts," is the Soviet one.

This is precisely the finding that the answering tradition had reached forty years earlier, and reached about the Soviet budget itself. In *The Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936, Trotsky made the concealment of fiscal reality the very centre of his account of what the ruling stratum in the USSR — the bureaucracy, the caste of privileged officials who administered the state and lived off it — actually was. His complaint against official Soviet literature was not that it lied about this or that figure but that it refused to open the books at all: "what you cannot meet anywhere," he wrote, "is an investigation of the bureaucracy as a ruling stratum — its numbers and structure, its flesh and blood, its privileges and appetites, and the share of the national income which it swallows up." And he named the mechanism of the concealment exactly. When the Left Opposition had tried, in 1927, to estimate how much of the national income the apparatus consumed, "the authorities took the necessary measures to make such estimates impossible." The bureaucracy, he concluded, "conceals its income; it pretends that as a special social group it does not even exist." A state that will not let its own surplus product be counted is telling you something about who disposes of it.

Trotsky, notably, used the budget itself as a class instrument

— the same move Usoskin, Entov and Tarasenko make against Washington, turned the other way. He observed that the first Soviet five-year plan projected a state budget of only 16 per cent of national income, "whereas the budget of tsarist Russia, which had no intention of creating a socialist society, swallowed 18 per cent" — a single comparison of ratios made to expose the timidity and the priorities behind the plan. The method is identical. What separates the two books is not analytical power but the direction each is permitted to face. Trotsky could turn the fiscal microscope on the workers' state and its rulers because he wrote from outside and against them, at the cost of exile and, in 1940, his life. The three Soviet economists could turn the same microscope on the United States because their state wished it turned there, and only there.

None of this is peculiar to the budget. It is the signature of the whole Soviet Americanist enterprise, and the sibling volumes in this series show the identical shape. B. Pyadyshev's study of the American military-industrial complex (1977) is built out of Senator Proxmire, Fulbright, the Pentagon Papers and a former Assistant Secretary of Defense — "a small monument," as this series has said of it, to documents the author's own state did not produce. Georgi Tsagolov's *War Is Their Business* (1985) sets out the American critics' case with scrupulous accuracy and then abolishes it by decree, because he had no Fortune, no Proxmire and no Armed Services Committee of his own to cite. Radomir Bogdanov's *The US War Machine and Politics* (1986) writes the institutional history of the American national-security state and omits the armed institutions of its own. And in the volume closest to this one, Irina Osadchaya's *Keynesianism Today* (1983) reads Western economics with real competence and never once turns its instruments upon the one economy it was written from. U.S. Budget and Economic Policy is the fiscal member of that family. The same brilliance, the same blind spot, produced by the same conditions: an intellectual free to examine the accounts of a rival and forbidden to examine his own.

The reader who wants the counter-analysis of the Soviet budget that this book will not perform should go to *The Revolution Betrayed*, and in particular to its sixth chapter, "The Growth of Inequality," where the concealment of the bureaucracy's share of the national income is examined at length. For the same period's own record of the arms economy on both sides of the Cold War, R. Faramazyany's *Disarmament and the Economy* (1981), also in this series, tabulates the American military burden carefully and passes over the Soviet one — the mirror-image silence, worth reading beside this book precisely for what the two leave out together.

Read U.S. Budget and Economic Policy, then, for what it genuinely contains: an intelligent, well-sourced Marxist account of how the American federal budget militarised itself, of how it shifted its costs onto working people through the most regressive taxes it could reach for, and of how Keynesian economic management served, in the end, "the ruling upper crust of the capitalist class." The critique is real and it is documented, and a reader is right to take it. But hold in the other hand the one document the book never cites and never could — its own country's budget — and the volume becomes something more instructive than its authors intended: a demonstration, in two hundred numbered pages, that fiscal openness is a virtue best analysed in someone else, and that the surest measure of a state's fear of arithmetic is the arithmetic it will not print.

HISTORY

The October Storm and After

Twenty stories and reminiscences of the revolution and the civil war by writers who lived through them - John Reed, Sholokhov, Panova, German, and a short memoir of the night of the storm by Lunacharsky, who fronts the collection.

Anatoly Vasilyevich Lunacharsky

Introduction to the 1974 Edition

The first thing to say about this book is that it is not by Anatoly Lunacharsky. Library catalogues list it under his name, and the publisher's blurb leads with him — "A. Lunacharsky, the first People's Commissar for Education" heads the roll of contributors — but *October Storm and After: Stories and Reminiscences* is an anthology of twenty pieces, and Lunacharsky's share of it is a single reminiscence of about eight hundred words. In a volume of some eighty-eight thousand, he supplies roughly one per cent. He is the marquee name on a book he did not write.

That matters, because Lunacharsky in 1974 was one of the few genuinely first-rank Bolsheviks whose name Progress Publishers could still print in gold on a cover. He had been a real intellectual — a critic who read four languages and quoted poetry in all of them, the author of plays, the man who ran Soviet education and the arts from 1917 to 1929. He had also had the good fortune, if that is the word, to die in 1933, in Menton, on his way to take up an ambassadorship. He was never arrested, never tried, never confessed to anything. He was, in the Progress catalogue's terms, safe.

And so a reader might reasonably open this book expecting Lunacharsky's testimony — expecting, above all, some part of *Revolutionary Silhouettes*, the sequence of pen portraits of his contemporaries that he collected in 1923 and that remains the best first-hand sketch anyone made of the Bolshevik leadership at its height. It is not here. Not the Trotsky portrait, not the Zinoviev, not the Kamenev, not the Bukharin, not the Sverdlov. Nothing from the *Silhouettes* appears in this volume at all. What appears instead is "Smolny on the Night of the Storm" — vivid, brief, and, by the time you have read it twice, conspicuously empty.

Who made this book, and out of what

Nobody signs it. There is no editor's name, no compiler's

name, no introduction and no index; the only editorial voice in the volume is the abbreviation "Ed." at the foot of four notes. What survives of the copyright page carries the collection's Russian title — *Rasskazy o revolyutsii*, or *Stories of the Revolution* — above the standard line stating that this is the English-language edition. The compilation, in other words, was made in Russian and then translated; *October Storm and After* is the export imprint's own title, and the promotion of Lunacharsky to the head of the bill is the export imprint's own decision.

The volume's treatment of dates is the finding, and it is exact. Every one of the nineteen translated pieces carries a translator's credit — George H. Hanna does twelve of them, Robert Daglish five, Margaret Wettlin and Helen Altschuler one each; only Reed's, written in English, has none. Not one of the twenty pieces carries a date of composition, a date of first publication, or a periodical or book from which it is taken, beyond an occasional gesture in a head-note ("The Tales of the Don, of which this story is one, were written in the twenties"). Two of the twenty do not even carry an author's name. The single dating statement in the entire object is on the back cover: "Many of the stories were written between 1920 and 1940, but there is also a large selection of modern writings."

That is the whole apparatus. Eighty-eight thousand words spanning perhaps five decades, and the reader is told which decade by a blurb. It is worth being concrete about what this costs. Sholokhov's story and Lunacharsky's memoir are separated from Vera Panova's by something like forty years, a world war, the Terror and Zhdanov; in this book they sit in one undifferentiated present tense in which everything was written by people who "took part in the Great October Socialist Revolution". A collection that dated its contents would be a historical source. A collection that does not is a mood.

The internal evidence puts the compilation at the end of the 1960s or a little after: the latest date the book contains is 1967, the year of Yuri German's death, given in his head-note; a photograph caption is dated 1967 as well. Nothing in the

extracted text records a printing history or an earlier edition, so 1974 may be the first English appearance or may not; the book does not say.

The arithmetic of absence

Run the names through the text. In roughly eighty-eight thousand words about the October Revolution and the Civil War, the word Trotsky does not occur once. Neither does Zinoviev, Bukharin, Rykov, Radek, Bogdanov, Antonov-Ovseyenko, Podvoisky or Uritsky. Stalin, for that matter, does not occur either — this is a Brezhnev-period export title, the 1956 line still nominally held, and the late dictator has been erased along with his victims. Kamenev occurs exactly once, spelt "Kameniev", performing a procedural function, inside a passage written by an American. Lenin is named seventy-nine times.

These are counted absences in a badly scanned book, so they were tested rather than assumed: the scan renders Fadeyev as "F.aclejev", Lavrenyov as "LAVBENYOY", Panova as "VEBA PANOVA" and Izvestia as an unreadable smear, and a name the scanner has chewed returns zero exactly like a name nobody wrote. Each of the names above was searched for again as a fragment and in its common variants, and run through the project's edit-distance checker. Nothing came back. The one near-miss the checker offered was "Bukhara", which is the city, in a story set in Central Asia.

The most eloquent absence is not a name at all. Lunacharsky's own piece pauses to admire "the activities of the Military Revolutionary Committee at the time of the October Revolution", and Reed's excerpt turns on a vote by armoured-car crews to withdraw their representative from the Military Revolutionary Committee. The body is named twice, in the two pieces that open the book. Its chairman is named nowhere. This is not the crude old method of writing Stalin into rooms he was not in; it is the later, tidier method of leaving the room empty and describing the furniture.

Trotsky himself had described the older technique from exile, in an essay written on 18 June 1938, three months after the last of the great Moscow trials, and a text the Fourth International thought important enough to reprint twelve years later. Of the "Practical Centre" that Soviet painting had by then made a favourite subject, he observed that Stalin "did not appear at Smolny", the staff headquarters of the insurrection, and that "in memoirs of participants in the insurrection — and there is no shortage of these — the name of Stalin is not once mentioned." Set that beside this volume, whose first item is a

memoir of Smolny by a participant. In 1938 the falsification worked by insertion, and Trotsky could refute it by pointing at the memoirs. By 1974 it works by subtraction, and the memoir has been brought into line: it now mentions nobody.

The single Kamenev sighting is worth pausing on, because of where it sits. The book's second item is headed "TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD (Excerpts)", and its editorial head-note quotes Lenin's preface to John Reed at generous length: "Unreservedly do I recommend it to the workers of the world. Here is a book which I should like to see published in millions of copies and translated into all languages." The head-note then concludes, without any apparent embarrassment: "Here we give two short excerpts from John Reed's book."

Millions of copies in all languages; two short excerpts. It is difficult to construct a more compact self-indictment. And the two excerpts have been chosen with care. One is Lenin reading the Decree on Peace to the Second Congress of Soviets; the other is a night meeting of armoured-car crews in the Mikhailovsky Riding-School, at which Krylenko argues them out of neutrality. Reed's book is a book in which Trotsky is on nearly every page — chairing the Petrograd Soviet, running the Military Revolutionary Committee, speaking at the Congress. Progress has located two stretches of it in which he happens not to be, and printed those.

Note also who else survives the excerpting. Nikolai Krylenko — "the People's Commissar for Military Affairs", in Reed's phrase — gets several hundred words of direct quotation here, ending on a genuine piece of reporting: "he tottered, almost falling; a hundred hands reached up to help him down". Krylenko was shot in 1938. He is present in this volume only because an American wrote him down in 1919 and the American's paragraph could not be filleted further without collapsing. No Soviet-authored text in the book names him.

The pattern is exact and it is not an accident. Where a revolutionary is named, he or she died in time: Sverdlov in 1919, Dzerzhinsky in 1926, Gorky in 1936, Lenin himself. Kollontai, who survived to 1952 in diplomatic exile and was never charged, is a contributor and is introduced as "a close friend of Lenin's". Krupskaya appears, safely, in someone else's recollection. The dead-in-time and the never-accused make up the entire cast.

What the head-notes do to Lunacharsky

The book has no argument in it, and that is the technique: a

book with no argument in it cannot be caught making a false one. Its entire scholarly apparatus, across twenty pieces, consists of twelve footnotes. Four are the editor's, and of those, two explain what the Smolny Institute was and which presidium is meant, one glosses the Old Style calendar, and one glosses "Menshevik defencists" as "supporters of the imperialist policy of the Provisional Government". Four more are the translators', rendering Russian and Central Asian words. The remaining four belong to the authors of the pieces themselves. On the entire history of the revolution, then, Moscow's editors offered their readers one political sentence.

What the book has instead is a short biographical head-note before each piece, and these repay reading closely. Lunacharsky's runs to four sentences. He "joined a Social-Democratic organisation in 1892, when he was 17 years old; he later contributed to the Bolshevik newspapers *Vperyod* and *Proletary* under Lenin's guidance." Then: "For many years after the October Revolution he was People's Commissar for Education of the R.S.F.S.R." Then a line about his talents, and then: "Lenin had a very high opinion of Lunacharsky."

Every clause here is doing work. The years between 1908 and 1913 — when Lunacharsky was the leading exponent of "God-building", the attempt to give socialism the emotional apparatus of a religion, and when Lenin devoted much of Materialism and Empirio-Criticism and a good deal of private invective to demolishing him and Bogdanov — have been folded into the phrase "under Lenin's guidance". The word *Vperyod* is doing something particularly neat: it was the name of Lenin's paper in 1904–05, and it was also the name of the dissident Bogdanov–Lunacharsky group and its journal after 1909. The head-note attaches it to Lenin, and the reader who does not already know is given no reason to look further.

"For many years after the October Revolution he was People's Commissar for Education" supplies no terminal date and no reason for one. Lunacharsky ran Narkompros until 1929 and was then removed, in the year the cultural revolution turned against precisely his kind of tolerance. The head-note does not say when he stopped, or why, or what he did in the four years before he died. It does not mention that he resigned from the government within a fortnight of the revolution, in distress at reports that the Kremlin's cathedrals had been shelled, and had to be talked back. Nor, of course, does it mention the Silhouettes, whose existence would immediately raise the question of what became of their subjects.

Compare what our own tradition managed to say about the same man in the same period. Trotsky, writing *The Revolution*

Betrayed in 1936 — three years after Lunacharsky's death, and with no motive to flatter him — records that "the patronizing of all kinds of modernism by Lunacharsky, the People's Commissar of Art and Education, was often embarrassing to Lenin", and that Lenin nonetheless "confined himself to ironical remarks in private conversations, and remained remote from the idea of converting his literary tastes into law", because the state could restrict but must "in no case pretend to the role of commander in the sphere of science, literature and art". That is a portrait: the irritation and the tolerance together, and the political principle that made both possible. The head-note can manage only "Lenin had a very high opinion of Lunacharsky." It is not that the Soviet sentence is false. It is that it has had everything removed from it that would let a reader think.

Turn now to Lunacharsky's own eight hundred words, and the shape of the problem becomes plain. The second half of "Smolny on the Night of the Storm" is a memoir of the formation of the first Soviet government. "Let me add to these few scanty lines my reminiscences of the way the first Council of People's Commissars was formed. It took place in a little room in Smolny, where the chairs were hidden under the hats and coats thrown on to them." He was there; he was one of the people being chosen; and he recalls having doubts: "It seemed to me that the selection was often too casual and I was afraid that the people chosen, whom I knew well and who did not seem to me to have the training for the various specialities, were not up to the gigantic tasks ahead." Lenin "waved me aside with a gesture of annoyance but at the same time smiled" — "That's for the time being," he said, "then we'll see."

It is a wonderful small scene, and Lunacharsky was a wonderful writer of small scenes. It is also a memoir of the composition of a body in which not one member is named except Lenin. Lunacharsky, writing about the men he "knew well", names none of the men. The reader is told that "some, of course, were replaced, others retained their posts", and that "some people, of course (even some of those who had taken part in the insurrection and had not been mere onlookers), grew dizzy in face of tremendous prospects" — an insinuation floated over an empty space where thirteen names should be. Whether Lunacharsky wrote it that way, or whether the cuts were made later, the extracted text cannot tell us, and the volume's refusal to date or source a single item makes it impossible to find out. What can be said is that Progress printed it in 1974 in a form that names nobody, and that the missing list was not hard to find.

It had, in fact, been published in English by this book's

opponents more than a decade earlier. Writing under the name Ernest Germain, Ernest Mandel devoted a two-part article, "Thirty Questions and Thirty Answers about the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union", to the Khrushchev-era official History, in Fourth International nos. 10 and 11. (That journal's issues are numbered rather than dated, and no date can now be recovered for them; neighbouring numbers report the Twenty-First Congress of January–February 1959, which places the run in the years just after.) Noting that the History "forgets" to give the composition of the first Sovnarkom — as it also "forgets", he adds, "that Trotsky was the first Bolshevik president of the Petrograd soviet and that as such he also presided over that soviet's Revolutionary Military Committee, entrusted with preparing the insurrection" — Germain supplied the list from the source: "This can, however, be found in John Reed's book, currently on sale in the USSR: Lenin, Miliutin, Shliapnikov, Antonov-Ovseyenko, Krylenko, Dybenko, Nogin, Lunacharsky, Stepanov, Trotsky, Lomov, Teodorovich, Avilov, Stalin."

Read that list slowly, because it is the whole argument of this introduction in fourteen names. Four of the men on it died before the Terror: Lenin in 1924, Nogin the same year, Skvortsov-Stepanov in 1928, and Lunacharsky in 1933. Trotsky was murdered in Mexico in 1940. Most of the rest — Krylenko, Antonov-Ovseyenko, Shliapnikov, Dybenko and others — were shot in 1937 and 1938. Lunacharsky's presence on the cover of a 1974 Progress volume and his colleagues' absence from its pages are the same fact, seen from two ends.

The tactic of Germain's whole article is to hold Reed against the official text — "John Reed's book really does not leave a single word of the Stalinist falsification standing" — and its force comes from the fact that Reed was then legally on sale in Moscow. The same journal had already identified the exact boundary Progress would still be observing in 1974. Reviewing the new official History, a notice signed only "PF" put the method in a sentence: "this book is best characterized by what it leaves out: the Moscow trials!" — an application, the reviewer wrote, of "the lie by omission". And an earlier issue, surveying the Soviet publishing thaw, named "the preface and notes to John Reed's Ten Days that Shook the World" as one of "two of the most sensational publications in the USSR in recent years", and drew the conclusion that "destalinization stops at the level just preceding the big 'purge.'" That was written before this book was compiled. This book is its confirmation: Reed is still the loophole, and by 1974 the loophole has been narrowed to two excerpts.

One head-note comes very close to giving the game away. "A.

Zorich is the pseudonym of Vasily Lokot (1899–1937). He belonged to the generation of writers who entered the world of literature in the early years of the revolution. In the twenties and thirties his short stories and satirical articles were published in the columns of the newspapers Pravda and Izvestia." A satirist for the two principal Soviet newspapers, still in his thirties, stops in 1937. Lokot was shot. The book offers the dates and no explanation, and trusts that most readers will not do the subtraction.

It is worth recording what this volume does not do, because the reflex of the catalogue is missing here. The deviation vocabulary that runs through the Progress list — opportunism, revisionism, dogmatism, sectarianism — is essentially absent: zero occurrences of three of the four, and the single appearance of "opportunist" in eighty-eight thousand words is in a story by Vera Inber, where a daughter says to her father, "And don't you think it's the opportunist in you that's talking?" and he replies, "It probably is." Turned on oneself and immediately conceded — which is precisely what the label never does in the volumes that use it in earnest. This book does not denounce anybody. Its method is not the accusation; it is the empty chair.

What is worth keeping

None of which is the fault of the writers collected here, and a reader who throws the book away on the strength of the above will lose something.

Kornei Chukovsky's "People's Commissar for Education", taken from his Contemporaries, is the best thing in the volume and one of the best short accounts of Lunacharsky in English. It is affectionate and unillusioned at once. Chukovsky records the queue on the filthy staircase in Manezhny Street — teachers, inventors, librarians, circus people, futurists, Cubists, ballet dancers, Proletcult poets — and the Commissar receiving all of them. He records arguing with Lunacharsky about Walt Whitman, losing, refusing to concede, and then being asked to contribute the opposing view to his own book: "he did not object to an entirely different interpretation of the American poet's work rubbing shoulders with his own." He records the 1920 debate at the Moscow House of the Press where Mayakovsky and others attacked Lunacharsky's plays for four hours, Lunacharsky answered for two and a half, and the hall gave him an ovation at three in the morning — after which the only thing Lunacharsky said in the street was that Mayakovsky had looked sad, and he would have to go and cheer him up. Mayakovsky's verdict, quoted here, is "Lunacharsky spoke like a god."

That portrait is not propaganda, and the record it describes was real. Lunacharsky's Narkompros protected people it had no ideological sympathy with. He argued with the avant-garde rather than banning it; he thought poets, in the phrase he took from Marx and repeated after Mayakovsky's suicide, "need many caresses". Chukovsky's closing observation — that "this connoisseur of Botticelli, this fine judge of Richard Wagner, this interpreter of Ibsen, Maeterlinck, Marcel Proust and Pirandello was perfectly at home among rank-and-file proletarians" — describes a combination that the Soviet cultural apparatus would not permit again for sixty years.

How completely it would not permit it was described, at the time, by people who had no stake in flattering anyone. In October 1938, reviewing a study of Soviet art in the Trotskyist New International, Edna Margolin noticed that the new doctrine of socialist realism had been proclaimed without ever being defined, and drew the obvious inference: "unformulated, it makes a better weapon against those who fall from grace." Trotsky, in the essay quoted above, was blunter still: "the art of the Stalinist period will remain as the frankest expression of the profound decline of the proletarian revolution." By that standard Chukovsky's Lunacharsky is another civilisation — which is exactly why Lunacharsky could still be honoured in 1974 and his testimony could not be printed.

The fiction, too, is largely real fiction. Boris Lavrenyov's *The Forty First*, which takes up the largest single block of the book, is a Civil War story that ends with a Red sniper shooting the White officer she has fallen in love with and collapsing on his body: "Oh, what have I done? Look at me, sweet! Open your dear blue eyes!" Nothing is resolved and nobody is vindicated. Zorich's "The Insult" is told largely from inside the head of an elderly bourgeois scientist convinced that the revolution is destroying science, and takes his grievance seriously for most of its length. Sholokhov's "The Bastard", Vsevolod Ivanov's "Letter T", Vera Inber's Central Asian stories: these were written in the 1920s and 1930s by writers who could still write, and the translations, several of them by George H. Hanna, are competent and readable. If you want to know what the revolution felt like at ground level to people who were there, the volume delivers.

That is not an accident of taste, and it is worth naming the mechanism. Five years before this book appeared, in the *International Socialist Review* of January–February 1969, George Saunders surveyed half a century of Soviet writing and observed that after the purges and Zhdanov, "those pioneer years came to look like a golden age of vigor, freedom, and experimentation", while "many of the finest literary talents

perished in the great purges of the nineteen-thirties." An anthology assembled in Moscow at the end of the 1960s could reach back past both catastrophes and come up with genuinely good stories, precisely because the 1920s were the last stretch of Soviet literature that had not been written to order. The quality of this book is a measurement of what came after it.

The tragedy, then, is not what these writers wrote, and it is emphatically not what Lunacharsky wrote. He died in 1933. He did not live to see the Writers' Union, or the trials, or the shooting of Krylenko and Lokot, or the use that would be made of his own name forty years on. He spent his political life insisting that the revolution could afford disagreement — that an opposing reading of Whitman could sit beside his own in the same book. The charge here lies entirely against the editors who, four decades after his death, put his name on the cover of a volume assembled on the opposite principle, from which the names of his closest colleagues had been removed, and in which his own memoir of choosing a government mentions nobody he chose. He is the pretext for a book that could not have contained him.

Read it for Chukovsky, for Lavrenyov, for what Reed still manages to say through two short excerpts. Then read the *Silhouettes*, which are available elsewhere in English, and see who is missing.

ANTI-IMPERIALISM

Lenin's Ideas and Modern International Relations

The fullest statement of Soviet peaceful-coexistence doctrine at the height of detente, with its pedigree documented congress by congress - and an introduction that tests the central claim against the book's own eighty-one Lenin citations.

Dmitry Georgievich Tomashevsky

Introduction to the 1974 Edition

This book exists to establish that peaceful coexistence is Lenin's doctrine. It is 92,000 words long, it cites Lenin's Collected Works eighty-one times, and in the whole of it the phrase "peaceful coexistence" never once appears inside a quotation from Lenin.

That is not a rhetorical flourish; it is a countable fact about the text, and Tomashevsky is honest enough that a careful reader can establish it from his own footnotes. The single Lenin quotation he offers as the doctrine's textual foundation runs: "...The period of the coexistence side by side of socialist and capitalist states" has begun. It carries a leading ellipsis, it is sourced to volume 30 of the Collected Works, and it does not contain the word "peaceful". It is a description of a situation — two kinds of state now exist at once — not a prescription for policy. Tomashevsky knows the gap is there, and he bridges it in the following sentence with a verb that gives the whole game away: "The principle of peaceful coexistence logically followed from Lenin's conception of socialist foreign policy."

Followed. Not was stated by. The book's central claim is a derivation, and Tomashevsky says so.

Fifty pages later he supplies, without appearing to notice, the fact that finishes the argument. Reporting Soviet diplomacy after the Civil War, he writes: "Georgi Chicherin said in June 1920: 'Our slogan was and still remains the same: peaceful coexistence with other governments no matter who they are.'" That is the earliest attested use of the actual phrase anywhere in this book, and it belongs to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, not to Lenin. Everything else with the phrase inside quotation marks comes from the 14th and 15th Congresses, the 1960 and 1969 Moscow Meetings, the CPSU Programme, the 23rd and 24th Congresses, the Lenin Centenary Theses, Gus Hall, Georges Marchais. The doctrine has an institutional pedigree of great length and considerable seriousness. It does not have the pedigree the title claims for it.

What the text is, and when it stops

The copyright page settles the printing history in one line: first printing 1974, © Progress Publishers 1974. Translated from the Russian by Jim Riordan. No earlier edition, no revision note — so, unusually for this series, the spine date is not misleading about the printing.

The text, though, closes earlier than that, and the closing date matters enormously for this particular subject. The latest datable events are the April 1973 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee; Brezhnev's visits to the United States, West Germany and France "in 1973"; the Paris agreements, which appear as "The termination of the war in Vietnam"; and "the successful beginnings of the European Conference on Security and Co-operation" — the first stage of which met at Helsinki in July 1973. The years 1974 and 1975 occur in the body of the book only as the terminal year of the Ninth Five-Year Plan. The manuscript was finished in the summer of 1973 and not touched again.

The seams show. One passage still treats the Helsinki process as a matter of arrangements not yet made: the multilateral consultations that "began in Helsinki, in November 1972" are described as existing "to determine the time, place, participants and agenda of the conference, in other words, procedural and organisational questions in the main." Another passage, plainly written later, already celebrates the conference's "successful beginnings". The book was assembled in layers and the layers were not reconciled.

Two things follow, and they are not the same thing. Chile does not appear in this book — not the country, not Allende, not Unidad Popular, not one word — and neither does the October war. Tomashevsky's manuscript closed before 11 September and before 6 October 1973, so this is not suppression on his part. But Progress Publishers held the English text for the better part of a year and printed it in 1974 without adding a line. A reader who bought a book called Lenin's Ideas and Modern International Relations in London or Delhi in 1974

was handed an account of the world in which the previous eighteen months' single most consequential test of the doctrine had not occurred.

The book supplies no biography at all. "D. Tomashevsky" is the whole of it: no institute, no degree, no position. I have not been able to source an institutional affiliation for him from any material held here, and I will not invent one. What the book is can be read off its apparatus without needing the author's job title. The 24th Congress of the CPSU is invoked twenty-nine times and its Peace Programme is the organising document of the Afterword; the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties supplies the authorities of last resort; Kádár, Marchais and Gus Hall are quoted approvingly. This is an export volume addressed to the Western and non-aligned communist parties and their periphery, and its commission is legible in every chapter: to establish that détente with Nixon's America was not a retreat from revolution but its Leninist form.

The strongest version of the case

That case is not self-evidently dishonest, and the chapter where Tomashevsky makes it best deserves to be read before anything else in the book.

"A Matter of Life or Death for Millions" is a serious, well-organised treatment of war in Marxist terms, and much of it would survive translation into any tradition. Its method is genuinely Lenin's: that the character of a war is determined by its class and political content and not by who fired first; that "One cannot understand the present war without understanding the epoch"; that Clausewitz's formula needs a class subject, war being "the continuation, by violent means, of the politics pursued by the ruling classes of the belligerent powers long before the outbreak of war". Tomashevsky quotes Lenin holding that "As a general rule, war is legitimate on the part of the oppressed" and that revolutionary wars "may prove necessary in the interests of socialism". He is not smuggling pacifism in under Lenin's name; he says plainly that coexistence "has nothing in common with class peace and leaves no doubt about the sacred right of the oppressed peoples to employ every means in their fight for liberation, up to and including armed struggle."

And on the specific question that the chapter is built around, he is right. Against the position that a world war would hasten the end of capitalism and should therefore be welcomed, he writes that such reasoning, "which is typical of Maoism, has nothing to do with a Marxist specific and historical analysis of

social phenomena on which Lenin tirelessly insisted." He cites Mao's remark at Chengtu that if the atomic bomb reduced the Chinese people to ashes they could begin again and build better; he records that "The 9th Congress of the Communist Party of China officially recorded the thesis of the inevitability and even desirability of war"; he calls the slogan of "a revolutionary war of the world village against the world city" irresponsible. A thermonuclear exchange would have destroyed the productive forces on which any socialism depends and killed the class that was supposed to inherit them. Saying so is not a betrayal of Marxism, and a critic who cannot concede it has not understood what the argument was about.

He is honest, too, about what Lenin actually said on the subject of living alongside capitalism, and he does not sand off the edges. He quotes Lenin: "We never imagined that with the fighting over and the advent of peace, the capitalist wolf would lie down with the socialist lamb." He records that Lenin "never considered it automatically ensured or 'eternal'". He quotes him wanting trade and nothing more mystical than trade — "I know of no reason why a socialist commonwealth like ours cannot do business indefinitely with capitalist countries" — and he correctly represents Lenin's post-Civil-War aim as switching "from our relations of war with the capitalist countries to relations of peace and trade." All of that is real, all of it is Lenin, and none of it is embarrassing to Tomashevsky's case that a workers' state needed a breathing space and was entitled to buy one.

The trouble begins exactly where the breathing space becomes a world outlook.

Where the derivation fails

Lenin's coexistence was a respite inside an expected sequence. In the same period from which Tomashevsky draws — November 1920 — Lenin put it in terms his 1974 expositor never quotes: "We have now passed from the arena of war to the arena of peace and we have not forgotten that war will come again. As long as capitalism and socialism remain side by side we cannot live peacefully — the one or the other will be the victor in the end." Trotsky reproduced that passage in *The Third International After Lenin* (1928, ch. I), and it is the exact counterweight to the volume-30 fragment. Both are Lenin; only one of them is quoted here. A doctrine that turns "we cannot live peacefully" into a permanent principle of international relations has not been derived from Lenin. It has been built next to him.

Trotsky also supplied, in the same chapter, the genealogy that

this book's title is designed to prevent the reader from looking for. Discussing Georg von Vollmar's 1878 pamphlet *The Isolated Socialist State*, Trotsky notes that Vollmar's scheme for a socialist Germany trading its way to victory over world capitalism "is based on the perspective of a peaceful coexistence of the socialist and capitalist systems". The phrase and the underlying idea reached Marxism a generation before the October Revolution, from German social democracy, and Trotsky's point was that they arrive together with the notion of a self-sufficient national socialism. That is the argument Tomashevsky has to answer and never states: not that coexistence is cowardly, but that it is the foreign policy of socialism in one country, and that the two propositions stand or fall together.

The Revolution Betrayed (1936) put the charge in one sentence, in the chapter on foreign policy and the army: "The perspective of world revolution gave place to the deification of the status quo." Trotsky's sarcasm there — "What could be finer, when all is said and done, than an eternal pact of non-aggression between socialism and capitalism?" — is aimed at precisely the formulation this book calls Leninist.

Tomashevsky does have a defence, and it is the one the whole international movement used: coexistence is "a specific form of class struggle in the world", applying between states and not within them. He states it carefully. Communists, he writes, "look upon it as a principle of relations between countries but completely inapplicable to the class struggle within individual countries, to relations between the exploiters and the exploited, between the oppressors and the oppressed". As a piece of doctrine that is coherent. As a description of what the policy did, it collapses the moment a revolution abroad becomes inconvenient to a negotiation in Moscow — which is why the missing eighteen months matter so much, and why the book cannot afford Chile.

The record it does not keep

Trotsky and Brest-Litovsk. Trotsky appears four times, all in a single stretch on the peace treaty, and the passage contains a specific, checkable falsification. Tomashevsky writes that Lenin substantiated coexistence "in the hard struggle against Trotsky and the 'Left'-wing Communists", whose position, he says, "in principle renounced the possibility and expediency of any relations with capitalist countries other than 'revolutionary war'." He then adds: "Typical in that respect was the position of Trotsky, who was appointed Commissar for Foreign Affairs after the October Revolution."

It was not typical of it. Revolutionary war was Bukharin's position and the Left Communists', and Tomashevsky quotes Bukharin saying so — "there can never be peaceful coexistence between us" — from the stenographic record of the Seventh Congress. Trotsky's position at Brest was the quite different, and quite unsuccessful, formula of neither war nor peace: refuse to sign, refuse to fight, break off and declare the war ended. One can think that policy was a catastrophe, as Lenin did; one cannot describe it as a demand for revolutionary war, because it was constructed precisely to avoid one. The amalgam merges two opposed positions into a single heresy so that one refutation disposes of both. It is worth noting that the companion *Progress* volume in this series, Arbatov's *The War of Ideas in Contemporary International Relations* (1973), performs the same amalgam in almost the same words. It was house doctrine, not a slip.

The supporting quotation is worth a second look as well. "Will we have any diplomatic work? I shall make a few revolutionary appeals and then shut up shop" is footnoted not to Trotsky but to S. Zarnitsky and A. Sergeyev's biography of Chicherin, Moscow 1966, in Russian — a Soviet secondary source published thirty years after Trotsky's expulsion from history. The remark is widely reported and may well be substantially what he said; but a book that quotes Lenin from the *Collected Works* eighty-one times reaches for a 1966 party biography the moment its subject is Trotsky, and the reader is entitled to notice.

Stalin. The name occurs once in this book, in the title of a work by George Kennan cited in a footnote. He is nonetheless quoted. Tomashevsky writes that "The Central Committee's political report to the 15th Party Congress stated: 'The basis of our relations with the capitalist states lies in the acceptance of coexistence between the two opposing systems. Practice has completely justified that.'" The political report of the Central Committee to the 15th Congress, in December 1927, was delivered by Stalin. (The footnote as printed reads "16th Congress of the RCP(B). December 1927" — the congress that met in December 1927 was the 15th, and by then the party had not been the RCP(B) for two years; the note is garbled in a way I cannot untangle from the scan.) The effect, however it arose, is that the doctrine's most authoritative early formulation is presented anonymously, as the voice of an institution. A book arguing that a policy descends from Lenin has quietly removed the man it actually descends through.

Czechoslovakia. Five mentions, one of them the event. It is handled in a single sentence and a half: hostile classes "can in certain conditions grow active, and, counting on outside

support from imperialism, take their opposition as far as direct counter-revolutionary actions. This was apparent, in particular, in the political events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia." Then: "The strength and effectiveness of the internationalist solidarity of socialist countries frustrated the attempt by the remnants of the former exploiting classes in alliance with Right-wing opportunists and with support from world imperialism to destroy the fundamentals of the socialist system in Czechoslovakia". Five armies, half a million troops, the abduction of a communist party's leadership — all of it is inside the phrase "internationalist solidarity". Dubček is not named. Neither the phrase "Brezhnev Doctrine" nor "limited sovereignty" occurs anywhere in the book, which is unsurprising, since it was written for readers who might use them. Elsewhere in this series, the Progress volume *Socialist Internationalism* (1982) at least denies the doctrine before restating it; Tomashevsky simply installs it.

The placement is what makes it lethal to his own argument. The Czechoslovak sentence sits in a chapter about relations between socialist states, safely walled off from the chapter on coexistence, where the principle under discussion is stated as flowing from "the right of every nation freely, without outside interference, to arrange its affairs as it desires" and presupposing "a renunciation of attempts at interference in the internal affairs of another country." Non-interference is a law of nature when the other state is capitalist and an error of formalism when it is not.

Hungary. The word occurs once as a country name, in a list of states that began building socialism. Nineteen fifty-six is absent. This is not merely a gap: János Kádár is quoted twice as a political authority, at the 1969 Moscow Meeting and in a Central Committee resolution endorsing the 24th Congress, and how Kádár came to be First Secretary is not a matter the book can raise. Yugoslavia appears twice, in lists; 1948 does not appear at all. The one break in the postwar communist world that the book can narrate is China's, and it narrates it at length and with real anger — "great-Power chauvinism and hegemonism", the border incidents of 1969, Albania's departure from the Warsaw Treaty. The rule is legible: schisms are discussable when the other side left.

The reply, and where to find it

The Fourth International argued against this doctrine continuously from the 1920s, and in the exact months Tomashevsky's manuscript was closing it was arguing about the thing his book cannot mention.

Milton Alvin's "'Peaceful Coexistence' — An Obstacle to Revolution", the last of four weekly instalments of a series called "Fifty Years of Stalinist Treachery", appeared in *Intercontinental Press*, vol. 11 no. 35, 8 October 1973 — under four weeks after the coup in Santiago. Its charge is the structural one: the communist parties' "main purpose is to settle for 'peaceful coexistence' between the Soviet bureaucracy and world imperialism. Everything is subordinated to that."

Alvin then added a fifth piece, "A Postscript — Chile" (*Intercontinental Press*, vol. 11 no. 37, 22 October 1973), which is the reply Tomashevsky's chapter on the developing countries was written to forestall and which he could not have read. Its indictment is of a strategy, not of a temperament: that *Unidad Popular* "did not touch the real institutions, the repressive instruments of the capitalist state — the police, the armed forces, the courts, prisons and legislature", and that "Instead of putting the generals in jail, the Stalinist-Social Democratic bloc put them in the cabinet." One may reject the conclusion. It is not a demand for nuclear war.

That is a general accusation. The specific one came in the same magazine five weeks later. Gerry Foley's "Moscow's New Line on Struggle in Chile" (*Intercontinental Press*, vol. 11 no. 42, 26 November 1973) reads the Argentine and Soviet party press after the coup and finds the militant tone unaccompanied by any change of policy: the lesson the Argentine Communist Party drew from the collapse of *Unidad Popular* "was the need to follow exactly the same policy that paved the way for the bloody coup across the Andes." (Foley also records, from *Le Monde Diplomatique* of November 1973, Pinochet's boast to a circle of officers after the coup about how completely Allende had trusted him.) The year-end summary in *Intercontinental Press*, vol. 11 no. 46, 24 December 1973, states the verdict flatly: "The defeat of the Chilean workers in the week of September 11 was a stunning blow for which the Communist party in Chile and its mentors in the Kremlin hold full responsibility. They betrayed the Chilean revolution by presenting Allende's popular-front government as a model of peaceful transition to socialism."

A year later the Fourth International's Tenth World Congress put the theory behind the charge on the record. In "Good Grounds for Revolutionary Optimism", by Joseph Hansen, printed in the documents issue of *Intercontinental Press*, vol. 12 no. 46, 23 December 1974, the formulation is: "As the governmental representative of this caste, Stalin — and his heirs after him — followed a policy calculated to maintain the status quo on an international scale, calling this 'peaceful

coexistence."

The fairest and most complete statement of the case, though, comes later, and it is the one worth setting against Tomashevsky's strongest pages, because it concedes what he is right about. John Ross and Ernest Mandel, in "The Need for a Revolutionary International" (International Marxist Review, vol. 1 no. 1, Spring 1982, pp. 38–39), trace the doctrine to its root — the theory of socialism in one country "expressed the basic conservatism of the Soviet bureaucracy, its turning away from world revolution towards maintenance of the international 'status quo', i.e. peaceful coexistence with imperialism" — and then immediately mark out what the criticism does not claim:

While revolutionary Marxists never called upon the Soviet Union, its workers government, to artificially 'provoke' revolutions elsewhere to 'further' them through military adventures abroad, or to 'sit and wait' before developing the Soviet economy and society towards socialism till international revolution would finally triumph, they fully understood that the fate of the Soviet Union ... remained intimately and finally tied to the outcome of class struggles on a world scale.

The obligation they draw from this is not adventurism but its opposite of inaction: "the Soviet Union had the duty to help and further world revolution in all those cases where revolutionary mass struggles and deep revolutionary crises in one or several countries clearly testified to the objective possibilities of achieving new revolutionary victories." That is the standard against which September 1973 should be measured, and it is a standard Tomashevsky could have engaged with. His book instead treats every critic of coexistence as a Maoist demanding nuclear war, which is a real position he refutes well, and not the position that most needed refuting.

What it is now

Read for what it is, this is a competent and in places genuinely thoughtful book, written by someone who had thought hard about war. Its chapter on war and peace is the best thing in it and would repay reading by anyone who imagines Soviet writing on the subject was all boilerplate. Its account of imperialism's record in the newly independent countries is a list of real events, correctly dated. Its refusal of the convergence theory is argued and not merely asserted.

But its title makes a promise it cannot keep, and it keeps

failing to keep it in the same place each time. Every time the argument reaches the point where Lenin should be quoted saying the thing, the citation turns out to be Chicherin in 1920, or the 15th Congress in 1927, or the Moscow Meeting in 1960, or the Party Programme, or the 24th Congress — a genuine tradition, seriously constructed, with its own real arguments about the nuclear age, and not the tradition named on the cover. What Tomashevsky has written is a good statement of Soviet foreign policy in the summer of 1973 dressed as an exegesis of Lenin. The dress does not fit, and the seams are all in his own footnotes.

Thirteen years later the seams gave. Ernest Mandel, in "The Significance of Gorbachov" (International Marxist Review, vol. 2 no. 4, Winter 1987, p. 31), noted what had become of the other half of the formula: "Like the world revolution, the international elimination of capitalism has even formally disappeared from its objectives — it is not even mentioned in the new programme of the CPSU adopted at the 27th Congress". The class struggle that coexistence was supposed to be a specific form of had been dropped, and only the coexistence was left. Tomashevsky's book is worth keeping because it is the fullest English statement of the doctrine at the moment before that happened, made by someone who still believed both halves.

HISTORY

A Short History of the World, Volume I

World history from the first stone tools to 1917, by the Soviet Academy's Institute of History - Nechkina on the Russian revolutionary movement, Skazkin on the middle ages, and Albert Manfred, the great Soviet historian of France, presiding and at his best on 1789.

Albert Zakharovich Manfred

Introduction to the 1974 Edition

A Short History of the World is the most ambitious thing this series contains: a single condensed history of the entire human race, "from the era of primitive society right up to the present day," compressed by the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR into two modest volumes. This is the first of them, and it carries the whole story from the first stone tools to the overthrow of the Russian monarchy in 1917 — Egypt and Sumer, Greece and Rome, medieval Europe and China and the Arab lands, the discovery of America, the French Revolution, the Paris Commune. It is the work not of one author but of a committee of genuine specialists, and it should be said at once that they were good ones. The list of contributors names Academician Milica Nechkina, the leading Soviet authority on the Decembrists and the Russian revolutionary movement; Academician Sergei Skazkin, a distinguished medievalist; the orientalist Academician Alexander Guber; Sergei Utchenko, a serious historian of the Roman Republic; and, as the volume's presiding editor, Albert Manfred, the outstanding Soviet historian of France, of the Revolution and of Napoleon. When the book reaches the French Revolution it is very good indeed, and that is not an accident: it is Manfred's own subject, written by the man who knew it best. This is not a pamphlet. It is a serious book by serious people, and the interesting question it raises is what such people did when the material of world history would not fit the shape they were required to give it.

Begin, as this series always does, by dating the text rather than the spine. The English translation is dated 1974 and was made by Katharine Judelson from a Russian original — *Kratkaya vsemirnaya istoriya*, literally a short world history — of the previous decade. Because this is a pre-1917 volume, its own contents cannot date it closely: a survey that stops at the First World War carries no glasnost, no Brezhnev, no Sino-Soviet split on its face. What dates it is its intellectual furniture, and that is unmistakable. The framework is the confident, settled historical materialism of the post-Stalin Soviet academy, the

doctrine as it stood before any of the loosening of the later 1980s: the five socio-economic formations as the fixed skeleton of all human history, the October Revolution as the hinge of the world, and the whole treated not as an interpretation to be argued but as a body of established law. The preface states the programme without embarrassment. What the reader is about to receive, it explains, rests on "the Marxist-Leninist theory on the laws governing the development of human society"; and among the questions the book sets out to answer is this one: "Why is the final victory of communism inevitable[?]" That is the register throughout. History has laws, the laws are known, and the outcome is settled in advance. The task of the historian is to display the working.

It helps to ask what a book like this was for. A one-volume world history, translated into the language of international circulation and issued by the export house of Soviet ideological production, was not a research monograph and did not pretend to be one; its preface hopes the work will prove "accessible and of interest to the reader at large," and it is pitched at the educated general reader at home and abroad rather than at the specialist. Its purpose is orientation — to hand that reader a single, coherent map of the whole human past, with the meaning already marked on it. That is why the teleology is not incidental but structural. The reader is not merely told what happened; he is told that it was going somewhere, that "the final victory of communism" is the destination the whole million-year journey has been approaching, and that the state publishing the book is the place where that journey arrives. A world history that ends, in its second volume, with the society issuing the history is a powerful instrument of legitimation, and the confidence of the doctrine is part of the message: the past is closed, its laws are known, and the future is not in doubt. The cost of that confidence is paid wherever the evidence is more interesting than the map allows, and the largest such place is the one the book opens with.

The law in question is the doctrine of the five formations. In

the scheme codified in Stalin's 1938 *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* and taught unchanged for half a century afterward, every human society climbs the same staircase in the same order — primitive-communal, slave-owning, feudal, capitalist, and at last socialist — each stage generated by the maturing of productive forces inside the one below, each an advance on the last, the sequence universal and obligatory. This volume is that staircase turned into narrative. Its very table of contents is the ladder laid on its side: Part One "The Ancient World" is the slave-owning epoch, Part Two "The Middle Ages" is the feudal epoch, Part Three "The Modern Period" is the rise of capitalism, and the second volume, we are told, will bring "the revolutionary replacement of capitalism, the last type of society based on exploitation, by communism." The engine that drives the whole is class struggle, announced as the single key to everything: "Underlying all the manifold political events — during the era of slave-owning society and that of feudal and, in particular, capitalist society — is the class struggle, the struggle of the oppressed masses of working people against their exploiters." As a statement of method this is not contemptible; a great deal of good history has been written on less. The difficulty is not that the book looks for modes of production and class relations. It is that it knows what it will find before it looks, and there is one place in world history where what it was required to find and what its authors could actually see come apart in the reader's hands.

That place is Asia, and the missing idea has a name. The most important Marxist concept ever devised for the great agrarian civilisations of the East — for Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China, the very societies this volume opens with — is the Asiatic mode of production, and it does not appear in this book. Search the whole of it: the phrase is not there, and "Asiatic" occurs only once, geographically, in a sentence about "the majority of Asiatic states." Yet the concept was Marx's own, and it was specifically about these places. In his 1859 preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx listed the great epochs of economic development as "the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal and the modern bourgeois modes of production" — four rungs, not the later three-before-capitalism, and the first of them named for Asia. He built the idea in his 1853 articles on British India for the *New York Daily Tribune* and in his correspondence with Engels that summer: a society of self-sufficient village communities, without private property in land, over which the state stands as universal landlord, tax and rent fused into a single levy, and on that foundation a centralised despotism that Marx thought had held Asian history strangely static. Whatever one now makes of that model — and it has been

criticised, from inside Marxism and out, as an Orientalist misreading that mistook colonial disruption for changelessness — it was Marx's, and it was the natural theoretical home for exactly the phenomena these opening chapters describe.

The absence is not an oversight, and it is not these authors' choice. It was a decision taken far above their heads and long before they wrote. In the Soviet theoretical debates of the late 1920s and early 1930s — the Leningrad discussion of 1931 was the decisive moment — the Asiatic mode was condemned and effectively banned. It implied that a large part of humanity had travelled a distinct, non-European and, worst of all, non-progressive road, and that offended both the universal five-stage ladder then being canonised and the political needs of a state that wished to promise the colonial world a future identical to Europe's. After 1938 the historian of Asia had exactly one permitted task: to find slavery and then feudalism where Marx had found something he judged to be neither. This volume performs that task on a planetary scale, and the strain shows in the authors' own sentences.

Watch it operate. For the ancient river valleys the required category is the slave-owning formation, and the verdicts are duly delivered. "Assyria was a state of warlords and slave-owners," we read; "slavery was more developed there than it had been in either Egypt or Babylon." Urartu is disposed of in a single line: "Like other ancient kingdoms of the East, Urartu was a slaveholding society." For India and China the required category is the transition from slavery to feudalism, and it too is supplied by fiat: "Unlike the peoples of India and China who made the transition to feudalism from a relatively developed slave-holding society, the peoples of South-East Asia ... did not evolve developed slave-holding civilisations." India's classical states are "the slave-holding society of the Gupta Empire and the slave-holding states in the south of India." The labels are affixed with confidence. But read on, and the evidence the same authors have gathered pulls steadily the other way. Egyptian agriculture, they report, rested not on slave gangs but on the peasant commune: "The land was cultivated by peasant communes and each commune was administered by its council of elders," which organised the taxes and the labour levies for the state's building works — communal cultivators and a state above them extracting *corvée*, which is the material of the Asiatic mode, not of Roman *latifundia*. Indian slavery, they concede, "although fairly widespread in India, was as a rule of a domestic, patriarchal variety" — a marginal, household institution, not a mode of production. And about the Indian village they write a sentence that Marx could have signed: one distinctive feature of ancient India, they observe, was "the unchanging nature of

the village communes over many centuries," self-governing, self-sufficient, reproducing the same pattern down the ages. That is Marx's Asiatic village to the letter. The scholarship arrives at the Asiatic mode from every direction and stops one word short of it, because that word was the one word that could not be written.

This is not a peculiarity of one survey. It is a house pattern, and the companion volumes in this same series, prepared in the same institutional world, show the identical operation performed at closer range. The Progress A History of India, Volume One itemises the predominance of state-owned land, the fusion of rent and tax and the absence of serfdom in medieval India — Marx's checklist, feature by feature — and then writes "feudalism" over the top of the list. The Modern History of China edited by Tikhvinsky lets Marx's category vanish from a history of the very country whose hydraulic bureaucracy helped inspire it, and forces China onto the feudal track with a borrowed phrase of Lenin's. Agibalova and Donskoy's school textbook History of the Middle Ages makes the Arab Caliphate "feudal" in a single sentence for children — a state that is the universal landlord, with tax and rent merged and no serfdom — and Feudal Society and Its Culture generalises the same suppression across India, China, Japan and the Iranian and Arab lands together. Four books, four teams of specialists, one banned idea leaving its outline in the shape of its own absence. A Short History of the World is where the operation is carried out on the whole globe at once, at a single stroke, because a one-volume survey has no room to hedge as the monographs do. The awkwardness the longer books register in a paragraph, this one registers in an adjective — "domestic," "patriarchal," "unchanging" — and moves on.

The reply to all this was made by Marxists, and it is worth pointing the reader to it precisely because the objection is not that the book is too Marxist but that it is not Marxist enough — that it has replaced a method of inquiry with a timetable. Marx's own 1859 list, quoted above, already refuses the single European staircase: it puts the Asiatic mode first as a distinct road, not a lower rung of the same one. The sharpest instrument against the staircase, though, is Trotsky's law of uneven and combined development, formulated in exactly these years against exactly this dogma. Backward societies, Trotsky argued, do not obediently re-enact the path of the advanced ones; they fuse archaic and modern forms into combinations without precedent. "To jump over intermediate stages," he wrote in his 1932 lecture In Defence of October, "is the way of backward countries" — and the whole of Russian history was his standing refutation of the idea that the stairs must be climbed one at a time, in order, by everyone. A history

of the world built on uneven and combined development would have had no need to pretend that Mauryan India and Han China were secretly passing through the same slave-owning phase as the Mediterranean; it could have said what its own evidence says, that they were something else. The question was alive and being argued in the wider Marxist world throughout the years this book was written — in the West, the Dobb–Sweezy debate of the early 1950s over the transition from feudalism to capitalism turned on precisely the point that "feudalism" covered wildly divergent social orders and that the sequence of forms was a matter for concrete study, not a template known in advance. The file Moscow had closed in 1931 was open everywhere else.

None of this is a reason to throw the book away, and it would be a poor service to the reader to leave the impression that a survey compiled by scholars of this calibre has nothing to teach. It has a great deal. Its first and most durable virtue is that it is genuinely a history of the world and not of Europe with appendices. Whole chapters go to ancient India and China, to the Arab Caliphate and Sassanid Iran, to Japan and South-East Asia, to the Mongol conquests, to America before and after the European invasion — treated as histories in their own right, by specialists who knew the sources, and not as raw material for the European story. In 1974 that global reach was rarer in a general survey than it should have been, and much of the substance still holds. The second virtue is the one the materialist method really does deliver: a steady attention to how people fed and clothed themselves, to tools and techniques and the relations of production, that keeps the book anchored in something more solid than dynasties and battles. Its account of the deep transitions — the move from stone to bronze to iron, the invention of the plough, the rise of irrigation agriculture in the great river valleys, the first appearance of surplus, property and class — is clear, concrete and, in its essentials, sound. A reader will come away understanding why states arose where they did, which is more than most narrative histories trouble to explain.

The third virtue is the most attractive, and it is the honest fruit of the class-struggle emphasis. This is history with the labouring majority kept firmly in view, and it does not flinch from insurrection. It gives real space to the revolts of the exploited across every epoch — the great uprising of Egyptian peasants and slaves in the eighteenth century B.C., when, in the ancient chronicle the book quotes, "the earth whirled round like a potter's wheel" and the poor took the houses of the rich; the slave war of Spartacus; the peasant wars of medieval China and early-modern Russia. Where a conventional survey of the period would give the reader kings and treaties, this one insists

on the people who built the pyramids and worked the latifundia and paid the rents, and treats their resistance as central rather than as disorder. Its anti-colonialism, too, has real force: the chapters on the European conquest of America and the plunder of Asia describe the "primary accumulation" of capital through the enslavement and robbery of whole continents with an unblinking directness — the book quotes Marx to the effect that "plunder and violence was the sole aim of the Spanish adventurers" — that much Cold-War Western historiography preferred to soften. On these matters the doctrine and the evidence pull the same way, and the book is the better for it.

So the reader can use this volume, and use it well, provided the ideological skeleton is recognised for what it is. Where *A Short History of the World* narrates — the plough, the commune, the slave revolt, the French Revolution, the growth of the working-class movement — it is often admirable, the work of people who cared about the past and knew it. Where it classifies — where it announces that Egypt and Assyria were slave-owning societies and India and China feudal ones by the same law that governed Rome and France — it is reciting a catechism fixed in Moscow forty years before, and its own best sentences quietly contradict it. The tell is always the same, and once seen it cannot be unseen: an "unchanging" village here, a "patriarchal" slavery there, a state that is somehow the universal landlord, the diagnostic features of a banned idea surfacing one by one in the prose of scholars who were not permitted to name the thing they had found. Read the narrative for its learning and its reach; read the ladder as an ideological fingerprint pressed into the text — the place where a great state told the whole human race that it had only ever been walking, in step, up a single flight of stairs toward the door that state claimed to hold open. The historians who wrote this book knew the world was more various than that. Sentence by sentence, against their own conclusions, they keep letting the reader see it.

HISTORY

A Short History of the World, Volume II

The twentieth century to 1973, closing so close to press that the Paris ceasefire arrives in a footnote. Strongest on decolonisation, with a third of the book written by the USSR's leading Africanists and orientalists.

Albert Zakharovich Manfred

Introduction to the 1974 Edition

This is the second and final volume of the Institute of History's one-volume history of the human race, and it carries the story from the point where the first broke off — the fall of the Russian monarchy — to the moment of writing. Where the companion volume ran from the first stone tools to 1917, this one is entirely modern: the October Revolution and the civil war, the building of Soviet industry, the Depression, the rise of fascism, the Second World War, the collapse of the colonial empires, the Cold War and the détente of the early 1970s. It closes almost at the instant it went to press. A footnote apologises for arriving too late to be worked into the body of the text: the Paris ceasefire on Vietnam of "January 27, 1973". The narrative reaches Leonid Brezhnev's visit to the United States of June 1973 and the strategic-arms agreements of 1972–73. So there is no lag to argue about here, none of the trap the companion volume set, where a book on the spine dated 1974 was really a decade older. This is a fresh text of 1973, the Russian original and the English (translated by Vladimir Veizy) barely a year apart. Everything it omits, it omits in 1973, with the whole century behind it.

That matters, because the test this volume has to pass is a harder one than its predecessor faced. The first volume's difficulty lay in the deep past — in forcing the agrarian civilisations of antiquity onto a five-runged European ladder, so that a category Marx himself had reserved for Asia left its outline in the book precisely by being unsayable. The reader who wants that argument will find it in the introduction to Volume One. The difficulty here is different and sharper, and it can be stated in a single sentence. This volume must narrate the twentieth century, and the twentieth century is the century of the state that published the book. A world history written in Moscow in 1973 can afford to be candid about the crimes of every ruling class on earth except one. The interesting thing about *A Short History of the World* — the thing worth the modern reader's attention — is that it is candid about almost all of them, and that watching where the candour stops tells you exactly what the book is and who it was written by.

Begin, as always, with the who. This is again the work of a committee, again of genuine specialists, and again they were good ones. The chapters on the colonial and semi-colonial world — a full third of the book — are shared among the leading Soviet orientalists and Africanists of the day: the Academician Alexander Guber, who had died in 1971 and whose name is printed in mourning rules; Apollon Davidson, the pioneer of African studies in the USSR; Leonid Kutakov, a historian of Japan; and others. The Soviet chapters are by Ilya Berkhin, a historian of the civil war and of socialist construction, and Alexander Chubaryan, later the director of the Institute of General History and a serious student of international relations. The chapter on "The World Socialist System" — the one in which the affairs of the Soviet bloc are narrated — is by Leonid Nezhinsky, a specialist on precisely those countries, and on Hungary in particular. Hold that fact; it will be needed. The presiding editor of the whole two-volume work was Albert Manfred, the outstanding Soviet historian of France. These were not hacks. They were scholars, several of them distinguished, working inside a discipline whose largest questions had been settled by authority before they sat down to write.

The settled framework is the same historical materialism that governs the first volume, but here it has a single organising event, and that event is October 1917. The book's very first chapter is headed "October 1917 Revolution in Russia Ushers in New Era in History of Mankind", and the claim is meant without qualification: October 25 (November 7) 1917 "was a fateful day, as, indeed, it was for the whole of mankind." Everything after it is arranged as consequence. Capitalism enters its "general crisis"; the colonial system disintegrates; a "world socialist system" arises which, by 1970, "proved beyond any doubt its superiority over capitalism". The engine, as in the first volume, is class struggle and the standpoint is that of the labouring majority against those who live off it. As a method this is not to be sneered at, and — this is the point that has to be made before any other — over most of the book it does honest and valuable work.

It is worth being concrete about that, because a reader told

everything in the volume is worthless will not believe the part that matters. The anti-colonial chapters are the book's glory. They treat the national movements of Asia, Africa and Latin America as history in their own right, written by people who knew the languages and the sources: the Druse revolt against the French in Syria in 1925, the strike waves of Bombay and Cawnpore, the first African trade unions, Cárdenas's nationalisation of the Mexican railways and oil in the late 1930s, the long unwinding of the British and French empires after 1945. In 1973 this global evenness of attention was rarer in a general survey than it should have been, and much of it holds up. The account of the Great Patriotic War — the Soviet name for the war against Germany of 1941–45 — is the emotional core of the book, and it earns its place: Stalingrad and Kursk rendered at the scale of the individual soldier, the sixteen guardsmen who threw themselves under the tanks, the private Matrosov who stopped a machine-gun with his body. The Soviet share in the destruction of fascism was real and was systematically minimised in the Cold-War West, and the book is right to insist on it. Nor does the materialist eye go blind the moment it leaves Europe. The volume records, flatly and correctly, that after the Indonesian coup of 1965 the army and the Muslim militias conducted "a brutal campaign of anti-communist terror throughout the land, which brought death to several hundred thousand Indonesians" — a massacre the Western press of the day was in no hurry to count. When the crime belongs to somebody else's ruling class, this book will name it, number it and explain it. That is the instrument. Now watch it being switched off.

The first place it goes dark is the Soviet countryside at the turn of the 1930s. The book gives collectivisation a warm and detailed chapter: the tractor stations, the poor peasants of the Berezhovka district winning better yields than their neighbours, the kulaks — the well-to-do, labour-employing peasants — sabotaging the collective farms out of class malice. "In the areas of total collectivisation," it writes, "local Soviets were authorised to expropriate from the kulaks land, implements, cattle, and property acquired by exploitation, which meant the liquidation of the kulaks as a class." That is the whole of dekulakisation: an administrative sentence with no human being in it. The deportation of well over a million people to the north and to Central Asia, the deaths in transit and in the special settlements, do not occur. And the famine — the famine of 1932–33, in which several million people starved to death in Ukraine, the north Caucasus and Kazakhstan, the direct result of grain requisitioning pressed through a collectivisation the peasants resisted — is not merely uncounted; it has been inverted. The one time the word appears in these pages it is a weapon in the kulaks' hands: "The

kulaks started sabotaging government purchases of grain, hoping thereby to cause famine and so wreck the government's economic policy." The famine that happened is gone; a famine that the class enemy intended stands in its place. As for the coercion that was undeniable even in Moscow, it is admitted — but quarantined. Somewhere, "these authorities began forcing the peasants to join collective farms", there were "policy distortions", and the Party corrected them. The excess is real; it has simply been detached from anyone who ordered it. Stalin's name does not appear in the paragraph. This is the first appearance of the book's characteristic move: an error is granted, and in the same breath cut loose from the man and the policy that produced it.

The move reaches its purest form over the Terror. The mass killing of 1936–38 — the show trials, the shooting of the old Bolsheviks, the destruction of the Red Army command, the roughly three-quarters of a million executed and the millions more sent to the camps — is compressed into a few sentences and given a name that does the work of a lid: "the Stalin personality cult". The period, the book says, "was marked by gross violations of Party and Soviet democracy and socialist legality in consequence of the Stalin personality cult". Stalin's fault was "rudeness, capriciousness, intolerance of criticism", and this "led to unjustified restrictions of democracy, gross violations of socialist legality and repressions against prominent Party, government and military leaders and other people." Read that clause again: it is the entire body count of the Great Terror, and it contains not one name, not one number, and not one institution. The Moscow Trials are never mentioned. Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov — the men in the dock — appear in this book only earlier and only as villains, the authors of "fallacious anti-Leninist policies"; that they were then tried on fabricated charges and shot is nowhere stated. Marshal Tukhachevsky is named, warmly, as the young commander of the Western Front in 1920; that he was executed in June 1937, and the officer corps gutted after him on the eve of the war the book so movingly narrates, is left out. Stalin himself, we are told, "had won great popularity by his relentless fight against the anti-Leninist groups of the Trotskyites and Bukharinites" — the euphemism performing its function, since the "fight" in question is the one that killed them. And the whole is sealed with a sentence that would be comic if the subject were not what it is: "The personality cult was something quite alien to the Soviet system of government." A phenomenon that consumed the Party's entire leadership is declared foreign to the thing it consumed.

There is a smaller tell inside this passage, and it is the sharpest single thing in the book, because the book supplies the

evidence against itself. To show that even Lenin had misgivings about Stalin, the authors quote Lenin's last letter to the Party — the document history calls his Testament. They quote it thus: Stalin, "having become General Secretary, has concentrated boundless authority in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be able to exercise that authority with sufficient discretion." And there they stop. The sentence is genuine and it is mild — a worry about discretion. What the quotation omits is the postscript Lenin added a few days later, in January 1923, in which the worry has hardened into a recommendation: that Stalin was "too rude" for the office, and that "the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from that post." The book quotes Lenin's doubt and cuts Lenin's demand. This is not an accident of compression; it is the operation the whole volume performs in miniature. And the reply to it was written thirty-seven years before this book, by the man this book cannot name. In *The Revolution Betrayed* of 1936, Leon Trotsky observed that under the new order "the innumerable articles, speeches, and letters of Lenin, ending in his 'testament', will continue under the new constitution to be locked up merely because they rub the new leaders the wrong way." The Testament was suppressed in the USSR for exactly the reasons that made this book quote only its harmless half.

The third dark place is August 1939. The Soviet–German non-aggression pact is admitted — it could hardly be denied — and defended as a breathing space: Germany's offer was insincere, the USSR knew it, but "it needed time the better to prepare for the impending war and was thus left no choice but to accept the offer". A serious case can be made along those lines, and honest historians have made it. But the book makes it by removing the evidence that complicates it. The Secret Additional Protocol — the annex in which Berlin and Moscow divided Poland, the Baltic states and Bessarabia into spheres of interest — is not mentioned. Its consequences are then narrated as though they had fallen from the sky, or rather as though they had welled up from below. The Red Army's entry into eastern Poland on 17 September becomes "a mission of liberation which resulted in the reunion of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia". The annexation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia becomes a set of spontaneous revolutions: the peoples "rose in revolt and overthrew their pro-nazi governments", held "genuinely free elections", and "applied to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for admission". The war against Finland becomes Finnish aggression — "Finland's rulers ended by provoking an armed clash". Every one of these was, in fact, an act of the Soviet state carried out under a secret agreement with Hitler; every one is rewritten so that the Soviet state is the object of others' actions, or the mere ratifier of the people's will. (Our own tradition holds itself to this same

standard, and should: Ernest Mandel, whose *The Meaning of the Second World War* is the best short Marxist account of the conflict, misdated the signing of that Secret Protocol to 27 August — it was signed on the night of 23 August 1939. The date is correctable; the protocol is not deniable.)

The fourth place is Hungary, and here the operation is at its most revealing, because the book does not fall silent — it tells the story, and the story has had one actor surgically removed. The events of October–November 1956 appear as "counter-revolutionary forces, directly incited and aided by aggressive elements in Western states", attempting "a coup d'état" to tear Hungary out of the socialist camp; the Hungarian people rejected them; and "a Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government set up on November 4, 1956", headed by János Kádár, restored order and resumed the march to socialism. Notice what is missing from that November the 4th. The government was "set up" — by whom, the sentence does not say — on the very day that Soviet tanks entered Budapest in force and crushed the rising in a week of fighting that killed thousands. The intervention that is the whole meaning of the date has been dissolved into the passive voice. Imre Nagy, the reform-communist premier the Soviets removed and later had shot, is not named. The single largest use of Soviet military power in Europe between 1945 and 1968 has been narrated with the Soviet military left out. And the man who wrote the chapter, Leonid Nezhinsky, was a specialist on Hungary. He of all the contributors knew what happened on 4 November. He wrote the sentence that leaves it out.

The fifth place is not dark; it is simply not there. Czechoslovakia in 1968 — the Prague Spring and the invasion of the country by five Warsaw Pact armies in August of that year — does not appear in this book at all. This is worth dwelling on, because it is the cleanest silence in the volume and the least defensible. The invasion was five years old when the book went to press; it was the defining event of the socialist bloc in the years the book was actually written; and there was a chapter, "The World Socialist System", whose whole subject it was. The book finds room in that chapter for the constitutions of the socialist states, for the Council for Mutual Economic Aid, for the 1966 Warsaw Treaty proposal on European security. It cannot find room for the half-million troops who occupied a fraternal socialist country to depose its communist leadership. Throughout the volume the word for a foreign army sent to reverse a nation's chosen course is "intervention", and it is applied without stint to the Americans in Korea and Vietnam, to Britain, France and Israel at Suez in 1956, to every imperialist adventure the century offers. The one intervention it will not name is the one its own state

carried out.

Set these five cases beside the Indonesian massacre the book counted so exactly, and the pattern resolves. It is not that the authors could not see ruling-class crime; the volume is full of ruling-class crime, seen clearly and told well. It is that a single question is never allowed to turn inward. The book will admit that individual Bolsheviks erred — that collectivisation had "distortions", that Stalin was rude, that mistakes were made. What it will never do is apply its own categories — counter-revolution, terror, intervention, the crime of a ruling class against the people it rules — to the Soviet state itself. Error is admissible; the category is not. That is the discriminator, and it is worth more than any tally of adjectives, because a book may be candid about a hundred small mistakes and still be built on this one silence.

The reply to that silence is not the property of anti-communism; it was made from inside the revolutionary tradition, in real time, by the people the book cannot mention. Consider first the erasure that founds all the others. This is a history of the October Revolution in which Trotsky does not appear. He chaired the Petrograd Soviet in 1917; he chaired the Military Revolutionary Committee that actually organised the insurrection; and in this account of that insurrection his name is absent, surfacing later only as the author of a "pernicious policy". The authors even quote, for colour, John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World* — the eyewitness classic whose pages are full of Trotsky, and which was quietly withdrawn from Soviet circulation for that very reason — while stepping around the figure who fills it. The reader who wants the insurrection told by the man who ran it has Trotsky's own *History of the Russian Revolution* (1932); the reader who wants the official history of the world communist movement answered has *The Third International After Lenin* (1928).

But the standing answer to a book like this is *The Revolution Betrayed*, which Trotsky finished in 1936, the year of the first Moscow Trial and of the Constitution this volume celebrates. It supplies precisely the category the Institute has removed: the Soviet bureaucracy not as a collection of flawed individuals but as a privileged ruling stratum with interests of its own, a caste thrown up by the ebb of the revolution and the defeat of its allies abroad. "The bureaucracy conquered something more than the Left Opposition," Trotsky wrote. "It conquered the Bolshevik party. It defeated the program of Lenin." Of the whole process he offered an image this volume's authors could not have printed and could not have refuted: "The leaden rump of bureaucracy outweighed the head of the revolution." Where *A Short History of the World* explains the Terror as one man's

rudeness, *The Revolution Betrayed* had already explained, in advance, the social machinery that made the man necessary and the Terror possible. And on the 1937 elections in which "98.69 per cent" of the vote went to the bloc of Communists and non-Party candidates — which this book presents as democracy triumphant — Trotsky's chapter on the 1936 Constitution is the direct answer, noting that Stalin himself had conceded the secret ballot was needed because "the 'Soviet people' cannot yet vote for those whom they want to elect." As for the trials, the American philosopher John Dewey chaired the independent commission of inquiry whose 1938 report, *Not Guilty*, found the charges fabricated; and the Left Opposition's own journal, the *Bulletin of the Opposition*, was reporting the coming frame-ups month by month as they were prepared. The materials for the correction existed, in print, in the languages this book was translated into, the entire time.

None of which is a reason to discard the volume. It is, over great stretches, exactly what it claims to be: a genuine world history, attentive to the whole planet and to the people who did its labour and its dying, and better on the colonial world and the anti-fascist war than most of what the Cold-War West was producing alongside it. Use it for that, and use it well. But read its account of the Soviet century with the one question held steadily in view — is the category ever turned inward? — and the book divides cleanly in two. Where it narrates the crimes of others, it is a work of history. Where it reaches its own state, the historian's instrument, kept so sharp for every other ruling class of the age, is set carefully down. The scholars who wrote this book knew how to see a ruling class killing the people beneath it; they proved it, page after page, from Java to the Suez Canal. There was one such scene they were not permitted to describe, and it was the one outside their own windows.

FICTION

The Iron Flood

A column of soldiers, women, children and cattle cut off on the Black Sea coast in 1918, marching to rejoin the Reds. A crowd becoming an army. With a new critical introduction.

Alexander Serafimovich

Introduction to the 1974 Edition

The novel opens with something nobody can identify.

Dust smothers a Cossack village, leaving visible only the dark tops of the poplars. Out of it comes a din: dogs, horses, children crying, men swearing, women calling, a drunken accordion — "as though a huge beehive had lost its queen and was humming in frenzied distraction, many-voiced and discordant." Above it, in the blinding sky, kites turn their hooked beaks to right and to left, "but making nothing of it, for never before had there been such a sight." Then Serafimovich asks the reader the questions the kites cannot answer:

Was it a country fair? Where, then, were the tents and traders with their heaped merchandise? Was it a settlers' camp? But why the guns and limber-chests, the army carts and the stacked rifles? Was it an army? But why were there babies crying all over the place, napkins hung upon rifles to dry and cradles swung suspended from the muzzles of guns; why did young mothers suckle their babies, cows munch hay beside the artillery horses...

That is how you open a novel whose protagonist is a mass. The reader is put in the position of the bird: looking down at a hundred thousand people who do not yet constitute anything, and unable to say what they are. Everything the book goes on to do is contained in the fact that the question has no answer on page one and does have one on the last page.

We begin there deliberately, because this introduction has an unusual job. The Iron Flood is the one book in this series that our own tradition has dismissed by name, and we have to deal with that before we can do anything else.

The edition

Three dates, and the middle one is missing.

Serafimovich wrote The Iron Flood in 1924, when he was

sixty-one and already a writer of thirty-five years' standing. The volume in your hands is described on its copyright leaf as the Fourth Revised Edition, 1974, published by Progress in the Soviet Authors Library, with illustrations by M. Grekov and A. Kokorin. The English is credited only as "Translated from the Russian": no translator is named, and we have not supplied one.

"Fourth Revised Edition" is doing a great deal of quiet work. It tells you that the text has been through at least four states and does not tell you what changed, when, or who decided. Serafimovich lived until 1949 and revised his own book; what happened to it after that is not disclosed here. A reader should hold the 1974 text lightly on points of detail. What follows is an account of the novel as this printing gives it, which is the only version an English reader has.

The events are real. In the summer of 1918 the Red forces in the Kuban were cut off, and a mass of poor peasants and Cossacks — with their families, their carts, their cattle and their children — fled south and west from the Cossack rising, then marched along the Black Sea coast and over the mountains of the North Caucasus to rejoin the main Red Army. That was the Taman Army. Its commander was Yepifan Iovich Kovtyukh, who appears in the novel as Kozhukh and is named on this volume's own jacket. Remember that name; we return to it at the end, and it is the reason this introduction exists.

What the book actually does

Two things, and both are harder than the novel's reputation suggests.

The first is that the mass is the subject and is never flattered. This is not a people's army marching to victory with banners. It is a rabble that has to be terrorised into becoming an army, and Serafimovich says so. By the last chapter the men are boasting about discipline in these terms: "It can't be stricter than what we have here: when batko said he'd give us hell we

all learned to behave. Just look, we march in ranks as straight as a tight string." Batko — father — is what they call Kozhukh, and what they are praising is the credible threat of a man who will have them shot. The transformation the novel exists to depict is achieved by suffering and by fear, and the book does not pretend it was achieved by persuasion.

The second is that the political argument is genuinely staged rather than settled. The best scene in the book is a stand-off round a cooking fire between the peasant soldiers and a detachment of Black Sea sailors, and Serafimovich gives the sailors — anarchists, hung with revolvers, bombs and cartridge belts, travelling with women the soldiers resent — the floor.

"Where's your Kozhukh taking you? Have you thought of that? We started the Revolution. We sank the fleet, regardless of Moscow's instructions. The Bolsheviks are messing about with the German Kaiser, making secret ... But we shan't allow the people to be betrayed. If a man betrays the people, he'll be shot on the spot. Who's your Kozhukh? An officer!"

And when the soldiers jeer at them for the women, the reply is a complete political self-account:

"Who was it that started the Revolution? The sailors. Who did the tsar shoot? Who did he drown? Who did he chain? The sailors. Who brought literature from abroad? The sailors. Who beat the bourgeois and the priests? The sailors. You're only beginning to see daylight, whereas we sailors have shed our blood in the struggle. And while we were shedding our blood for the Revolution who but you fell upon us with your tsarist bayonets?"

Rifles come up; revolvers come out; bombs are unfastened. A grey-moustached Ukrainian sergeant who had fought the whole imperialist war on the Western front, and who "when the Revolution broke out, had killed the officers of his company", takes a mouthful of hot porridge and defuses it.

Look at what is in that exchange. Brest-Litovsk denounced as a betrayal — "messing about with the German Kaiser". The Bolsheviks' use of former tsarist officers denounced as class treachery, aimed at the novel's own hero: Who's your Kozhukh? An officer! The sailors' claim to be the revolution's real vanguard, with a list of credentials that is substantially true. This is the anarcho-maximalist left of 1918 speaking in its own voice, at length, in a novel published in 1924 and still being reprinted by the Soviet state's own foreign-language house in 1974. Serafimovich does not refute them. He lets them make their case, notes that they are armed to the teeth

and not sober, and moves on.

And the ending earns itself. The men sit round fires listening to speakers, and understand that they are part of something:

They did not understand, they did not know how to express it, but they felt it. ... As the veil of smoke vanished towards the star-bestrewn sky, so their jubilation waned into intangible weariness around the fires, and the great sea of people fell gently to sleep smiling. The fires went out. It was quiet. The night was blue.

A writer who can end a novel about a hundred thousand people with four words about the colour of the sky is not a writer who needs anyone's indulgence.

The author's own account, which is in this volume

This printing carries, in front of the novel, an essay by Serafimovich called "How The Iron Flood Was Conceived and Written". It is the most interesting piece of front matter in this series so far, because for once the apparatus around a novel is the novelist.

It opens with him climbing the Caucasian watershed before the First World War with his son, and reaching a place where the range narrows "almost to a razor-blade thinness", with bottomless precipices on both sides, the sea to the right "reared up into a wall, an immovable wall of molten blue", and the Kuban steppe to the left. "We stood in reverent silence on the narrow isthmus, not more than two metres wide, and stared at the map of the world that lay open before us." Then the revolution, Moscow "gaping with the black holes of windows", and a question: "What about me, where was my place?"

What follows is a serious argument about the peasantry, and we quote it because a good deal of what is said about Serafimovich assumes he was incapable of one.

He rejects his own earlier subject: "Too much had already been written about the poor peasant, poverty-ridden, ignorant, long-suffering. I had written about such peasants myself and portrayed them exactly like that. But now we had the Revolution." He sets out why peasant revolt alone cannot make a revolution — "Razin's, Pugachev's and later peasant uprisings" shook the social order "but did not replace it with a new one" — and why the proletariat had to lead it, and why it could not win alone: "If the working class had been alone in the revolutionary struggle, it would have been vanquished, as it happened in previous revolutions."

Then the part that shows he knew exactly what his subject was. The peasant, he writes, "was a property-owner: he had a cow, a horse, a plot of land and a house", and that made "the fundamental difference between his psychology and the worker's". He puts the reasoning in the peasant's own mouth — do away with the landowner, take his land, and then: "I may also take his implements, a couple of cows, a couple of horses and a plough, and that is all I want. With these things I shall grow rich and enlarge my farm." And: "The majority of them did not give a thought to what would happen afterwards and had no idea how they would go on."

The march, he says, "was such a nightmarish university" that by the end "the people changed out of all recognition". And then the distinction that a doctrinaire would not have drawn: what they arrived at "might not have been conscious knowledge, as with the proletariat, but it was instinctive conviction."

Finally he explains his own last page. The real Taman force went on to Astrakhan; the novel stops before that.

Why did I put the fullstop earlier? Because my task had been fulfilled. I took anarchist mass which refused to obey and was prepared to bayonet its leaders if they displeased them and led them through terrible torments to the point when they realised they were a part of an organised force of the October Revolution. That was enough for me.

That is an artist explaining a formal decision in formal terms. Whatever else is true about this book, it was built, and the man who built it knew why every part of it was where it was.

The charge from our own side

Now the thing this introduction has to face.

In the seventh chapter of *The Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936, Trotsky described what the bureaucracy's command over literature produces, and named names: "Mediocre but 'right-thinking' storytellers like Serafimovich or Gladkov are inaugurated as classics." He predicted that the Thermidorian epoch would be remembered "pre-eminently as an epoch of mediocrities, laureates and toadies".

The charge has two parts and they have to be separated.

On the second part — the manufacture of classics by political criterion — Trotsky was exactly right, and the jacket of this very volume is the proof. It says that *The Iron Flood* "became

a classic work of socialist realism". Became. Socialist realism was not proclaimed until 1934, ten years after the novel was written; the doctrine was applied backwards to a book that predates it, in order to give the doctrine ancestors. That is the identical operation this series has traced in the Russian Classics Series, where Gogol and Turgenev are annexed as forerunners of a method they could not have heard of. The jacket also quotes a personal letter from Lenin in 1920 about "how necessary your work is to the workers and all of us" — four years before *The Iron Flood* existed. Lenin is endorsing something else, and the endorsement is placed where a reader will take it to cover this novel. Trotsky's word for that process was "inaugurated", and it is the right word.

On the first part — mediocrity — the book in your hands does not support it. The opening with the kites is not the work of a mediocrity. Nor is the essay on the peasant as small proprietor; nor the sailors' speech; nor "the night was blue". Serafimovich was sixty-one, had been publishing since 1889, and wrote here a formally ambitious novel with a collective protagonist, at a time when that was an open technical problem and not a convention.

There is an irony in this worth naming, because it implicates both sides. The Soviet apparatus said Serafimovich's politics made him a classic. Trotsky said Serafimovich's politics were all he had. The two verdicts are opposite in intention and identical in method: each decides the value of the book from the position of its author, and neither requires anyone to read it. Our business is the second thing.

This is now the second time in this series that the judgement of 1936 has failed to fit a particular book. Fadeyev, whose later career the verdict describes exactly, wrote *The Rout* at twenty-five and it is not a mediocrity's novel either. The pattern is instructive rather than embarrassing. Trotsky was writing in 1936 about a machine that was then at full power, and about writers he encountered as its ornaments — laureates, officials, names on lists. He was right about the machine. He was describing men by what the machine had made of them, at a moment when their best work was already ten or fifteen years behind them and had been produced before the machine existed. A tradition that can say this about its own founder's judgement is in better health than one that cannot.

Who is not on the jacket

The rear flap of this 1974 printing states that the novel "is based on real events, the heroic march of the Taman Army commanded by E. I. Kovtyukh across the North Caucasus to

join the main Red Army forces (summer 1918)".

Yepifan Iovich Kovtyukh was born in 1890. He was a staff captain in the tsar's army, went over to the Bolsheviks, commanded the Taman Army on the march this novel celebrates, rose to komkor in the Red Army, and commanded the 11th Rifle Corps until June 1936. He was arrested by the NKVD on 10 August 1937. His name was placed on an execution list signed by Stalin on 26 July 1938, and he was shot three days later, on 29 July. He was rehabilitated on 23 February 1956.

Read that beside the scene at the cooking fire. The sailors' jeer at the novel's hero — Who's your Kozhukh? An officer! — names precisely the category that the state would liquidate twenty years later: the former tsarist officers who had carried the Red Army through the civil war. In 1918 Serafimovich put the accusation in the mouths of anarchists and let his commander stand. In 1938 the accusation, in a new grammar, was made by the state and the commander did not stand.

And the novel went on being a classic the whole time. It was a classic while Kovtyukh was a corps commander; it was a classic while he was in the Lubyanka; it was a classic in the years when his name could not be printed; it was a classic after 1956, when it could be printed again; and in 1974 the house put it on the jacket in capital letters as the guarantee of the book's authenticity, with no indication that the man had been shot by the government that was selling you the book.

That is what the apparatus around a Soviet novel consists of. Not footnotes. A sentence of praise with a hole in the middle of it, where a name is doing the work of a certificate and the reader is not told what became of the man who earned it.

What is living

The march, and the honesty about it.

Serafimovich set out to show a mass of small proprietors turning into something that could win, and he refused every shortcut available to him: the mass begins as a rabble, its discipline is imposed by a commander it fears, its enemies on the left are allowed to state their case, and what it arrives at is not understanding but conviction it cannot articulate. There is no positive hero in the doctrinal sense, no Party organisation directing the action, and no promise at the end beyond a hundred thousand people asleep and a blue night.

Read it for that, and read the author's essay first. Then read the

jacket again, and notice that of the two men named on it — the writer and the commander — the state killed one and canonised the other, and told the foreign reader about neither.