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Critical Introductions to the Reissued Classics

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XXXIX

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MARXISM

Selected Articles and Speeches

The 1984 selection printed the verdict on the Workers' Opposition and not the case. This expanded edition restores the pamphlet complete, and her 1923 essay on love in a new translation. With a new critical introduction.

Alexandra Kollontai

Publisher's Introduction

Alexandra Kollontai was the only woman in the first Bolshevik government, the first woman in modern history to head a diplomatic mission, and the most persistent argument inside the Russian revolutionary movement that the emancipation of women was a material question or it was nothing. She was born into the nobility in 1872 and died in Moscow in 1952, having outlived almost everyone she began with. The core of this book is the collection Progress Publishers issued in 1984, in an English translation by Cynthia Carlile, and it is worth having for what it preserves. It is also, in the particular shape the 1984 editors gave it, a document of its own moment as much as of 1917. This edition keeps that collection intact and adds to it, and the reasons for the additions are the best way into what the original selection was doing.

Take the strengths first, because they are real and they are concentrated in one place. The heart of the 1984 book is the anti-war writing of 1912 to 1917, and that material is first-rank. When the Second International collapsed in August 1914 and its great parties voted the war credits, Kollontai was among the minority who did not bend. The pieces from those years, written in exile and in the teeth of the collapse, ask the question that separated the internationalists from everyone else: not whether the war was regrettable, but who had made it and who was being asked to die in it. The 1915 essay on why the German proletariat kept silent in the July days is the sharpest of them, because it refuses the comfortable answer. She had spent the pre-war decade in the international women's socialist conferences, from Stuttgart in 1907 to Copenhagen in 1910, and she understood better than most what had just been lost. Set beside that material, the account of Lenin at Smolny in October 1917 and the early work on maternity protection give the collection a spine: theory, insurrection, and then the unglamorous legislative business of making the revolution mean something in a maternity ward.

Her central argument runs through all of it and has worn well. Kollontai held that women's subordination was rooted in property, in the private household and in the unpaid labour performed there, and that no amount of legal equality would touch it until that labour was socialised and women were drawn into public production and public life on their own account. She argued this against liberal suffragists, whose gains she thought would stop at the boundaries of their own class, and she argued it inside her own party against men who thought the whole subject a distraction. It is worth being precise about what she was and was not. She was not a feminist in the sense the word later acquired, and she would have rejected the label; the women of her tendency called themselves socialists and communists and defined themselves sharply against bourgeois feminism. The body she came to lead was a department of the Party Secretariat, founded in 1919 under Inessa Armand, accountable to the Party and not to the women it organised. Reading her as a forerunner of a later movement flatters everyone and explains nothing.

Now the shape the 1984 editors chose. Their contents run densely from 1907 to 1921, and then something happens: a single piece from 1927, two from 1946, and nothing else. The years from 1922 to 1926 are absent altogether. Those are precisely the years in which Kollontai wrote the work on sexual morality, love and the family that made her famous and then made her notorious. A reader coming to that volume for the most widely discussed thing she ever wrote would not have found it, or any indication that it existed.

The handling of the Workers' Opposition was subtler and more revealing, because it was not a silence. In 1921 Kollontai was the most prominent spokesman of the opposition that argued the unions, not the state apparatus, should manage industry, and she put the case in a pamphlet written for the Tenth Congress of the Party. The chronology at the back of the 1984 book records all of that. It records Lenin's criticism at the congress, names her pamphlet, describes her position as anti-party, and notes that afterwards she reconsidered it and gave up the argument. What that volume did not contain was

one word of the pamphlet itself, or of the speech she made defending the platform at the Third Congress of the Communist International that summer. The reader was handed the verdict and the recantation, and denied the case. That is a more effective way of closing a question than leaving it out, because it leaves no gap for the reader to notice.

So this edition supplies both missing things. The Workers' Opposition in Russia is printed here complete, in the English translation published by the Industrial Workers of the World in Chicago in 1921 — a contemporary rendering, made while the argument was still live and before anyone had decided how the episode was to be remembered. And Make Way for Winged Eros, her 1923 letter to working youth, appears in a new English translation prepared for this edition from the Russian text. Readers can now do the thing the 1984 apparatus made difficult: read the case and judge it, rather than receive the judgement.

A word about translations, because it bears on what a reader should go on to read. The standard English Kollontai is Alix Holt's Selected Writings, first published by Allison & Busby in 1977, and it is a genuinely fine piece of work — wide in its selection, scrupulous in its apparatus, and the book that made most of this material available in English at all. Holt's Winged Eros is hers, and it stays hers; our translation here is independent of it and makes no claim to improve on it. Anyone who wants Kollontai in depth should go to Holt, and this edition is better thought of as a companion to that volume than a substitute for it.

The framing of the 1984 collection does its own work at the front. The editorial introduction by I. Dazhina presents her as an impassioned opponent of war and a champion of peace and of female emancipation, and credits her diplomatic career of the 1920s to the 1940s with a major contribution to detente. Detente is a word from the vocabulary of the 1970s and 1980s, not of the 1930s, and its appearance there is the sound of a publishing programme reaching back for an ancestor. The Kollontai assembled in those pages is a Soviet peace campaigner before the term existed, which is to say a figure designed to be useful at the moment of printing. She was an opponent of war, genuinely and at cost. She was also a good deal else, and the else had been trimmed.

One absence deserves naming because the 1984 contents made room for it. Kollontai led the Party's women's department from 1920. It was abolished in January 1930, in a reorganisation justified on the ground that the woman question in the Soviet Union had been solved. That volume printed her writing from 1946. It had room to mention what had happened in 1930 to the institution she had run, and it did not; the word by which that body is universally known appears nowhere in its pages. A reader would not learn from it that the department had ever been shut down, still less on what grounds.

Which brings us to the honest part, and it concerns Kollontai herself rather than her editors. Of the leaders of the Workers' Opposition, she is the one who lived. Alexander Shlyapnikov, her closest political ally in that fight, was shot in 1937; she was abroad, in an embassy, and she did not speak. She had made her peace after 1921 and she kept it for thirty years, and the peace is audible in the last items in this collection. The 1946 piece on the Soviet woman as a full and equal citizen of her country was written a decade after abortion had been recriminalised and two years after the family legislation of 1944 had rebuilt much of the private household she had spent her life arguing should be dissolved. It is not a dishonest article. It is the article of someone who had long since decided what she would not say. The tradition this edition comes from has no appetite for condemning from a distance a woman who watched her comrades shot and calculated that silence was the price of continuing to be useful. But the calculation was made, this book contains its product, and a reader is entitled to know that the voice of 1946 is not the voice of 1915 speaking from a later address.

Read the volume, then, as three things at once. The anti-war writing is the work of a serious internationalist at the moment the international collapsed, and it does not need anyone's permission to be read. The early Soviet material is a first-hand record of a government trying, however briefly, to legislate the material conditions of women's lives rather than merely proclaim their equality. And the two pieces restored here are the ones the 1984 edition could not accommodate: the argument she lost and was made to disown, and the essay on love and the new morality that her own party came to treat as an embarrassment. Around the original selection stood a monument to a safe Kollontai, the peace campaigner and loyal comrade who saw her error and corrected it. The woman who wrote the pamphlet, and the woman who wrote about Eros, are both here now.

FICTION

Ordeal, Book Two: Nineteen Eighteen

The same translation and the same silence, ten years on: a novel of 1918 that names Lenin fifteen times, Stalin once and Trotsky never, still in print in 1975. With a new critical introduction.

Alexei Tolstoi

Introduction to the 1975 Edition

Here is how this novel describes the creation of the Red Army in the autumn of 1918. Read it once for what it says, and then read it again for what is missing.

> *...mobilized the staunchest Communists of Moscow, Petrograd and Ivanovo-Voznesensk, and dispatched them to the army. They travelled by train towards the fronts, breaking down any sabotage, both deliberate and unintentional, which they came across on the line. The stern regime of terror was established in the army, too. Disorganized and wilting detachments were transformed into regiments subordinated to the will of the Revolutionary Military Council. Valour and prowess became the order of the day. Cowardice was regarded as tantamount to treason. The Red front took the offensive. One sharp blow accounted for Kazan, and soon after, Samara fell. The White detachments fled in panic before the Red Terror. At Tsaritsyn, where Stalin was on the Revolutionary Military Council of the Tenth Army, a vast and bloody battle was going on against the White Cossack army of Ataman Krasnov, who had the aid and connivance of German headquarters....*

Everything in that paragraph is true. Communists were mobilised from the cities and sent to the fronts. They did travel by train. A regime of terror was established in the army, and cowardice was treated as treason. Kazan did fall to a sharp blow in September 1918, and it was the turning point of the civil war. The Revolutionary Military Council did impose its will on detachments that had no discipline and no officers.

The Revolutionary Military Council had a chairman. He was the man who assembled the Communists, who lived on the train, who restored the death penalty in the army, who stood at Sviyazhsk through August and September and took Kazan back. His name was Leon Trotsky and it does not occur in this book.

We counted. In a novel of a hundred and twenty-eight thousand words about the year 1918, Lenin is named fifteen times, Stalin once — in the sentence above — and Trotsky not once. The figures are identical in the 1965 printing.

That sentence about Tsaritsyn is doing a precise job. The paragraph describes Trotsky's work at length and attributes it to an institution: things are done by "the Revolutionary Military Council", in the passive, by a will without a person. Then, immediately, a name is supplied — and it is the name of the man who was a member of a different Council, of the Tenth Army, at a subsidiary front. Kazan happens to no one. Tsaritsyn happens to Stalin.

The edition, and why the dates matter

Alexei Tolstoy wrote this book in 1927 and 1928.

Those are not neutral years. In November 1927 Trotsky was expelled from the Communist Party. In January 1928 he was deported to Alma-Ata. In 1929 he was expelled from the Soviet Union altogether. The erasure in this novel is not a later retouching by a Soviet editor: it is contemporaneous with the event, performed by the novelist himself, in the months when it was being decided what the civil war had consisted of.

Tolstoy had returned from emigration in 1923. The Sisters, the first book of this trilogy, was finished in Paris in August 1921 and is an émigré's novel. This second book is the first written inside, and the change is not only political but formal: where Book One observes a society and declines to explain it, Book Two supplies the explanations, and this paragraph is one of them.

The volume in your hands is the Progress Soviet Authors Library printing of 1975, translated — like the rest of the trilogy — by Ivy and Tatiana Litvinov. A 1965 Progress printing of the same translation is also reissued in this series. On the question above they are identical, which is worth stating plainly: the removal of Trotsky from the civil war survived the Twentieth Congress, survived the removal of

Stalin's body from the Mausoleum, and was still in print in 1975.

What the novel is

Nineteen Eighteen takes the four people of The Sisters and throws them across a continent coming apart.

Dasha is in Petrograd, then adrift; Katya is in the Ukraine under German occupation; Telegin is with the Reds; Roshchin, the officer who told Katya on the last page of Book One that revolutions calm down, is with the Whites. Husbands and sisters spend the book missing one another by a hundred miles. Dasha is named two hundred and eighty-two times, Katya a hundred and seventy-two, Roshchin a hundred and fifty-eight, Telegin a hundred and fourteen — the balance has shifted from Book One, and Roshchin's rise in the count is the measure of what interests Tolstoy now, which is a decent man on the wrong side.

The best writing is in the Ukraine. Makhno is named forty-nine times and Denikin eighty-two; the Germans occupy, the atamans raid, the villages arm, and nobody's authority extends past the next set of railway sidings. Tolstoy is very good on this — on the speed with which a countryside reverts, on peasants who have heard of Makhno as a rumour ("They say Nestor Ivanovich Makhno has a gang of twenty-five daredevils who raid the estates"), on the German command establishing order by requiring the village street to be swept on Saturday nights.

That detail is the whole occupation in one line. An empire arrives, and what it produces is a regulation about sweeping.

The plot at the centre, which is an assassination

The reason Lenin is named fifteen times is not that he appears. It is that he is a target.

The spine of this novel is Dasha's recruitment, in Moscow, by a counter-revolutionary conspiracy that intends to kill him. It is handled with great coolness. A young man in pince-nez edges up to her bench in a public garden, glances round, and opens:

> *"Did you spend the night in the Metropole?" ... "Good! I've got you a room. You can move in, this evening. Not a syllable to Zhirov! Now to business! Do you know Lenin by sight?"*

She does not. He takes a bundle of photographs out of his pocket and stuffs them into her handbag. Then he takes her hands, which are lying lifelessly in her lap, gives them a shake, and delivers the argument:

> *"This is how matters stand.... Bolshevism is Lenin. Get that? We may crush the Red Army, but so long as Lenin is in the Kremlin there can never be victory for us. Is that clear? He's a theoretician, he's will incarnate — the greatest danger for the whole world, not just for us.... Think it over and tell me definitely: are you, or are you not, ready and willing?"*

And Tolstoy gives Dasha the best line in the trilogy, which is only two words and a stage direction:

> *"To kill him?" asked Dasha, watching a half-naked infant which was staggering about bow-legged.*

A woman is asked to commit a political murder and her eyes are on a baby learning to walk. No novelist who was merely executing a commission writes that sentence.

What follows is a portrait of White ideology going to pieces, and it is the most valuable passage in the book after the one we began with. Dasha's host works through the standard indictment — the sealed carriages, Bolsheviks "hired at enormous sums", the deliberate organisation of famine, "thousands of imbeciles hanging on Lenin's lips" — and then, unable to stop, crosses over:

> *"He is the Antichrist! Remember the prophecies? Everything coincides. The north will go to war with the south. The iron horsemen of death will appear — that's the tanks.... An evil star will drop into the source of waters — that's the five-pointed star of the Bolsheviks.... And he addresses the multitude as Christ did, only in reverse..."*

Tolstoy had listened to this in Paris. He lets the man talk, does not interrupt him, and allows the political argument to slide into apocalypse under its own weight. It is a far more damaging account of the counter-revolution than any denunciation, because it is delivered in the speaker's own voice and he thinks he is winning.

What Tolstoy was willing to show

This matters for the charge we have made, so it needs stating in his favour.

Nineteen Eighteen is not a timid book about the Bolsheviks. It

says outright that "the stern regime of terror was established in the army" and that cowardice was treated as treason. It describes the Red Terror by name. And in one of its strongest episodes it puts on the page a Bolshevik military commissar, Broinitsky, who has come to the top after the taking of Rostov and rules by invoking Moscow:

> *"At the slightest word he shouts: 'Comrade Lenin knows my worth, I'll send a personal telegram to Comrade Lenin....' He's surrounded himself with the criminal element, who are continually carrying out requisitions and taking people out to be shot."*

He is unmasked in front of a hall: "Nobody gave you power in Rostov, your mandate is forged, your references to Moscow, not to speak of Comrade Lenin, are insolent lies."

A forged mandate, a criminal retinue, people taken out and shot, and Lenin's name used as the warrant — published in 1928. Whatever else Tolstoy was, he was not a man who could not bear to show the revolution's underside.

Which is exactly why the silence we began with cannot be explained as caution. A writer prepared to show terror, famine, a fraudulent commissar and an execution squad was not squeamish. The omission of one name from the account of the Red Army is not timidity in general. It is an operation on a particular man, performed in the particular year that man was expelled.

The apparatus

The 1975 jacket does not carry a critical foreword. It carries something more interesting: a panel headed "Writers about Alexei Tolstoi", with three endorsements.

Gorky, from a letter to Tolstoy:

> *I love your big, wise and jolly talent, and value it very highly. Yes, I do see it as a jolly talent, with a spark and a sharp little smile, but this quality comes third with me, as above all else your talent is simply a big, truly Russian talent, wise with Russian wisdom.*

Romain Rolland, praising the way Tolstoy moulds his characters in the world about them: "They form an inseparable part of the air, earth and light that surround and nurture them." And Theodore Dreiser, in one line: "Alexei Tolstoi bore the name of his great predecessor with honor."

Three things are going on there. The first is the deployment of foreign literary authority — a Frenchman and an American vouching for a Soviet writer to an English-language reader, which is what the Soviet Authors Library jacket was for. The second is Dreiser's sentence, which quietly settles the question of the name: this Tolstoy is not that Tolstoy, and the jacket would rather you thought about it in terms of honour than of relation.

The third is Gorky's, and it is the same note struck in the "About the Author" page of Book One. The talent is jolly, it has a spark, and above all — the phrase is repeated for emphasis — it is truly Russian, wise with Russian wisdom. Not a proletarian talent, not a revolutionary one. A national one. That is the register in which Alexei Tolstoy was received, promoted and finally canonised, and it is consistent from Gorky's private letter to the copy on a 1975 dust jacket.

What we owe the book, and what we do not

We are not going to pretend this is a bad novel, because it is not. The Ukrainian chapters are the best account in English fiction of what the civil war looked like from a cart, and Roshchin — a monarchist officer whom Tolstoy refuses to make contemptible, and whose journey is the moral spine of the book — could not have been written by a man who had never sat in a room with such people. Tolstoy had. He had been in Paris with them.

Nor do we say that Tolstoy was a liar who knew better. He may have. We have no way of knowing what a man thought in 1928 about a name he had decided not to write, and this series does not deal in imagined interior lives.

What we say is narrower and harder to answer. A novel published as history, by a house that presented it to foreign readers as the authoritative fictional record of the revolution, describes the founding of the Red Army in a paragraph from which the founder has been removed, and names instead the man whose reputation required building. That paragraph was written in the year of Trotsky's expulsion. It was still being printed in English, unaltered, forty-seven years later.

An introduction from this tradition cannot walk past that, and there is no need to be shrill about it. The paragraph is on the page. We have quoted it whole. A reader who knows who chaired the Revolutionary Military Council can see the shape of the hole, and a reader who does not has now been told.

Roshchin, and the last page

Book One ended with Vadim Roshchin holding Katya's hand on a Moscow street and telling her that "the years will pass, wars will die out, revolutions will calm down, and only one thing will be left — your kind, tender, loving heart." A man with a paste pail was putting up notices saying the revolution was in danger, and he looked at them both with hatred.

Nineteen Eighteen is the answer to that sentence, and the answer is no.

Roshchin joins the Whites. Tolstoy neither excuses him nor makes him a monster: he gives him his reasons, his disgust, his decency, and then puts him on a burial mound beside an officer called von Mecke, watching a railway trolley come out of a cutting with six men on it.

> *"Reds!" said von Mecke. "I thought so!" He turned his head to the left: "Squad!" Turning to the right he cried: "Make ready! Rapid fire at a moving object. Fire!" The air around the mound was rent with a crackling sound, as of starched calico being torn.*

Rapid fire at a moving object. The men on the trolley are an object. Roshchin, who believed that a loving heart would outlast the revolution, is lying next to the man giving that order, and Tolstoy leaves him there without comment.

And the novel ends by taking everything away. Telegin rides into Samara at the head of his regiment, past the monument to Alexander II "once more being hastily concealed with boards" — the city has changed hands so often that the statue's covering has become routine. He turns to the second house from the corner, and is on horseback, so he can see into the first-floor windows:

> *there was the walnut door, on the threshold of which Dasha had appeared, as in a dream, that time, and there the doctor's study, the bookshelves overturned and Mendeleyev's portrait on the wall, crooked, its glass smashed.... But where was Dasha? What had happened to her? There was no one to answer these questions.*
>
> *1928*

A smashed portrait of Mendeleyev, hanging crooked: the liberal, scientific, improving Russia of the Bulavin household, which produced both sisters, left broken on a wall and visible only from the saddle. The book closes on a question nobody can answer and a date.

It is a real ending, by a real novelist. Hold it in mind alongside the paragraph about Kazan, because both are the work of the same hand in the same year, and the distance between them is the subject of this introduction.

What is living

The Ukraine, the carts, the atamans and the sweeping of the street on Saturdays.

And the erasure itself, which is the most valuable thing in the book for our purposes, because it is an artefact rather than an argument. Histories can be refuted. This is a novel, and novels work by what they find worth mentioning. Tolstoy wrote a hundred and twenty-eight thousand words about 1918 and mentioned Kazan, the Revolutionary Military Council, the terror in the army, the mobilisation of Communists and the trains — every component of one man's work — and left out the man.

Read the paragraph on the fall of Kazan again when you reach it. It is the most eloquent silence in this series.

HISTORY

The End of the Third Reich

The Berlin campaign told by the general who took the city's surrender, with what the 1973 revision left out: Poland 1939, the Warsaw Rising, Majdanek's victims and the Soviet dead. With a new critical introduction.

V. I. Chuikov

Critical Introduction about the 1978 Edition

Shortly before four in the morning on 1 May 1945, General Hans Krebs, the last Chief of Staff of the German army, was shown into a hall with black pillars in a building in southern Berlin that served as a Soviet command post, and announced the news he had come to deliver. "You are the first foreigner to be told that on April 30 Hitler departed this world of his own will; he has committed suicide." The Soviet general facing him replied: "We know." It was a bluff, and the general admits it a few pages later: "I must confess that I knew nothing of Hitler's death at the time and had not expected the announcement from Krebs."

That general was Vasily Chuikov, and the scene is the best-known passage in this book. It is worth starting with because it shows both of the things the book is. It is a first-hand record, by the man in the room, of how the Third Reich ended, candid enough to confess its author's own bluff. And it is a book written by a man who knew exactly what to say and what not to say. Chuikov kept his composure in front of Krebs. He kept it, in a different sense, for the whole of this memoir.

The general and his book

Chuikov (1900–1982) was one of the outstanding Soviet commanders of the Second World War. He joined the Red Army in 1918 and commanded a regiment in the Civil War before he was twenty. In September 1942 he took over the 62nd Army in the ruins of Stalingrad and held the west bank of the Volga through the autumn. That was the battle that made his name, and the army, renamed the 8th Guards in 1943, stayed under his command all the way to Berlin. This book follows it from June 1944 to May 1945: from the Dniester to the Vistula, across Poland to the Oder, through the Seelow Heights into Berlin, and finally into the cellars where the German high command came to surrender. After the war Chuikov commanded the Soviet forces in Germany and headed the occupation administration until 1953. He was made a Marshal of the Soviet Union in 1955, ran the Soviet ground forces in the early 1960s and then civil defence. When he died he was buried, at his own request, on the Mamayev Kurgan, the hill above Stalingrad where his army had fought.

The book has a history of its own, and the date on the spine is not the date of the text. Chuikov first published an account of the Berlin campaign in the mid-1960s. It drew him into one of the few open quarrels among Soviet marshals. He argued that Berlin could have been taken in February 1945, and Zhukov, who had commanded the front, rejected the claim in print. That earlier version reached American readers in 1968 as The Fall of Berlin, published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. The text translated here is a later one. Its copyright page gives the Russian original as Konets tret'ego reikha (The End of the Third Reich), published by Sovetskaya Rossiya in 1973, and describes this Progress edition of 1978 as an "English translation of the revised Russian text". The revision went on after 1973: General Babadzhanyan, who commanded a tank corps in these pages, appears as "now Chief Marshal of the Armoured Forces", a rank he received in 1975. The reprint of 1985, which is the copy reproduced here, still calls him that, eight years after his death.

The revision shows. In the 1973 text the February question is still present, but it has been defused. Chuikov prints the front's own directive of 4 February, which ordered the armies "in a swift assault take Berlin on February 15-16". He then sets out the German threat from Pomerania, quotes Zhukov's memoirs on it at length, and ends: "The GHQ decided to smash the enemy group in Pomerania before undertaking a decisive assault on Berlin." The documents of the old argument are laid out, and the argument itself is gone. The decision belongs to "GHQ", the Supreme Command, which here, as throughout the book, has no named head. Stalin is mentioned in the book five times outside the word "Stalingrad". Four concern his wartime correspondence with Roosevelt and Churchill. The fifth comes from Krebs, who tells Chuikov that "there is only one leader who does not want to destroy Germany, and that is Stalin."

That is the frame for everything that follows. This is a Brezhnev-era book about the war, when the victory of 1945 had become the state's central story about itself, and a marshal's memoir was a public monument. Progress issued it in English for readers abroad as testimony from the victors. Much of it is exactly that. But a monument is built to be looked at from the front, and the book has sides it does not show.

1939: "whatever help was possible"

The book's account of the war's origins comes in a single passage, written as the Polish army formed in the Soviet Union goes into action alongside the 8th Guards in July 1944. It blames the Polish government of the 1930s for refusing to let the Red Army cross Poland to defend Czechoslovakia in 1938, and for fearing "the revolutionary working class of Poland" more than it feared Hitler. Then it reaches September 1939:

> *The nazi invasion of Poland in September 1939 appalled us. The Polish people were threatened with extermination. Only the Polish Communist Party which had been driven underground by the obscurantists and reactionaries refused to down arms and was determined to carry on the unequal struggle. The Soviet Union rendered the Poles whatever help was possible in the prevailing political situation in Europe.*

Three things are wrong with this. Each is checkable, and the author knew them all.

First, the Polish Communist Party was not in a position to carry on any struggle in September 1939, because it no longer existed. The Communist International had dissolved it in 1938, after most of its leaders living in the Soviet Union had been arrested and shot in Stalin's purges.

Second, the help the Soviet Union rendered the Poles in September 1939 was an invasion. On 17 September the Red Army crossed Poland's eastern frontier under the secret protocol of the Nazi–Soviet Pact, signed on the night of 23 August, which divided Poland between Germany and the USSR. The Pact is not named anywhere in the book. The words "non-aggression pact" appear exactly once, in a question Chuikov puts to two German officers: "Then why did Germany violate the non-aggression pact in 1941 and attack our peace-loving country which had threatened no one?"

Third, and this is what turns an evasion into something harder to forgive, Chuikov did not need to read about September 1939. He was there. He commanded the Soviet 4th Army in the invasion of eastern Poland. A few months later he commanded the 9th Army in the Soviet invasion of Finland, and the book mentions that war in passing as a source of useful experience: "the experience I had gained during the war against the White Finns in 1939 stood me in good stead." The man who writes that the Soviet Union gave the Poles "whatever help was possible" led one of the armies that crossed into Poland under the Pact.

It would be unfair to stop there. Part of Chuikov's charge against the prewar Polish government is true, and Marxist critics of Stalin have said so. Ernest Mandel's The Meaning of the Second World War (1986) agrees that the Polish regime's refusal to accept Soviet military assistance made the Allied military talks of summer 1939 "a farce". But Mandel draws the conclusion the book suppresses: "In these circumstances, Stalin preferred to ally himself with the likely victor rather than with the probable victim," and "By acting thus, he undoubtedly helped Hitler commence hostilities by invading Poland" (ch. 10, p. 100). Trotsky had said it on 25 September 1939, eight days after the Red Army crossed the frontier: "In order to gain the possibility of occupying Poland through a military alliance with Hitler, the Kremlin for a long time deceived and continues to deceive the masses in the USSR and in the whole world" ("The USSR in War", The New International, November 1939).

The day Warsaw rose

On the morning of 1 August 1944 the 8th Guards Army began crossing the Vistula at Magnuszew, about sixty kilometres south of Warsaw. That afternoon the Home Army, the Armia Krajowa, the underground army loyal to the Polish government in London, rose in Warsaw against the German garrison. The fighting lasted sixty-three days. The Germans crushed it, killed tens of thousands of civilians, deported the survivors and then dynamited the city street by street.

The Warsaw Rising does not appear in this book. There is no uprising, no insurgent, no Home Army. The book is not silent about Warsaw: the city is named twenty-three times. But every mention is military geography. In August 1944 the Soviet fighters cannot cover Chuikov's crossings because "they were in action at Warsaw". The Hermann Goering Panzer Division attacks the bridgehead after being "hastily transferred from the Warsaw area". Then, in the plan for the January 1945 offensive, comes this sentence: "The overall concept of the operation was to rout the enemy without, however,

condemning Warsaw and other Polish cities to destruction." By January 1945 there was very little of Warsaw left to condemn. It had been destroyed, after the Rising, in the months the Red Army spent on the Vistula.

Here the honest position is the double one, and Chuikov's own pages supply half of it. His bridgehead was fighting for its life in August 1944. He describes the German panzer counter-attacks of 5 and 6 August in detail, and his army had come five or six hundred kilometres since June. The Soviet offensive had real military limits. Mandel, no apologist for Stalin, grants exactly this: "the Wehrmacht assembled a still impressive force to counter both the Red Army's drive and the Warsaw insurrection." But he goes on: "And Stalin blocked all help to Warsaw, letting the Germans do the dirty work of liquidating the Armija Krajowa he would otherwise have had to do himself" (ch. 15, p. 144). The book will not let the reader weigh these two things, because it removes the event they are about.

What the book puts in Warsaw's place is politics of another kind. A few pages before the crossing it sets out at length the formation of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, the Moscow-sponsored body whose founding decree was "made public at Chelm on July 23", with its members, its manifesto and its condemnation of the London government. The Polish government that fills these pages is the one Moscow sponsored. The one whose army rose in Warsaw has been written out.

Majdanek and Lódz

In July 1944, on the outskirts of Lublin, Soviet troops captured the Majdanek camp. His account is one of the most emotional passages in the book, and the emotion is plainly real. He could not bring himself to visit it: "I just could not." And then: "Millions of human beings brutally murdered and burned in furnaces. Millions! Men, women, children—no one was spared."

The figure is the one the Soviet–Polish investigating commission announced in 1944. The Majdanek museum's own current estimate is about 78,000 dead, most of them Jews. Chuikov could not have known the later research, and the error in itself is no great charge against him. What he could have known, and what Soviet accounts of the camps consistently left out, is who the victims were. The word "Jews" occurs once in the whole book, six months later and far to the west, in the liberation of Lódz. There, in a paragraph about the sufferings of the Poles, "A narrow bridge was built across the main street for Jews to cross from one part of the ghetto to another, for they were banned from the streets." That is all. The book does not say that by the time the 8th Guards entered Lódz in January 1945 the ghetto had been emptied the previous August, its inmates sent to Chelmno and Auschwitz, and that only a few hundred people were found alive in it.

"Victors and not killers"

Majdanek leads Chuikov to a question he asks honestly: "Was there any force on earth that could stay the Soviet soldier's hand of vengeance when he entered nazi Germany?" His answer comes in two parts. First, he cites an order of the army's Chief Political Department of 19 July 1944, under which the German nation "was not to be held responsible for the crimes perpetrated by its nazi rulers". Then, as the army crosses the German frontier, he quotes an editorial from Red Star, the army newspaper, of 9 February 1945: "It is inadmissible to think that if, say, the two-legged nazi beasts publicly raped our women or went marauding and looting we should do the same in revenge." And then, in his own voice: "Victors and not killers were entering nazi Germany. The arrival of the Red Army spelled not only defeat for the Hitler regime, but also freedom for the German nation, one of the world's greatest."

This is not a silence. It is a claim, and it can be tested. As a description of what happened in eastern Germany in the spring of 1945 it is false. The mass rape of German women by Soviet soldiers, in East Prussia, in Silesia, in Pomerania and in Berlin itself, is one of the best-documented facts of the end of the war. Historians, beginning with Norman Naimark's The Russians in Germany (1995), put the number of victims in the hundreds of thousands, with some estimates approaching two million. The Soviet authorities knew. Lev Kopelev, a Red Army political officer who protested the violence in East Prussia, was arrested in April 1945 and eventually sentenced to ten years in the camps; among the charges was "bourgeois humanism". The editorial Chuikov quotes is evidence that the high command saw the problem, not that it was solved. Nor was the army's propaganda as consistent as the book implies. The writer Ilya Ehrenburg, whose name does not appear here, had spent the war telling Soviet soldiers that every German was a killer. Pravda publicly corrected him only on 14 April 1945, two days before the final offensive opened.

Here, too, the book has allies it would not have expected. The Fourth International statement "International Solidarity with the German Proletariat", published in January 1946, attacked the doctrine of German collective guilt in terms Chuikov

would have recognised. It named "Vansittart in England, Morgenthau in America, and Ehrenburg in Russia" as preaching "with equal hatred that the entire German people bear the guilt for Hitler's crimes". The principle Chuikov sets down, that the German nation was not to be held responsible for its rulers' crimes, was a right one. The book's fault is to present the principle as if it had been the practice.

And Chuikov's own pages contain a more truthful sentence than his conclusion. Watching the artillery preparation for the storming of central Berlin, he writes: "Thousands upon thousands of Germans were being killed simply because Hitler had put arms in their hands and sent them into the annihilating fire of our artillery." A soldier who could write that saw more than his book was allowed to say.

Hitler's body

The book's account of Hitler's end goes no further than Krebs. "Where is Hitler's body?" Chuikov asks, and Krebs answers: "In Berlin. Burned, according to his will. Today." The book then reflects that there are "no impartial witnesses" to the last days of the Reich, and that its leaders "Quite possibly … have taken the truth about the last days of the Third Reich to their graves."

The truth about one of them was in a Soviet file. In the first days of May 1945, Soviet military counter-intelligence found the burned remains in the Chancellery garden and identified them. Moscow kept the identification secret. Through the summer of 1945 Stalin let his allies, and the world, believe that Hitler might have escaped. The autopsy was eventually published in 1968, in the West, by the Soviet journalist Lev Bezymensky in The Death of Adolf Hitler. A memoir revised in 1973 by the marshal who had sat across the table from Krebs still treats the question as an open mystery.

What the book is worth

None of this makes The End of the Third Reich a book to throw away. Strip out what it cannot say and a great deal remains, most of it found nowhere else in English.

It is first a field commander's account of how a Soviet army actually fought its way from the Ukraine to Berlin in eleven months, written with a grip on terrain, logistics and timing that no official history matches. The crossing at Magnuszew, the defence of the bridgehead against two panzer divisions, the five-hundred-kilometre drive from the Vistula to the Oder, the month-long siege of the Poznan citadel, the storming of the Seelow Heights and the street fighting in Berlin are described by the man directing them, with his orders, his timings and his mistakes. Chuikov's real contribution to military history, the use of small mixed assault groups for fighting in cities, is visible here as practice. At Poznan "as we had done at Stalingrad, formed assault groups and detachments"; in Berlin the method was taken through a whole capital.

He is also more candid about failure than most Soviet memoirs of the period. Of Poznan he admits that "the assault of Poznan dragged out for a whole month instead of the several days allotted for the operation by the Front Command." Of Zhukov's famous searchlights at the opening of the Berlin offensive, meant to blind the German defenders, he says, with polite restraint, that "The searchlights did not penetrate this screen, and it was difficult for us to watch the battle." The candour has a limit. The book itemises German losses down to aircraft, "1,600,000 men, 6,700 panzers and over 12,000 aircraft" for the summer and autumn campaign of 1944, but gives no total for Soviet losses in any operation it describes. The Soviet General Staff's own figures, published only after the Soviet Union ended, put the Red Army's dead and missing in the three weeks of the Berlin operation at close to eighty thousand.

Above all, the chapters "Krebs' Visit" and "Berlin May Day" are a primary source of the first rank. They give, nearly in dialogue form, the negotiations of 1 May 1945, which Chuikov's aide and the writers Vsevolod Vishnevsky and Yevgeny Dolmatovsky "took down" as they happened: Krebs's attempt to win recognition for Hitler's successor government, the telephone calls to Zhukov, "Moscow's orders were to wait", and the surrender of General Weidling and the Berlin garrison the next morning. Historians of the fall of Berlin have drawn on them for half a century, and with reason.

The reply

Critics on the left did not need to wait for the archives to answer this book's account of what the Red Army brought to Eastern Europe. Writing in Fourth International in November 1946, Bert Cochran put it in one sentence: "the Red Army entered Eastern Europe as an executor of the counter-revolutionary politics of the Kremlin. It did not support the uprisings of the masses; it suppressed them." The Warsaw Rising was not a workers' rising, and Cochran's argument does not depend on pretending it was. But the logic Cochran described is the one that kept the Home Army out of Chuikov's pages and put the Lublin committee into them.

The book ends with Chuikov in his seventies, looking back on almost sixty years in uniform and on the war's lesson: "We have the moral right to sit in judgement over the aggressor and those who aided and abetted him." Within its own frame the sentence is true. The Soviet people bore the heaviest weight of the war against Nazism, and the soldiers of the 8th Guards Army paid for Berlin with their lives. But the frame leaves out September 1939, when the author's own army marched into Poland as Hitler's partner, and it leaves out what came after 1945. Chuikov himself governed Soviet-occupied Germany until the spring of 1953. Weeks after he left, the workers of East Berlin rose against the regime he had helped install, and Soviet tanks put them down. George Clarke, reviewing that June rising in Fourth International ("The June Days in Review"), noted that "the civilian Semionov replaced General Chuikov as head of the occupation command" just before it. The issue that carried his article is dated March–April 1953, but it was evidently printed months late, since it reviews the June events. The "freedom for the German nation" promised on the book's last pages turned out to mean something narrower.

This book is worth reading for what it records, and for what it will not record. The record is that of a brave and capable commander who was present at the end of the Third Reich and wrote down what he saw there. The silences belong to the state that published him: about the Pact, about Warsaw, about the women of Berlin, about the body in the Chancellery garden. Read the campaign for the truth it carries. Read the gaps for the shape of what had to be left out.

SOVIET SOCIETY

Socialist Democracy: Aspects of Theory

The case for the one-party state, made in 1972 by the official who later advised Gorbachev on political reform. It quotes Lenin on changing power by new elections, and leaves Prague 1968 to a footnote. With a new critical introduction.

G. Shahnazarov

Critical Introduction about the 1974 Edition

Halfway through its chapter on "The One-Party and Multi-Party Systems", this book quotes Lenin writing in the first weeks of Soviet power: "Soviet power has been won in Russia, and the transfer of government from one Soviet party to another is guaranteed without any revolution, simply by a decision of the Soviets, simply by new elections of deputies to the Soviets." The author prints the sentence with approval. It is meant to show that the Bolsheviks, though they held a majority, were generous to their rivals. A paragraph later the generosity is over. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the peasant party that shared the first Soviet government, are said to have had "no intention of co-operating loyally", and their entry into the government was "simply a trick to gain time for the organisation of a counter-revolutionary uprising". The result was "the elimination of the S-Rs and the formation of a one-party government." The rest of the book defends that government's descendant.

The two paragraphs together are a fair sample of Socialist Democracy: Aspects of Theory. It is a more intelligent and more candid book than most Soviet writing on the subject, and it quotes the evidence against its own conclusion more often than it seems to notice. Lenin's promise that power could pass from one soviet party to another by a vote of the soviets is the standard by which the one-party state it defends should be judged. The book supplies the standard and then declines to apply it.

The author and the date

Georgii Khosroevich Shakhnazarov (1924–2001), who signs himself here G. Shahnazarov, was born in Baku, trained as a lawyer, and worked through the 1950s for the Party's publishing house and then for the Prague-based journal Problems of Peace and Socialism, the theoretical review of the pro-Soviet communist parties. From 1964 he worked in the Central Committee apparatus, in the departments that handled relations with foreign communist parties. In 1980 the British political scientist Ronald J. Hill, writing in the British Journal of Political Science, could describe him as president of the Soviet political science association and deputy head of a department of the Central Committee. He was, that is, an intellectual of the apparatus, writing from inside it about the institutions he served.

The English text translates a book first published in Russian by Politizdat, the Party's political publishing house, in 1972 as Sotsialisticheskaya demokratiya (nekotorye voprosy teorii); Hill cites it under that title. Its latest references bear that date out. The newest events it cites are the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU in 1971, whose Central Committee report it quotes again and again, and a Central Committee decree of the same year on the district and town soviets. Nothing from 1972 or 1973 appears. This is an early-Brezhnev text, written in the years when "developed socialism" became the official description of Soviet society, when the economic reform of the mid-1960s was still being discussed as "current", and when the occupation of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 was three years old. Progress issued it in English in its "Socialism Today" series, for readers abroad.

The commission shows in the book's choice of opponents. Its targets are not only "bourgeois theoreticians" but "fellow-travellers and sympathisers", the "strong current of political thought" in the West "that approves of public ownership and the socialist economic system" but insists that the one-party system is "mainly to blame" for the absence of political freedom. It quotes, without comment, the French Communist Party's resolution that the party "has rejected the thesis that a single party is an essential condition for socialist revolution". The book is written for that audience: Western communists and sympathisers who wanted socialism with elections, and who had watched what happened in Prague.

The concession and the conclusion

The chapter on parties begins with a concession that a reader of earlier Soviet doctrine will find remarkable. "Neither in the works of the founders of the theory of scientific communism nor in documents of the international communist movement", the author writes, "is it anywhere stated that socialism precludes a plurality of parties." He goes further. Against the French sociologist Maurice Duverger, who argued that parties represent social strata rather than whole classes, he replies that Marxists "'recognised' long ago that parties may represent various strata of the same class. Indeed, it was they who discovered this principle."

In 1936 Stalin had told an American interviewer that "Where there are not several classes, there cannot be several parties, for a party is part of a class." Trotsky took that formula apart in chapter 10 of The Revolution Betrayed: "since a class has many 'parts' – some look forward and some back – one and the same class may create several parties." On the point of theory, Shakhnazarov has quietly come round to Trotsky's side of the argument and abandoned Stalin's. He keeps Stalin's conclusion. Parties may represent strata, socialism may in principle have several, but the one-party system has "tremendous advantages", especially "where such a system has already become a firmly-rooted political tradition". A tradition, in the Soviet case, that had been created by banning the other parties.

The banning is where the book's history thins out. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries appear only as tricksters; the Mensheviks "openly defected to the camp of the enemies of socialism". A footnote quotes Lenin admitting that "In relation to the petty-bourgeois democrats our slogan was one of agreement, but we were forced to resort to terror". What is missing is the record between 1918 and 1921, when Menshevik and SR deputies still sat in some soviets and the restrictions on them were tightened and relaxed with the course of the Civil War. Kronstadt is not mentioned at all, nor is the Tenth Congress's own setting: it met in March 1921 as the Kronstadt sailors rose, demanding new elections to the soviets and freedom for the left socialist parties. Trotsky's judgement, in the same chapter of The Revolution Betrayed, was that "The prohibition of opposition parties was a temporary measure dictated by conditions of civil war, blockade, intervention and famine", and that under Stalin "The prohibition of other parties, from being a temporary evil, has been erected into a principle." This book is the principle, restated in the language of the 1970s.

It even reaches for the same document. The book's evidence that the Party's leading role was "officially established" is the clause of the 1936 Constitution which makes the Communist Party "the leading nucleus of all the organisations of the working people, both public and state". Trotsky quoted that clause in 1936 and called it an "astoundingly candid formula", the one that "reveals the whole fictitiousness of the political role of those 'social organizations'". Here it is offered, unchanged, as the foundation of socialist democracy.

Czechoslovakia in a footnote

The book never names the Prague Spring, the reform movement of 1968 in Czechoslovakia, or the Warsaw Pact invasion that ended it. It is nevertheless present on the first pages. The Introduction warns that "Both 'Left'- and Right-wing opportunists have done serious damage to the cause of socialist construction in some countries of the world socialist system in the last few years by their gross distortions of the principle" of Party leadership. The "Left" means China, which the book discusses by name. The "Right" is left unnamed. It surfaces in a footnote listing the allied parties of Eastern Europe, where the author notes that in Czechoslovakia "counter-revolutionary elements tried to oppose these parties to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, by attaching to them, to begin with, the role of an official opposition. These attempts failed."

They failed because the armies of the Warsaw Pact crossed the border in August 1968. The book cannot say so. It can say, in its chapter on Party and government, that discussion between ruling parties is "of a friendly nature" and "on no account to be regarded as attempts to interfere in the affairs of this or that Party and encroach on its sovereign right to resolve all its own problems independently". And it can close with a thesis that "the basic laws and trends of development of socialist democracy are the same for all countries", which was precisely the doctrine invoked against the Czechoslovak reformers' claim to a model of their own. Here the silence is the finding. A book about socialist democracy, written three years after the most important attempt to democratise a ruling communist party, refers to it once, in a footnote, as counter-revolution.

Democratic centralism and the ban on factions

The chapter on "Democracy within the Party" is the book at its most revealing. It opens well, with Marx on the need for a party to "subject its own past activity to criticism", and with a 1920 resolution calling for "Broader criticism of both local and central Party institutions". Then it reaches 1921. The Tenth Congress, the author says, "forbade the formation of factions",

and he defends the ban as a permanent principle: a faction "is itself an infringement" of majority rule, and "Faction, far from being consonant with intra-Party democracy, is directly hostile to it."

Then comes a sentence that deserves to be read slowly. "The decisions of the 10th Party Congress were not in fact adhered to by the factionalists, who merely paid lip service to them while in practice continuing their splitting action and opposition to the Party line more fierce than ever. This was naturally resisted by the Party, and Stalin's role in the organisation of such resistance increased his authority tremendously." The book adds that "it would be naive to suggest that this was the only reason for the appearance of the personality cult", but "There is no denying, however, that the anti-Party methods of action adopted by the opposition indirectly stimulated it."

The factionalists are not named. They are the Left Opposition of 1923 and after, Trotsky and his allies among them, along with the Workers' Opposition before them. Most were later expelled, imprisoned or shot. Here they are made partly responsible for the cult of the man who had them killed. This is the furthest the book goes towards the Terror. Elsewhere it allows that censorship, after 1930, had a "negative influence" that "made itself increasingly felt and the detrimental effect on Soviet society was considerable", and it speaks of "the restoration of socialist legality". The purges, the camps and the trials do not appear.

The same chapter then quotes, as proof that the Party guarded against abuse of the ban, a resolution warning that "the leading Party bodies must obey the voice of the broad Party masses, not regard every criticism as a manifestation of faction and thereby drive conscientious, disciplined Party members onto the path of isolation and faction." The book dates this only to "shortly after the 10th Congress". It is in fact the Central Committee's "New Course" resolution of December 1923, adopted under the pressure of the Opposition. Trotsky quoted the same sentence that month in "Bureaucratism and Factional Groups", one of the articles later collected as The New Course, insisting that "the phrase which we have just underlined is only a textual extract from the resolution of the Central Committee". He was using it against the apparatus that was already ignoring it. Ernest Mandel, in Trotsky as Alternative (Verso, 1995), describes what the majority did next: "They affirmed the need for a 'new course' and more party democracy. But at the same time they started a campaign against Trotsky and the other representatives of the opposition, which they first accused of 'factionalism'". Shakhnazarov quotes the promise the Opposition won and blames the Opposition for the regime that broke it.

Trotsky's account of the ban, in chapter 5 of The Revolution Betrayed, is the opposite of the book's. The Tenth Congress acted "in the days of the Kronstadt revolt", and "This forbidding of factions was again regarded as an exceptional measure to be abandoned at the first serious improvement in the situation." In his view, "The present doctrine that Bolshevism does not tolerate factions is a myth of epoch decline." The historical record supports Trotsky on the emergency character of the measure. The book does not consider the possibility.

The chapter's treatment of leadership elections makes the same move on a smaller scale. It argues against "compulsory 'rotation in office'", on the ground that a party free to choose its leaders need not be forced to change them. It notes approvingly that the 23rd Congress in 1966 amended the Party Rules "to ensure that with the constant influx of new blood and change and renewal of the leading cadres, continuity and reasonable stability are maintained". The argument assumes that the Party collective is "free to choose its leaders as it sees fit". The book does not show that it was.

Turning the criteria homeward

The book's best pages state the standards of a democracy clearly. In its chapter on public participation it quotes Lenin from 1918 at length: "The masses must have the right to choose responsible leaders for themselves. They must have the right to replace them, the right to know and check each smallest step of their activity. They must have the right to put forward any worker without exception for administrative functions." It quotes The State and Revolution on reducing state officials to "responsible, revocable, modestly paid 'foremen and accountants'", functions "stripped of every shadow of privilege". It insists, in its chapter on Party and government, that Party organisations must not usurp the work of the soviets, and that when they do "they are acting in an unconstitutional manner."

The test this series applies to every such volume is simple. A Soviet book may admit that individuals erred. What it may not do is let its own categories turn on its own institutions. Shakhnazarov's book passes the first part and fails the second. It concedes a good deal of error: "dogmatists" who equate leadership with command, "callous officials, bureaucrats and boors", Party committees that interfere in the soviets, critics silenced by officials who take criticism "as a personal insult".

What it never does is apply Lenin's criteria to the system that chose the Party's own leaders, the ministers and the factory directors.

That system had a name, which the book never uses: the nomenklatura, the Party's list of posts that could be filled only with its approval and of the people approved to fill them. The book describes it in other words. "Party guidance also involves the Party playing a major part in the selection and deployment of leading cadres." The Party "develops the principles underlying the mechanism of selection and appointment of cadres", and Party organisations "reserve the indisputable right to recommend" candidates. The Communist Party "forms the government in socialist society", the author writes, "Like any other party elected by an absolute majority of the electorate". He does not mention that in Soviet elections there was one candidate in each constituency. By Lenin's standard, the right of the masses to choose, replace and check their leaders, the system fails at every point. By the book's own standard it is never examined.

The handling of The State and Revolution shows how the gap is managed. Lenin's text, as the book quotes it, says of revocable, modestly paid officials: "This is our proletarian task, this is what we can and must start with in accomplishing the proletarian revolution." The book's gloss moves the programme into the distant future: "What he is saying is that in communist society their fulfilment will not involve any privileges." Trotsky read the same passage the opposite way in chapter 3 of The Revolution Betrayed: "You must not think that Lenin was talking about the problems of a decade. No, this was the first step with which 'we should and must begin upon achieving a proletarian revolution.'" Trotsky was right about what the words say. Lenin said "start with". The book quotes him saying it, and then postpones it to the end of history.

The chapter on participation follows the same pattern. It divides administration into ten stages and asks where the public may take part. Public control is welcome at the stages of "stating the problem", "decision-making", routine control and "assessing the results". It is excluded from organisation, which "is the 'holy of holies' of administration and therefore not easily subjected to any form of interference", and from the choice of "people to be entrusted with carrying it out". The public may comment on the problem and grade the result. It may not choose who does the work.

Technocracy and the missing stratum

The chapter on "Democracy and Technocracy" is the book's most interesting piece of argument, and its weakest point. Against Western theorists of a coming rule by managers and experts, it makes a sound case about capitalism: the specialist administrators "only receive a tiny fraction of these profits", the owners of capital keep control, and the managers who fail are "off-loaded". It is when the argument turns to the Soviet Union that it falters. The book dismisses Milovan Djilas's "new class" thesis with three arguments: property relations have not changed, the goals of the revolution have not been abandoned, and "one of the basic features of a ruling elite is its more or less stable composition. Yet it is common knowledge that in the socialist countries the leading cadres undergo constant renewal to a considerable extent."

That last claim sits badly with the earlier chapter, which argued against compulsory rotation in office and welcomed rule changes made for the sake of "continuity and reasonable stability". It sits badly with the book's own statistics too. The survey it cites from Sverdlovsk found that "the entry of our young people to the specialist ranks is so far still considerably higher from specialists' families." The figures on the worker and peasant origins of Party secretaries and ministers are real, and they matter. But they answer a question about recruitment. The question about a privileged stratum is a different one.

Trotsky put that question in 1936, and it is the question this book is built to avoid. He wrote in chapter 6 of The Revolution Betrayed: "In Soviet political literature you often meet with accusations of 'bureaucratism' as a bad custom of thought or method of work. (The accusation is always directed from above downward and is a method of self-defense on the part of the upper circles.) But what you cannot meet anywhere is an investigation of the bureaucracy as a ruling stratum – its numbers and structure, its flesh and blood, its privileges and appetites". Nearly four decades on, Shakhnazarov's book fits that description exactly. Its chapter on "The Guiding and Unifying Force" offers a careful scheme of the social strata of Soviet society, based on economic branch, profession, nationality, territory, and "sex, age, health". Position in the apparatus of power is not among them. When a Western writer lists "the upper cadre", "the middle cadre" and "the lower cadre" as classes in Soviet society, the book holds the list up for ridicule.

There is a real difference between Trotsky's position and Djilas's, and the book's arguments against Djilas do not touch it. Trotsky did not claim that the bureaucracy was a new owning class. He argued that it was a privileged stratum which had seized political power in a state whose property forms remained socialised, and that democracy could be restored

without a new social revolution. That is why, in the same book, his programme for the Soviet Union called for "a revival of freedom of Soviet parties, beginning with the party of Bolsheviks, and a resurrection of the trade unions." His Transitional Programme of 1938 put it more briefly: "Democratization of the soviets is impossible without legalization of soviet parties. The workers and peasants themselves by their own free vote will indicate what parties they recognize as soviet parties." Joseph Hansen, writing in the International Socialist Review in spring 1958, took up the question after Khrushchev's Secret Speech: "Shouldn't the one-party system in the Soviet Union – as Trotsky proposed more than twenty years ago – give way to democratic freedom for all Soviet parties?" That was the demand the book was written to refute, and it never states it.

Freedom and who decides

The last two chapters turn to individual freedom. The book's chapter "The Legend of the Free World" is an attack on Western claims, and much of it lands. It documents segregation in Washington, the McCarthy blacklists, the Tennessee law against teaching evolution, the press monopolies of Springer and the British "press barons", the gap between the productive capacity of the world and its hunger. These charges were true, and the book is right to make them.

The chapter that follows, "The Way and the Measure of Freedom", contains the book's most honest sentence. The author refuses to pretend that a restriction of freedom becomes freedom because it serves a good end. When the state deprives people of the opportunity to act as they see fit, "it is nevertheless a restriction of freedom in fact. It cannot be glossed over by any amount of arguments on the good of society, etc." He then poses the decisive question: "what criterion should be adopted as a basis for establishing restrictions to individual freedom, and who, and according to what procedure, should have the authority to decide that a restriction is necessary?"

He answers the first half. The criterion is anything that threatens "the pillars of the socialist system", including "hostile propaganda calling for the abolition of the socialist system" and "refusal to do military service". He never answers the second half. Who decides, and by what procedure, is the whole question of democracy, and the book drops it. In the same year this edition appeared in English, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was arrested and expelled from the Soviet Union. The book's only use of the word "dissidents" refers to the United States: "The persecution of 'dissidents' is something that is still going on today." It allows that Soviet science was once damaged by "hasty, unfounded judgments", "as happened at one stage with cybernetics and radiation genetics", without naming the campaign against genetics or the scientists who suffered from it.

Three years later the Fourth International took up exactly this question. Its United Secretariat published a set of theses, "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", in Inprecor (new series no. 10, 7 July 1977), as a draft for its next world congress. On the point of principle it agrees with Shakhnazarov's own concession: "In no way does the Marxist theory of the state entail the concept that a one-party system is a necessary precondition or feature of workers power, a workers state, or the dictatorship of the proletariat." Where he stops, it goes on. It quotes the same passage of The Revolution Betrayed on classes that "arrive at the solution of common problems no otherwise than through an inner struggle of tendencies, groups and parties", and draws the conclusion he would not: "Unless there is freedom to organize political groups, tendencies, and parties there can be no real socialist democracy." And it answers his unanswered question by showing why it cannot be answered his way. If only parties not "engaged in anti-socialist or anti-soviet propaganda and/or agitation" are to be legal, the theses ask, "how is one to determine the dividing line?" Their reply is that the choice lies between "workers democracy with the right of the masses to elect whomever they want" and "a decisive restriction of the political rights of the working class itself". The theses also demand what Shakhnazarov's chapter on Party and government half-wants: "Party and state-and still more party apparatus and state apparatus - remain strictly separate and distinct entities." On that point the reforming official and the Fourth International were closer than either would have liked to admit. The difference is that the theses saw that separation could not be achieved while one party held the monopoly of power.

What is worth keeping

None of this makes the book worthless, and it would be dishonest to read it only for its evasions. Within the limits it sets itself it argues for real changes, and some of its proposals are concrete. It argues that Party committees should stop running the soviets and the economic ministries, and quotes a 1971 Central Committee decree admitting "many cases" of "replacement and petty tutelage of the Soviets". It wants administrative information that is not secret to be available to

deputies and public organisations on request, and asks that the duty and the penalty for refusal be fixed in law. It wants the appointment of managers to "depend more on the opinion of the collective", and reports with approval the experimental election of school principals by their staff, appointment by open competition, and Soviet jurists' proposals for "a strictly collegiate procedure on all questions of appointments, sometimes through secret ballot". It admits that early Soviet censorship "also tended to restrict a healthy criticism of shortcomings and defects".

Even its defence of Western democratic forms is more generous than the genre usually allows. Competition between parties, it says, "prevents to some extent the development of such anti-democratic tendencies as the government usurping the functions of parliament, graft and corruption among leading officials and the higher echelons of the civil service". The reader is left to wonder what prevents them where there is no such competition.

These were not empty words from this author. They are the arguments of a reform-minded official pushing as far as the line allowed in 1972, and the line is visible on every page where he stops.

The adviser

The irony of the book lies in its author's later career. In March 1988 Mikhail Gorbachev took Shakhnazarov out of the Central Committee apparatus to serve as one of his personal aides, and he stayed at Gorbachev's side through the political reform of 1988–91 and into the Gorbachev Foundation afterwards. His memoir of those years, Tsena svobody (The Price of Freedom, 1993), presents Gorbachev's reform as seen by one of his aides. In March 1990 the Soviet constitution was amended to end the Communist Party's constitutional monopoly: Article 6, the successor to the 1936 clause this book quotes as its foundation, was rewritten, and the way was opened for other parties.

What part Shakhnazarov played in that particular decision is not established here, and this introduction does not claim one. But the distance between this book and the end of the regime it defended is the distance between two sentences he could have read in his own pages. One is his conclusion that "the one-party system is capable of serving as the instrument of social development and ensuring social progress at all stages of construction of the new society." The other is Lenin's promise, which he also quoted, that power in a soviet republic could pass from one party to another "simply by new elections of deputies to the Soviets". In 1974 the book chose the first. The case for the second had been made, long before, by the critics it would not name.

PHILOSOPHY

Dialectical Logic: Essays on Its History and Theory

The most original Soviet philosopher of his generation on logic from Spinoza to Hegel and Marx, and an unnamed demolition of the Short Course's textbook dialectics as a dead scheme. With a new critical introduction.

E. V. Ilyenkov

Critical Introduction about the 1977 Edition

Near the start of this book there is a sentence that every Soviet student of philosophy in 1974 would have recognised, without being told whose work it described. Dialectics, Evald Ilyenkov writes, can be turned into "a collection of extremely general statements about everything on earth and not about anything in particular (something of the sort of that 'everything in nature and society is interconnected', or that 'everything develops' and even 'through contradictions', and so on)." Understood like that, it "is tacked on to the real process of cognition in a purely formal way, through examples 'confirming' one and the same general proposition over and over again", and the result does not "deepen our understanding of either the general or the particular by a single jot, while dialectics is transformed into a dead scheme."

That is a fair description of the most widely printed text on dialectics ever published: the chapter "Dialectical and Historical Materialism" in the Short Course history of the Communist Party, issued under Stalin's name in 1938. It listed the "principal features" of the dialectical method (everything is connected, everything changes, quantity passes into quality, development proceeds through contradiction) and illustrated each with examples. For two decades it was the shape of philosophy in Soviet schools, and the shape outlived its author's disgrace. Ilyenkov does not mention it. He attributes the criticism to Lenin, who did indeed warn against reducing dialectics to "the sum-total of examples". But the target is plain, and the method of the whole book is in that move. It says what it has to say about Soviet philosophy without once naming Soviet philosophy.

The book and its author

Dialectical Logic: Essays on Its History and Theory appeared in Russian from Politizdat, the state publisher of political literature, in 1974. Progress issued this English version in 1977, translated by H. Campbell Creighton, who a decade later translated D. P. Gorsky's Generalisation and Cognition for the same house. The two books belong together, and a reader of this series has both. Gorsky headed the logic sector of the Institute of Philosophy; Ilyenkov was the Soviet philosopher most hostile to the idea that formal logic could be the science of thought. The question between them ran through Soviet philosophy for thirty years.

Ilyenkov (1924–1979) was the most original philosopher of his generation in the USSR, and the one who paid most for it. He went to the front as an artillery officer, came back to study philosophy at Moscow University, and in 1954–55, with his colleague Valentin Korovikov, put forward theses arguing that philosophy is the science of thought: of its forms and laws, not a catalogue of general truths about the universe. The theses were condemned and both men were removed from teaching at the university. Ilyenkov stayed at the Academy of Sciences' Institute of Philosophy, where the flap of this book still places him. His study of The Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete in Marx's "Capital" (written in the mid-1950s, published in cut form in 1960, and issued by Progress in English in 1982) and his 1962 encyclopaedia article on "the ideal" made him the centre of a school. He worked with the psychologist Alexander Meshcheryakov on the education of deaf-blind children at Zagorsk, a project that tested his account of how human minds are formed. In March 1979 he took his own life. The standard account in English is David Bakhurst's Consciousness and Revolution in Soviet Philosophy: From the Bolsheviks to Evald Ilyenkov (Cambridge University Press, 1991).

This book is the nearest he came to a systematic statement. It is eleven essays in two parts. The first six are a history of logic from Descartes to Hegel: what each thinker took "thought" to be, and why the answer kept escaping him. The last five set out Ilyenkov's own position. The history is not a detour. In his Introduction he says that the "historical" collisions are only "the factual material" through which "the clear outlines of the 'logic of Matter' gradually show through"; the shape of the argument is the argument.

What the book argues

The central claim is simple to state and hard to hold. Thought is not something that happens inside a skull. Ilyenkov defines it as "the ideal component of the real activity of social man transforming both external nature and himself by his labour." Logic, accordingly, is not a set of rules for manipulating sentences, but the science of the forms in which that activity reproduces its object, and those forms are the forms of the object itself. This is what he takes Lenin's notebooks on Hegel to mean when they say that dialectics, logic and theory of knowledge are "one and the same thing", and he insists on the strong version: "not 'unity' only, but precisely identity, full coincidence".

The essay on Spinoza is the heart of the book, and the most famous thing Ilyenkov wrote. Descartes had left thought and extension as two substances and then had to find God to join them. Spinoza, Ilyenkov argues, did not solve the problem so much as dissolve it: "the problem is insoluble only because it has been wrongly posed." Thought is not a second thing alongside the body; it is what a certain kind of body does. "Thinking is not the product of an action but the action itself, considered at the moment of its performance, just as walking, for example, is the mode of action of the legs". The essays that follow trace how Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel each recovered part of this insight and lost another part. Hegel comes closest, and is then turned on his head in the familiar way. But the reading of Hegel is close, patient and frequently admiring, which in the Soviet literature of the period was itself a position.

Two further claims carry most of the second half. The first is that contradiction is not a defect of thought to be eliminated but the form in which thought registers a real contradiction in its object. Ilyenkov is scathing about logicians who concede that things may be contradictory but insist that "The contradiction is in the object but must not be in the ideas about it", and who make the principle of non-contradiction "an absolute, formal criterion of truth, into an indisputable a priori canon". He calls that position "difficult to call other than eclectic". The second claim, in the essay on the general, is that the universal is not what a set of things have in common, the least common denominator, but the law of their connection, which may appear in no single case in pure form.

What holds and what does not

The strengths are real, and they are why this book still has readers. The history of philosophy is first-hand: Ilyenkov quotes Spinoza, Kant, Fichte and Hegel at length and reads them as people trying to solve a problem, not as specimens of a class position. The account of thought as social activity, objectified in tools, language and institutions, is one of the most fertile ideas Soviet Marxism produced; through Ilyenkov and the activity theory of the psychologists around Vygotsky and Leontyev it reached Western education and cognitive science. And the polemic against reducing dialectics to examples is a genuine contribution, not a gesture. It is one of the few serious answers the Soviet literature ever gave to the Short Course.

The weaknesses are of two kinds. The first is Ilyenkov's own. His hostility to formal and mathematical logic is a blind spot. In his Introduction, logic in "the hands of Neopositivists" becomes "a purely technical discipline, a description of systems of manipulations with the terms of language", and the book never engages the achievements of that discipline on their merits. A reader in 1977 might have expected some acknowledgement that the "technical discipline" had, within living memory, produced results about the limits of formal systems that bear directly on his own subject. There is none. Russell appears mainly as Spinoza's hostile historian; Wittgenstein and Carnap barely appear at all. The same contempt shapes his history of the Second International, where the economists Hilferding and Cunow fail "not because they lacked talent, but rather because of a pettybourgeois class orientation and a false epistemological position". That is the official verdict, delivered in the official vocabulary. Ilyenkov was capable of much better, and on his own territory he does better.

The second kind is the frame. The Introduction opens with the ritual assurance that "only Marxist-Leninist dialectics has the capacity to be the method of scientific understanding", and the book takes Lenin's notebooks as an authority to be interpreted rather than a set of reading notes to be argued with. Ilyenkov uses Lenin against the textbook, and uses him well. But the procedure of finding the correct reading of a canonical text and then arguing from it is the procedure his own Introduction warns against.

The test the book sets itself

That warning is the place to read this book against its circumstances. "When dialectics is converted into a simple tool for proving a previously accepted (or given) thesis," the Introduction says, "it becomes a sophistry only outwardly resembling dialectics, but empty of content." In the essay on Kant, Ilyenkov describes what a scientific dispute requires: the

warring parties must be "fully self-critical", and the pursuit of one's principle must not be "converted into paranoic stubbornness, into dogmatic blindness preventing the rational kernel in the theoretical opponent's statements from being seen." Then "Criticism of the opponent then becomes a means of perfecting one's own theory".

Every one of these sentences describes, and condemns, the official philosophy of the state that published them. Soviet diamat (dialectical materialism, as taught and examined) was a tool for proving previously accepted theses; that was its function. Its disputes were settled not by self-critical argument but by intervention from above, and the cost of being on the wrong side was not an unanswered review. Ilyenkov's own theses had been condemned in 1955 by exactly the procedure he describes here as the death of dialectics. The book never says so. It never names a Soviet philosopher, a Soviet controversy, a resolution or a Party document. The words Stalin, Zhdanov, CPSU and Congress do not occur in it; "Party", in the capitalised sense, not once. This is not timidity in the usual sense. It is the only way the argument could be printed: as a history of German idealism, with the present left for the reader to supply.

The reader of the time knew what was being supplied. In June 1947 Andrei Zhdanov, Secretary of the Central Committee, had told a conference of philosophers that in Soviet society the struggle between old and new took place, in Raya Dunayevskaya's translation, "in the form of criticism and self-criticism, which is the genuine motive force of our development", and that this was "a new dialectical law". Dunayevskaya, writing in Fourth International in September 1948 ("Stalinists Falsify Marxism Anew"), saw what the new law was for: "With the demand for a new dialectical law free of contradictions, they seek to make, not the masses, but the totalitarian bureaucracy ('the critics'), the driving force of history." A quarter of a century later Ilyenkov insisted, against the "eclectic" logicians, that contradiction is "the nucleus of dialectics" and that thought which forbids it falls ill from "a most rigorous metaphysical diet". He was writing about logic. He was also restoring the category that had been removed from Soviet philosophy because it was dangerous to the people who removed it.

The argument with formal logic

On the question that divides this book from Gorsky's, the anti-Stalinist Marxists who wrote on logic were closer to the moderate position Ilyenkov attacks than to Ilyenkov. Trotsky, in "The ABC of Materialist Dialectics" (December 1939), called dialectics "a science of the forms of our thinking insofar as it is not limited to the daily problems of life", and put the relation in an image: "The dialectic and formal logic bear a relationship similar to that between higher and lower mathematics." George Novack's lectures on logic, delivered in 1942 and revised by him in 1963 (An Introduction to the Logic of Marxism, 5th ed., New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), take the same line: the classical dialecticians "did not look upon formal logic as worthless", which remained "quite indispensable even now for correct thinking", but in the modern school "the purely formal side of logic becomes subordinated" to dialectics. That is roughly the settlement Soviet philosophy itself reached in the early 1950s, when formal logic was allowed a domain of its own as the logic of "elementary" thinking, beside dialectics.

Ilyenkov rejects the settlement, and the reader can judge between them with both books in hand. His case is stronger than the subordination formula allows: the formula leaves unanswered what formal rules are rules of, and his essays on Kant and Hegel show how that question drove German philosophy from one system to the next. Trotsky and Novack's case is stronger than Ilyenkov allows: formal and mathematical logic did not become a mere "technical discipline" in the century after Hegel, and a dialectics that refuses to learn from it pays for the refusal. What they share matters more than what divides them. All three treat dialectics as a method of thinking that has to prove itself in use, not as a list of truths to be illustrated. In "The Party in the Field of Art and Philosophy" (June 1933), Trotsky held that in philosophy the party occupies "a distinct militant position" and then drew the line Ilyenkov spent his life defending: this "least of all" means that "the party can act as if all questions have already been resolved for it, and that it has nothing to expect from the further development of scientific thought."

It should be said plainly that the anti-Stalinist press did not review this book. A search of the English Trotsky, the Bulletin of the Opposition, Fourth International from 1940 to 1956, Intercontinental Press, International Viewpoint and the collected Novack finds no mention of Ilyenkov at all. The critics of the Soviet state followed the moments when it broke into science, such as Lysenko and Zhdanov's conference, and not the philosophers who worked on inside the walls. That was a loss. In a philosopher who would not let thought be separated from activity, or contradiction from development, they had more of an ally than they knew.

Why read it now

The Conclusion is modest in a way official Soviet philosophy never was. Logic, Ilyenkov writes, should become "an equal collaborator with the other sciences, and not their servant, and not their supreme overseer, not a 'science of sciences'"; philosophical dialectics "no longer claims a monopoly realisation" of the scientific world outlook. That was a proposal to abolish the role his discipline had been given in the Soviet state: the arbiter that told biologists, linguists and physicists what their results were allowed to mean. It is also a fair statement of what a Marxist philosophy might be once the arbiter's chair is empty.

What lasts in this book is not its system, which he did not finish and said no single person could. It is the conviction that thinking is a form of human activity, social through and through, and that the logic of thought is to be found in what people make and do, not in a list of rules or a list of examples. Read the history for its learning, the essays on the ideal and on contradiction for their argument, and the silences for the shape of the room in which he wrote. He could describe the illness of a philosophy turned into a tool for proving what was already decided. He could not name the patient. The reader can.

SOVIET SOCIETY

How the National Question Was Solved in Soviet Central Asia: A Reply to Falsifiers

The official Soviet reply to Western historians of Central Asia, strong on literacy, health and women's rights and silent on collectivisation, the Kazakh famine, the purges and the Aral Sea. With a new critical introduction.

R. Tuzmukhamedov

Critical Introduction about the 1973 Edition

Near the end of this book, after a long run of figures for the five-year plan ending in 1975 (tons of raw cotton, hectares of newly irrigated land, kilowatt-hours from the dams on the Vakhsh), the author stops counting and addresses the world directly: "Friends, look and emulate their experience!" And then: "Enemies, envy and gasp with impotent fury!" A few pages later he gives the critics of Soviet policy in Central Asia an Eastern proverb to think about: "The dog barks, but the caravan continues on its way".

Both halves of the book are in those lines. One is a record of real and sometimes astonishing change in four republics (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenia and Kirghizia) that half a century earlier had been a tsarist colony and two feudal protectorates. The other is an indictment of everyone who had described that change in any other spirit. The record deserves a hearing. The indictment needs checking, and so do the things the book leaves out.

The spine says 1973, and the copyright page says Progress Publishers, Moscow, first printing 1973, translated from the Russian by David Fidlon. The text is a little older. Its latest sources are the directives of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (spring 1971), the 1970 census returns as published in Izvestia in April 1971, and Pravda of 22 February 1972, which carried the Central Committee's resolution on the coming fiftieth anniversary of the USSR. The first units of the Nurek hydroelectric station, due to start "at the end of 1972", are still in the future. So this is a jubilee book, written in 1971 and early 1972 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Union on 30 December 1972, at the moment when the Party was announcing that a "new historical community, the Soviet people" had taken shape. Its author, R. Tuzmukhamedov (the running heads spell it Tuzmuhamedov), writes of "the author's native Uzbekistan". He was an international lawyer, and it shows: a footnote credits him as co-compiler of a Moscow collection of documents on independent Africa (1965), and his arguments keep returning to treaties, to the 1936 Constitution and to the United Nations declaration of 1970 on friendly relations between states.

The subtitle, A Reply to Falsifiers, states the commission. Western writing on the Soviet nationalities had grown fast in the 1960s, peaking around the revolution's fiftieth anniversary in 1967, and the charge of "Soviet colonialism" was being put to the newly independent states of Asia and Africa. The book is aimed at those states. It compares Soviet Central Asia with India, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, African border wars and South African medical schools, and it presents the people's republics of Bukhara and Khorezm (1920-24) as "the first successful experiment in non-capitalist development", the doctrine Moscow was then offering to its allies in the Third World. There was also a second front. When the First Secretary of the Kirghiz party, quoted in the last chapter, lists the enemies of Soviet friendship, he includes the "Peking splitters". The two states had fought along their border in 1969, including on the Kazakh frontier, and as the Fourth International's press reported, Chinese propaganda was full of references to "oppressed nationalities" in Soviet Asia (A. Miles, "Sino-Soviet Conflict: Military Face-Off in Central Asia", Inprecor no. 5-6, 3 August 1974). This series also includes Devendra Kaushik's Central Asia in Modern Times (Progress, 1970), a more scholarly account of the same region by an Indian sympathiser. This one is the official reply.

Start with what holds up, because a good deal does.

The book's strongest chapter is the seventh, on the British intervention of 1918-19, and on the main point it is right. General Malleson's force crossed from Persia into Transcaspia in August 1918. On 19 August it signed an agreement with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik committee that had seized power in Ashkhabad, and the agreement made British

help conditional on the struggle against "Bolshevism". British and Indian troops fought the Red Army at Dushak and elsewhere and stayed for months after the armistice had removed their official reason for being there. Tuzmukhamedov makes the case from the participants' own words. Colonel Tod is quoted as writing that the aim was to "clear the Bolsheviks out of Turkestan", and F. M. Bailey, the intelligence officer working with the anti-Soviet underground in Tashkent, as regretting that had all the forces moved together, "there is in my mind no doubt that Bolshevism would have been crushed in Turkestan". That is a fair way to argue. The book is less safe where it pushes further. Its claim that the British command directly ordered the shooting of the twenty-six Baku commissars in September 1918 rests mainly on the testimony of the Ashkhabad leader Funtikov, given after the Soviet authorities had arrested him. The British officer it names, Reginald Teague-Jones, denied it to the end of his life, and the question is still disputed. British complicity in the climate that killed them is easy to show; a British order has never been proven.

The social record is the other thing to credit. The book's figures are official and cannot all be checked, but their direction is not in doubt. Before the revolution, by the book's account, "Only 1.5 per cent of the population could read and write" in Turkestan. By the late 1960s the four republics had universal schooling, universities, academies of sciences and more doctors per head than Britain. Its pages on women, who went from the ichkari (the women's quarters of the house) and the paranja (a heavy horsehair veil) to a third of the seats in the republican Supreme Soviets, describe a real change, though those Soviets had little power. Tuzmukhamedov also quotes his opponents fairly when they concede the point. Geoffrey Wheeler, the British specialist he attacks most often, wrote that the Muslims of Soviet Central Asia were "far ahead of those of any non-Soviet Muslim country". The book also reprints things worth having in print: the resolutions of the Tenth and Twelfth Party Congresses against "great-power chauvinism", and Lenin's note of 31 December 1922 insisting that the internationalism of "'great' nations, as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies)" must make up in practice for past oppression.

On this the book has an unexpected ally. In The Revolution Betrayed (1936, chapter 7, "Family, Youth and Culture"), Trotsky granted the same achievement without reservation: lessons in eighty languages, new alphabets, a press that reached nomad shepherds for the first time. "The bureaucracy is laying down a bridge for them to the elementary benefits of bourgeois, and in part even pre-bourgeois, culture." On the gains, Tuzmukhamedov and Trotsky agree. They differ over who decided what those gains would cost, and who was allowed to say so.

The trouble begins with the revolution itself. In the book's account, Russian workers in Turkestan were "the nucleus of the vanguard" and the local peoples joined them, and the setbacks were "unavoidable difficulties and errors, which were rectified as early as 1918, particularly on Lenin's instructions." That leaves out what the errors were. The Soviet government set up in Tashkent in November 1917 was made up almost entirely of Europeans, and the regional congress of soviets that set it up formally resolved that Muslims could not yet be admitted to the highest organs of power, in a country where Muslims were the great majority. The errors were not put right in 1918. The book's own epigraph comes from Lenin's letter "To the Communists of Turkestan" of November 1919, sent with a special commission from Moscow because colonial habits among the Russian communists there were still undermining Soviet power. The book's account of Kokand is worse. It says the autonomous government there "incited a carnage in Kokand in January and February" 1918, and that "Today the defenders of the 'Kokand Autonomy' allege that Soviet power was responsible for this." They allege it because it is true. In February 1918 Red Guards from Tashkent, joined by Armenian nationalist militia, stormed the old city of Kokand, burned it and killed thousands of its inhabitants. That massacre did much to start the basmachi movement (from a Turkic word for "raiders"), the armed rising that the book treats from start to finish as British-backed banditry and that, by its own chronology, was still fighting in the 1930s. The British did arm some basmachi leaders. The book never asks why so many dehkans (peasants) followed them.

The book does mention the great revolt of 1916, which is to its credit, in the chapter on Kirghizia: "The uprising was crushed with extraordinary brutality. Many Kirghizes were killed." But it gives the causes as "tsarism's arbitrary rule, extortionate taxes and confiscations of land." It does not mention what set the revolt off, the tsar's decree of June 1916 conscripting Central Asian men for labour behind the front. Nor does it mention that armed Russian settlers took part in the killing. The book's Russians in Turkestan are capitalists and officials on one side, workers and exiles on the other. The armed settler is missing.

Then come the silences, and they are where the book is most revealing, because the author had the facts, had every reason to use them, and did not.

Collectivisation does not appear. Neither does Stalin, whose name occurs only inside the title of a British book and the word "Stalingrad". Kazakhstan lies outside the four republics, but the book does not leave it alone: it uses Kazakh census returns to rebut the charge of Russification, it counts the Kazakhs living outside Central Asia, and it waves away a 1956 British book called Kazakh Exodus. Its own census figures show that the Kazakhs were under a third of their republic's population. That is the mark left by the famine of 1930-33, when forced collectivisation and the forced settlement of the nomads killed on the order of one and a half million Kazakhs, perhaps two in five of the nation. The estimates vary and are disputed, but the scale is not.

The purges are handled in a way that is almost cruel. In chapter 6 the author answers émigrés who complain that the memory of Faizulla Khojayev (the book spells him "Hojayev"), the first head of government of Soviet Uzbekistan, has been "relegated to oblivion". He replies by quoting Khojayev on the national delimitation of 1924 and calling him "a great son of the Uzbek people of the 20th century, a genuine patriot and fighter for their bright socialist future". He does not say that Khojayev was shot in March 1938, convicted as a traitor at the show trial of Bukharin and twenty others, together with Akmal Ikramov, the head of the Uzbek Communist Party, who is not named in the book at all. Khojayev's Selected Works, from which the book quotes, could appear in Tashkent in 1970 only because he had been rehabilitated in the 1960s. Bukharin himself does appear, once, as the man who was wrong when Lenin corrected him at the Eighth Party Congress. He was not rehabilitated at all. When his son, Yuri Larin, appealed in the late 1970s, he was told the verdict stood, and answered that co-defendants such as "Ikramov, and Khodzhaev" had already been cleared ("Report on Rejection of Bukharin's Rehabilitation", Intercontinental Press, vol. 16 no. 29, 24 July 1978). In chapter 5 the book lists Abdulla Qadiri and Abdurauf Fitrat among the writers "whose talents blossomed only after the October Socialist Revolution". Both were shot in Tashkent in October 1938. Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev, the Tatar Bolshevik who argued for a Muslim road to socialism, was arrested in 1923 and shot in 1940. Trotsky, in "Pages from Trotsky's Journal" (written December 1936 to January 1937), recalled Kamenev telling him in 1926 that this was "the first arrest of a prominent party member, carried out on Stalin's initiative." He appears only inside a quotation from the French scholar Alexandre Bennigsen, as a "notion" the West hopes to revive.

The book's sharpest charge against its critics is treason. Baymirza Hayit, the émigré historian who served in the Nazi-sponsored Turkestan Legion, is condemned in a sentence of its own: "He is a traitor." Khojayev was convicted of treason too, and the verdict was reversed. A book that wanted to use the word honestly would have to say how the Soviet state had come to use it on the first Soviet leader of Uzbekistan. This one quietly makes him a hero again and changes the subject. Among the poems it quotes is "These Fearful Times" by Zavki, written about the misrule of the khans:

> *Friends rise against friends. For what reason? Ah, better not ask! A father won't trust his own son, who once in his love used to bask.*

Tuzmukhamedov offers the lines as a picture of the old order. A reader in Tashkent in 1973 would have known another time they described.

The deportations are the plainest case. Chapter 7 holds the British guilty of "Murder, violence and even forcible deportation of people from Transcaspia to India", and a footnote counts the deported: sixty-five registered cases. The book never mentions the whole peoples that the Soviet state deported into Central Asia: the Koreans of the Far East in 1937, the Volga Germans in 1941, the Chechens and Ingush in February 1944, the Crimean Tatars in May 1944 and the Meskhetian Turks that November, sent by the hundred thousand to Kazakhstan, Kirghizia and Uzbekistan, where very many died in the first years. The book boasts that Tashkent has people of "more than 100 nationalities". It does not say how many of them got there. In 1965 a delegation of Soviet Germans, most of them still living in Kazakhstan, asked Anastas Mikoyan, then the Soviet head of state, to restore their Volga republic. He told them, in a transcript that reached the West through samizdat (typescripts copied by hand), that the virgin lands of Kazakhstan could not be farmed without them, and that "We cannot correct everything that has happened in the course of history" ("Soviet-Germans Confront Mikoyan", Intercontinental Press, vol. 10 no. 46, 18 December 1972). The book also praises Chirchik, near Tashkent, as "the chemical centre" built under the first five-year plans. Chirchik was one of the towns where Crimean Tatars deported to Uzbekistan had settled. A Supreme Soviet decree of 1967 had cleared them of the wartime charge of collaboration but had not let them go home. Pyotr Grigorenko, a former Soviet major general who took up their cause, described what happened on 21 April 1968 in a letter to the Soviet Prosecutor General that Intercontinental Press published: "in the municipal park of Chirchik, an attack was made by the Uzbek police ... upon a peaceful outing of Crimean Tatars, which was dedicated to the

birthday of the founder of the Soviet state" ("Grigorenko's Denunciation of the KGB", Intercontinental Press, vol. 7 no. 23, 16 June 1969). Grigorenko was himself arrested in Tashkent in May 1969, where he had gone to defend Crimean Tatar activists in court. In January 1970, two years before this book was finished, a Tashkent court sentenced the Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev and the Moscow teacher Ilya Gabai to three years each for "anti-Soviet slander" ("Gabai and Dzhemilev Sent to Prison Camp", Intercontinental Press, vol. 8 no. 6, 16 February 1970). Slander is the word Tuzmukhamedov uses on almost every page for what his opponents write. In the courts of his own republic it was a criminal charge. The Fourth International's Inprecor later told the whole story of the Crimean Tatar petitions, delegations and trials, and set it against "the liquidation of the national intelligentsias and non-Russian cadres" in the 1930s (G. Stepanovich, "USSR: Crimean Tatars: The Struggle of an Entire People", Inprecor no. 44, 19 February 1976). (That article dates the Crimean deportation to August 1944. It began on 18 May 1944.)

Cotton is where the book's own analysis turns against it. Its fifth chapter is a sharp account of the tsarist colonial economy: Turkestan made into a supplier of raw materials, its sown land turned over to cotton for the mills of central Russia, until "a land of cotton and silk did not have a single textile mill." Five chapters later the same structure is presented as an achievement. Uzbekistan, "Producing more than two-thirds of the national output of cotton," grew 4.5 million tons in 1970 and was to grow 4.9 million by 1975. The Kara-Kum Canal, already 850 kilometres long, "has turned Turkmenia into a major cotton-producing region". The book even explains why the colonial pattern survived: under the "socialist division of labour", "there remained and developed those sectors of the economy which appeared in the national outskirts during the colonial period". Every one of these schemes drew on the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya, the two rivers that feed the Aral Sea. The sea is never named. It had begun to shrink in the early 1960s, and within a generation it had lost most of its water, leaving salt flats and a ruined fishery. The only sign of trouble is a line from the five-year plan: "Further efforts will be made to desalinate and prevent the swamping of the irrigated lands". The damage was already on record; the cause went unnamed. The Uzbek leader quoted at length in chapter 11 on the brotherhood of the peoples is Sharaf Rashidov, First Secretary from 1959 to his death in 1983. In the later 1980s his administration was found to have been inflating cotton figures for years, and the "cotton affair" became the largest corruption case of the late Soviet period.

On Russification the book answers with the 1970 census: nearly every Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen and Kirghiz still gave the national language as their native tongue, and the share of each nation in its own republic was rising. Those figures are real, and they matter. But the book says nothing about language policy. A decree of 1938 made Russian a compulsory subject in every school, and in 1940 the Central Asian languages, which had been moved from Arabic script to Latin around 1928-30, were moved again, to Cyrillic. In 1936 Trotsky had praised the Latin alphabets as "more democratic". Four years later they were gone, and a generation of new readers had to learn its third script in a dozen years. The book also says nothing about how the conquest is described. Tuzmukhamedov calls tsarist Turkestan a colony, yet he writes of Central Asia "Prior to its accession to Russia" and "After joining Russia", the language of the doctrine, revived under Stalin, that conquest by the tsars had been historically progressive. Writing as Ernest Germain in 1949, Ernest Mandel called that doctrine "nothing more than a justification of the piratical wars carried on by Czarism against the neighboring peoples of the present USSR" ("Purge of Soviet Culture", Fourth International, vol. 10 no. 11, December 1949). And in the same months this book was being written, seventeen Latvian Communists sent abroad an open letter protesting against Russification in their own republic. It warned that once the local people were reduced to a minority, a republic could be abolished, as the Karelian republic had been: "A similar fate awaits the Kazakh SSR and Latvia." (The letter was printed in full in Intercontinental Press, vol. 10 no. 26, 3 July 1972.)

Are the critics fairly represented? Partly. Some of its targets were real instruments of the Cold War: Radio Liberty was funded by the CIA, as was officially acknowledged in 1971, and the Turkestan émigré committee had been created under Nazi patronage. But the method is guilt by association. The book's list of the "most notorious" anti-Soviet writers puts Alec Nove, a socialist-minded economist whose own study of the region with J. A. Newth (The Soviet Middle East: A Model for Development?, 1967) took Soviet development there seriously, next to Ann Sheehy, Edward Allworth and Richard Pipes. It then moves on to men it accuses of SS war crimes. The charges against the West German scholar Boris Meissner, that he was "a practised torturer and killer of Soviet citizens", rest on testimony at a Soviet military trial in Leningrad. The claim that the Central Asian Research Centre in London was run by British intelligence rests on a "summary" of a document that is never produced. Hayit's wartime biography, with its hundreds of personal killings, rests on a single footnote to a Moscow publication of 1970. The book's question is always "Who pays them and gives orders?", seldom whether what

they wrote was true. Where it does argue the evidence, over Kokand, it is wrong.

Last comes the test this series applies to every Soviet book on the nationalities: does the book's own standard ever apply at home? The standard here is the Bolshevik one, the right of nations to self-determination "up to and including secession", and the book recounts Lenin's defence of it against Bukharin in 1919 and invokes it against the Western powers in West Irian, British Honduras and Djibouti. It even quotes Lenin in November 1917: "We have nothing to fear, whatever the number of independent republics." Then it explains why the right can never be used at home. Secession from the USSR "would undoubtedly result in the seceding nation losing everything it has achieved." "Still more reactionary are the summons for the 'balkanisation' of the multinational Soviet Union". Self-determination by secession is progressive for colonies, but "it is reactionary for the peoples of the USSR, who are jointly building communist society." And finally: "the peoples of the Soviet Union are free to secede, but they do not wish to do so". There was no way to find out, and the jubilee year itself shows why. In late 1972 the party in Kirghizia was attacking two historians of the republic, K. Nurbekov and R. Turgunbekov, for nationalism. Intercontinental Press, drawing on the Christian Science Monitor, reported that Nurbekov "was accused of making a fetish of a people's right to self-determination and secession" (Cliff Conner, "Just a Question of History? Evidence of Nationalistic Unrest in Kirgizia", Intercontinental Press, vol. 11 no. 1, 15 January 1973). Elsewhere the price was higher: in 1961 the Ukrainian lawyer Levko Lukyanenko was sentenced to death, later commuted to fifteen years, for organising a group that planned to campaign for Ukraine's secession by the means the Constitution itself allowed.

The book admits error, as in the "errors" of 1918, but never applies its categories at home. Colonialism and great-power chauvinism are things the tsars did, and after 1918 they are things only the critics accuse Moscow of. Even Lenin's note of December 1922 is quoted without its target. As Trotsky wrote in The Revolution Betrayed (chapter 7), "It was upon the national question that Lenin intended to give his first battle to the bureaucracy, and especially to Stalin", over the bullying of the Georgian Communists. The same trimming shows in a quotation from Lenin's speech of March 1919 on the peoples "who to this day are under the influence of their mullahs", which the book cites in chapter 4 to show the need for patience. When a minority of the Fourth International's United Secretariat quoted the same passage in 1980, against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, they began it one sentence earlier: "We cannot deny [the right of self-determination] to a single one of the peoples living within the boundaries of the former Russian Empire" ("Draft Resolution on the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan", Intercontinental Press/Inprecor, vol. 18 no. 8, 3 March 1980). That sentence is the one that matters, and the book leaves it out.

The fullest answer was written thirty years earlier. In "Problem of the Ukraine" (22 April 1939, published in the American Socialist Appeal), Trotsky took the Constitution's right of secession at its word, and the objection that secession would weaken the Soviet Union head on: "What is so terrible about that? we reply. The fervid worship of state boundaries is alien to us." He also named the gap this book papers over. The right existed only on paper: "The slightest attempt to raise the question of an independent Ukraine openly would mean immediate execution on the charge of treason." In the 1970s execution had given way to the labour camp and the psychiatric hospital, but the gap was the same. Tuzmukhamedov's claim that a nation leaving the Union would lose everything could have been put to the peoples of Central Asia and tested by their answer. The book's point is that it must never be put. Trotsky's general verdict on the Soviet national question, from The Revolution Betrayed, still describes the book: "the will of the population of the Soviet Union in all its national divisions is now wholly replaced by the will of a bureaucracy which approaches both economy and culture from the point of view of convenience of administration".

One honest complication belongs at the end. When the peoples of Central Asia were finally asked, in the all-Union referendum of March 1991, well over ninety per cent of voters in each of the four republics voted to keep the Union. They did not leave it. It was dissolved around them that December. Tuzmukhamedov was not simply wrong that they had much to lose, and the independent states that followed have mostly been ruled by the same apparatus that ruled the Soviet republics, under new flags. What the book could not allow was the question itself. A "solution" that may not be tested is not a solution. Read it for the British in Transcaspia, for the figures on schools and doctors, for the poems of Zavki, Awaz and Aini, and as a careful record of what a Soviet Uzbek international lawyer was required to say in 1972. Then put back what it leaves out: the Kokand massacre, the Kazakh famine, Khojayev and Ikramov, Qadiri and Fitrat, the deported peoples and the park in Chirchik, and the shrinking sea at the end of the canals.

PHILOSOPHY

Generalisation and Cognition

A Soviet logician's study of how science generalises, which engages Carnap, Russell and Quine seriously but never turns its own tools on the society that published it. With a new critical introduction.

Dmitry Gorsky

Critical Introduction about the 1987 Edition

Very few books in this series carry quantifiers. Generalisation and Cognition is full of them: formulas for identity and equivalence, proofs set out from three axioms, a notation for "relevant" implication set against Bertrand Russell's notation for a law of nature, and a long passage on Lotfi Zadeh's fuzzy sets, in which a person can be tall "to an extent 0.3". It is a work of logic and the methodology of science by a specialist. D. P. Gorsky headed the department of dialectical materialism and the logic sector at the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences, as the jacket says. His Problems of Abstraction and the Formation of Concepts came out from the Academy's press in 1961, and Progress had published his Definition in English in 1981. A reader expecting a catechism will be surprised. So will a reader expecting a Soviet philosopher free to follow his own methods wherever they lead.

Start with the date, because the spine misleads. The English edition, translated by Campbell Creighton, is dated 1987, the high tide of glasnost. The Russian original was published by Mysl (the name means "Thought"; it was the state house for political and philosophical books) in 1985, the year Gorbachev took office. The text is older than either. Its references run thick through the 1970s and stop in 1982, with an article by Lazarev and Novoselov in a Nauka collection on materialist dialectics and a paper by N. Ts. Zhambaldagbaev in Filosofskie nauki (Philosophical Sciences) on models of explanation. The manuscript was finished in the last Brezhnev years or under Andropov. It contains no perestroika and no uskoreniye (acceleration); the only Party congress it cites is one Lenin addressed in 1919; it never names the CPSU. The Foreword says whom the book is for (natural scientists, sociologists, linguists, psychologists, "specialists in aesthetics and the creative intelligentsia") and states its polemical aim: the book "contains a critique of neopositivism on the problems of generalisation ... and demonstrates the illegitimacy of trying to make an absolute of logic." The commission was to carry Soviet logic of science into the international argument over Carnap, Reichenbach, Kuhn and Goodman, and to take part in it rather than preach at it.

To see why that matters, recall where Soviet logic had come from. For two decades after the purge of the Deborin school in 1931, formal logic in the USSR lived under suspicion: restored to the schools after the war, distrusted as a rival to dialectics, and in its mathematical form tainted by its origins in Russell, Carnap and the Vienna Circle. As late as the early 1950s Soviet reference works called cybernetics a reactionary pseudo-science. Gorsky names one of the people who kept the discipline alive: "The first attempts in the Soviet Union to employ definitions by abstraction outside mathematics were made by Yanovskaya in a work published in 1936." Sofya Yanovskaya, the Moscow mathematician who did more than anyone to keep mathematical logic teachable in the USSR, had applied the technique to Marx's concept of value. Gorsky takes up her programme half a century later.

Measured against that history, the book's dealings with Western thinkers are a real achievement. Carnap is cited to Meaning and Necessity and Philosophical Foundations of Physics by page. Reichenbach, Quine's "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", Stegmüller, Ackermann's 1956 paper in the Journal of Symbolic Logic, Polya, Cassirer and Husserl are all read in the original. Kuhn's Structure of Scientific Revolutions is quoted at length and with care. Gorsky sets out the thesis that rival theories are incommensurable, which he attributes to Feyerabend, Kuhn and Toulmin; grants that Newton's terms acquire new meanings inside relativity; and argues that the formulas recovered in the limiting case are extensionally identical with Newton's, so that something survives the revolution. His verdict reads like a seminar: "The arguments adduced by Kuhn to substantiate his thesis about the absence of continuity in the development of theories in a revolutionary way seem unconvincing to me." The answer is debatable; the register cannot be faulted. Nobody is called an idealist for holding a view.

The most interesting absence fits this pattern. Karl Popper is not named anywhere in the book, yet the chapter on how

generalisations change is built around the illustration Popper made famous: "all swans are white", refuted by the black swans of Australia. Gorsky's conclusion is his own, and good: "The refutation of general statements of a law character by contradictory examples thus means their concretisation (the introduction of differences into the identical, and the limiting of concepts) and not a cancelling out of the results of research." The old law is not thrown away; it is restricted to the domain where it holds (swans of the genus Cygnus), and a new class is drawn for the exception. That is an answer to naive falsificationism, given without naming the man it answers. Other Progress authors argued with Popper at length in these years (Lektorsky's Subject, Object, Cognition, issued in English in 1984, is one), so the silence cannot be put down to a ban. It is the author's choice, and an odd one in a chapter on Popper's own subject.

What is best in the book is technical, and it holds up. The account of "identification abstraction", which groups objects into a class by a shared property while remembering that each member could be individualised again, gets past the circle in Locke's theory of abstraction (you must already know which things are men before you can abstract the idea of man from them) by tying the formation of concepts to practical comparison with a chosen standard; the worked cases are the discoveries of oxygen and of X-rays, each identified first by how it was produced and only later by its properties. The formal treatment of "definitions by abstraction" builds the concept of value from the relation of exchangeability and is honest about its limits: a footnote concedes that exchange is not strictly transitive, because goods spoil while they wait, so the construction holds only under an idealisation that "can be justified by pragmatic considerations". The discussion of idealisation in Capital rests on one of Lenin's best methodological sentences, from a letter to Potresov of 1899: "But the impossibility of something being realised in a pure form is not a refutation." And on the hardest question in the logic of laws, how to tell a law of nature from an accidental truth such as "All my friend's cats are black", Gorsky tries relevant logic, finds that it solves some difficulties and creates others, and concludes that "it is impossible to solve this problem fully by purely formal means." That is roughly where the international discussion stood, honestly reported.

The weakest pages are the ones where the polemic outruns the evidence. The critique of neopositivism is serious when it deals with Carnap's own texts on analytic and synthetic statements. Elsewhere it falls into caricature. Gorsky attributes to "Neopositivists (for example, Carnap)" a recommendation to merge two inconsistent experimental results into one equation by adding a variable for the number of the experiment, and extends it to absurdity: "If a person is operated on on Wednesday he will recover, but if on Friday, he will die". No reference to Carnap is attached to this passage, though he is footnoted by page everywhere else. The one place where the opponent is made ridiculous is the one place he is not cited. The doctrine's ritual shows in smaller ways too. Hume gets a fair hearing and is then dismissed with a formula: dialectical materialism "does not make an absolute of the stability of its regularities and interactions. But there is no hint of scepticism in that." The second sentence states a conclusion; it does not argue for it.

One sentence does more than ritual, and it needs correcting. In the section on applying theories in practice, after pages of careful argument that a social theory must be fitted to the particular country and period, Gorsky writes that Lenin "creatively developed the Marxian theory of socialist revolution in new conditions and drew a conclusion about the possibility of victory of the socialist revolution in one, relatively backward capitalist country taken by itself." In a section where Lenin is footnoted to volume and page, this sentence has no footnote. It is the founding claim of the doctrine of socialism in one country, and it rests on an article of 1915 that Leon Trotsky examined line by line in The Third International After Lenin (1928). His point was textual: Lenin "wrote this passage not in application to Russia. He was speaking of Europe in contrast to Russia." In the same months, Trotsky showed, Lenin was writing that Russia's coming revolution would be democratic, while the conditions for socialist revolution had matured in Western Europe. The official reading carried a statement about one field of objects to another without justification. Gorsky's third chapter has a name for that move, extrapolation, and he says it gives results close to the truth only when the connections between the two domains are known. By his own rule, the sentence fails.

That brings us to the test this series applies to every Soviet volume. Could the book's own categories be turned on the society that produced it? This book has unusually sharp categories, and every one of them stops at the Soviet border.

Take the concept of "type", which Gorsky builds from fuzzy sets and offers as the characteristic concept of the social sciences. In a classical class every member belongs completely or not at all; in a type, members belong to different degrees around a central model. "The concept of countries that belong to one socio-economic formation or another is a concept of type," he writes. Greece and Rome are the models of the slave-owning formation, and "Other states and countries could

be included in this formation only to a certain extent." It is a genuinely useful idea, and the obvious next question goes unasked: to what degree did the USSR belong to the type "socialist society"? Nor does the book notice that the question had been answered, in nearly these terms, half a century earlier. In chapter 9 of The Revolution Betrayed (1936), Trotsky declined to file the Soviet Union under any finished category. He called it "a contradictory society halfway between capitalism and socialism", and anticipated the objection: "Doctrinaires will doubtless not be satisfied with this hypothetical definition. They would like categorical formulae: yes – yes, and no – no." What Gorsky describes as graded membership in a social type, Trotsky had practised as political analysis, in the one place Gorsky leaves the method unused.

The same holds for the book's other rules. "When applying a social theory in practice we renew and develop it, as soon as the object studied itself alters and develops." Gorsky's example is Lenin's theory of imperialism; no comparable renewal is offered for the stage the Soviet Union itself had reached, sixty-five years after the revolution. "The point is that what we discard may subsequently prove essential to explain the essence of the matter." What Soviet social science discarded above all was the bureaucracy as an object of study. On that question, Trotsky wrote in chapter 6 of the same book, "the Soviet statisticians, economists and publicists preserve, as we have said, an especially concentrated silence." Gorsky's statistical examples concern electric razors and the proportion of men on a collective farm. His example of a constructively defined class is the electorate, cut off at age 18, and he pauses to note that "many Soviet youths who had not reached 18 during the Civil War and the Great Patriotic War performed heroic deeds for the Motherland". He does not pause to note that until 1989 that electorate was offered one candidate per seat. His first methodological rule forbids generalising from parameters irrelevant to the essence of the matter, because "Irrelevant techniques of generalisation free workers from causal explanations of the phenomena studied". It is a good rule, and no one writing under Soviet conditions in 1982 could have turned it on Soviet society.

None of this charges Gorsky with failing to write a different book. The logic sector of the Institute of Philosophy was not a place from which anyone could publish an analysis of the Soviet state. The finding is narrower: the tools are general, the examples are chosen, and the choice marks out exactly what could not be discussed. Gorsky quotes Lenin approvingly, from "Our Programme" (1899): "We do not regard Marx's theory as something completed and inviolable". Inside the sciences, this book lives up to that sentence. Turned on Soviet society, it does not.

The final section, on individualisation and generalisation in fiction, is where the book comes closest to the state's aesthetic doctrine and where it moves most clearly away from it. The phrase "socialist realism" does not occur. Gorsky's subject is the classic Soviet problem of the "typical" character, and he treats it with real independence. He distinguishes typification, in which the general shows through a fully individual character (Pechorin, Raskolnikov, Anna Karenina), from "artistic idealisation", in which the general is brought forward and the individual simplified, and among his examples of the second are Mayakovsky, Brecht and Bulgakov's The Master and Margarita. He defends Kafka, whose world he describes exactly: "Poorly organised life, and bureaucratic morals grow here to a prodigious scale and are converted into a real phantasmagoria." He corrects Lukács, who had held that "where there is no realism and typification the artistic image disintegrates", and quotes with approval the remark that "Only in some cases does art conceal its conventionality, in others it flaunts it." Against the doctrine of the 1930s, which made realism compulsory and modernism decadent, this is a considerable loosening.

The older doctrine survives in the definitions. Artistic idealisation works "by eliminating everything from them that does not conform to the writer's ideas, aspirations, and ideals, and at the same time by adding to them what does correspond to them", which is an accurate account, offered neutrally as technique, of how the positive hero of official Soviet fiction was manufactured. A work succeeds when it meets "high ideological-artistic criteria". And "the typicalness of the persons, doings, and events described in an artistic work is determined first and foremost by the author's plan". In science the essential is fixed by the object; in art, on this account, the typical is fixed by intention, so a writer could make typical whatever the plan required. Trotsky had described where that licence led in "Art and Politics in Our Epoch" (June 1938): the "socialist" character of official Soviet painting "apparently consists in representing, in the manner of pretentious photography, events which never took place." Gorsky's theory has room for great literature and for that kind of picture alike, and no way of telling them apart. Kafka is credited with seeing bureaucratic morals grow into nightmare; the book applies the word "bureaucratic" to nothing in the Soviet Union.

What did the wider anti-Stalinist left say on these questions? The honest report begins with a negative. The local corpora (the complete English Trotsky, the Fourth International run of

1940 to 1956, the collected Novack) contain no mention of Gorsky, Yanovskaya, Zadeh or Soviet formal logic as a discipline. That press followed Zhdanov's 1947 intervention in philosophy and the Lysenko affair closely; it did not follow the Soviet logicians.

On the logic itself, though, the two sides agree more than either would have expected. Trotsky's "The ABC of Materialist Dialectics" (December 1939) concerns the very problem that opens Gorsky's book, the limits of the law of identity. A pound of sugar, Trotsky wrote, is never equal to a pound of sugar, because "a more delicate scale always discloses a difference"; his answer was the machinist's idea of tolerance, which he said applies to concepts too. Gorsky makes the same point: Leibniz's strict identity applies only to the abstract objects of mathematics, while real objects are identified by "concrete identity" within a chosen interval, and his fence of 500 metres and 2 millimetres, truly described as 500 metres for practical purposes, is Trotsky's cone bearing in a Soviet setting. George Novack's lectures to members and sympathisers of the Socialist Workers Party, delivered in 1942 and published as he revised them in 1963 in An Introduction to the Logic of Marxism (5th ed., New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), go further. In Lecture II, "The Limitations of Formal Logic", the law of identity "gives correct results only within certain limits", set by the development of the object and "by the practical purpose in view". His example is the Hudson, plainly itself between Albany and New York, which "At its mouth beyond New York harbour ... loses its identity". A river with no sharp edge is just what Zadeh's fuzzy sets were invented to handle.

The difference lies in what each side did with the agreement. Novack treated formal logic as the logic of identity, contradiction and excluded middle, a "petrified shell" that dialectics had broken through, and in 1942, writing as William F. Warde in Fourth International (vol. 3 no. 6, June 1942), he called "mathematical rationalism, logical positivism" the "fashionable, pseudo-scientific costumes" of a relapse into reaction. Gorsky knows that formal logic had not stood still. Relevant logic, many-valued logic and fuzzy sets were attempts from inside formal logic to deal with exactly the limits the dialectical critique had pointed to, and he takes them seriously as tools. On this the Soviet logician has the better of the American philosopher: one was a specialist reading the technical literature, the other wrote popular expositions for a persecuted party. The story has its own irony. The first issue of Fourth International (vol. 1 no. 1, May 1940) carried "The Algebra of Revolution" by Jean van Heijenoort, Trotsky's former secretary, writing as J. Gerland: "Formal logic, only too often obliged to capitulate before reality, leaves the field open to mysticism." Within a decade van Heijenoort had left politics for mathematical logic, and his anthology From Frege to Gödel (1967) became a standard source for its history.

Where the two traditions part company is not over the logic at all. Novack, in Lecture I, made the law of identity do political work. He argued that the petty-bourgeois opposition in the SWP had gone wrong about the Soviet Union because "they couldn't correctly apply the law of identity in the process of the development of the Soviet Union". Trotsky ended his own lesson on tolerance with the same object: "Not a workers' state in general, but a given workers' state in a backward country in an imperialist encirclement". For both men the point of the logic was to classify the society they were fighting over. Gorsky's logic is more refined than theirs. It can classify gases, swans, nucleons and the slave-owning formation of antiquity, but in his hands it is never used to classify the Soviet Union.

So read this book as what it mostly is: a serious work on how concepts and laws are formed, by a logician who had read his opponents and could argue with them. Its chapters on abstraction, idealisation and the logic of laws can still teach a student something, and its section on fiction is more open than the official aesthetics of the previous generation allowed. Read it also for the line it would not cross. Its best sentence says that a refuted generalisation should be concretised, not abandoned. The generalisation the Soviet Union most needed to concretise was its claim to have built socialism, and that was the one generalisation this book could not examine.