

ventionist state and modernizing economy early in the twentieth century. This indeed, is the argument of Corinne Gaudin's recent work, *Ruling Peasants* (2007). Thus the question remains open: Village life had never been static, always subject to change in response to outside forces. But had a tipping point been reached? Had the moving equilibrium of the rural commune been fundamentally altered yet?

When it comes to his investigation of rural professionals (whom he numbers, rather problematically, at 65,000 to 70,000 in 1912), there is a presentist tinge to Gerasimov's argument. His heroes are clearly the professional agronomists who cast aside the "archetypal intelligentsia revolutionary ideology" (6) with a vision of a "pan-imperial" (23, 152) nation and of a universal civil society that was gradually displacing the state. In contrasting the educated discursive communities existing before and after 1905, he sets up a binary opposition between the traditional revolutionary intelligentsia with its archaic utopian visions and the new progressivist and technocratic professionals. It is a viewpoint commonly held in Russia today that the relentless and uncompromising utopian ideology of an oppositionist segment of the educated public ultimately had tragic consequences for Russia. In fact it can be argued that the vast majority of oppositionist intelligentsia were radical only because the tsarist regime left them little choice if they were to be public-minded, not because they were consumed by a utopian dream. Many were also fruitfully engaged in progressive, ameliorationist efforts in the *zemstvos*, cooperatives, and elsewhere, despite often feeling the heavy hand of the state. If in his depiction of technocratic professionals he creates too vague temporal boundaries, in the contrast with the "revolutionary intelligentsia" the taxonomic boundaries are far too rigid and, in my mind, create a caricature of the thousands of second-tier intellectuals who labored rationally, in difficult circumstances, for the betterment of Russia. While Gerasimov rightly points to examples of state-societal cooperation and interaction between a new generation of civil servants and professionals in the countryside, conflict, *proizvol*, and heavy-handed repression remained rife but are missing in this telling, both in the years preceding and during World War I. Judith Pallot's masterful examination of the implementation of Petr Stolypin's reforms after 1906 describes a conflict-ridden and convoluted relationship in the countryside between state, professionals, and peasants quite unlike the one drawn by Gerasimov (see Pallot, *Land Reform in Russia, 1906–1917*, 1999).

All reservations aside, *Modernism and Public Reform in Late Imperial Russia* engages boldly and insightfully with the vexed and overlapping topics of the culture of the Russian intelligentsia, the distinctive rise of the Russian professions, the integration of the many millions of Russian peasants into the larger society; writing local and empirewide history; bridging the gap between the pre- and postrevolutionary periods; joining the tools of cultural and social history in a single project, and assessing the viability of late imperial Russia on the eve of World War I.

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*Histoire de l'URSS*. By Andrea Graziosi. Nouvelle Clio: L'histoire et ses problèmes. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2010. lxxv, 559 pp. Index. Maps. €45.00, paper.

Andrea Graziosi's stated aim in *Histoire de l'URSS* is "to rethink Soviet history on the basis of the new documentation and new studies that have appeared since 1991" (v). In fact, Graziosi also aims at providing an account of the historiography of the field, both east and west, from the beginning to the end of Soviet history. His large book is divided into three parts. The first part is a 55-page bibliography. Part 2, "Nos Connaissances," is a 375-page narrative history of the Soviet Union that is entirely without footnotes or other references. Here Graziosi uses an innovative three-part periodization of Soviet history: 1914–1939, 1939–1964, and 1964–1991. One effect of this is to remove the Stalin era as an integral episode in Soviet history, tying Iosif Stalin more closely to Vladimir Lenin in one direction and to Leonid Brezhnev in the other.

Part 3, "Questions et Débats," consists of 142 pages devoted to various controversial topics such as "Léninisme, stalinisme et terreur," the role of ideology, agriculture, nationality issues, foreign policy, and "Les causes de l'effondrement." Closely tied to part 1, this section often reads like an enormous annotated bibliography. (The book's cross-referencing system is a bit clumsy. Graziosi mentions hundreds of authors in part 3, but if you want any information about their works, you have to turn to the index and find a page reference in roman numerals to the bibliography in part 1. Users of the book should also be aware that these roman numeral references are consistently two pages ahead of what they should be. Note also that cross-references in the text refer to chapters as "sections.")

If an overall interpretation emerges from the welter of detail, it seems to go something like this: On the one hand, the Soviet system was doomed from the start by an ideological "original sin" (410) that ensured that genuine reform was never more than a mirage. This original sin was already identified in 1920 by Ludwig von Mises, the Austrian economist who is mentioned more often than you might expect in a book on Soviet history. Von Mises argued that a nonmarket system cannot generate rational prices and therefore cannot allocate resources in even a minimally efficient fashion. On the other hand, contrary to von Mises's 1920 prediction, the Soviet Union did not collapse immediately but hung on for 74 years, and this unexpected survival needs to be explained. In fact, "the USSR never ceased to astonish" (xi) and the historian should be ready for surprises, for example, the long-term switch from murderous excitement to dead calm. While not particularly sympathetic to this framework, I found it to be flexible enough to allow Graziosi to escape our usual ideological pigeonholes. In particular, he brings out the role of an ideologically inspired "Soviet humanism" in motivating genuine if doomed efforts at reform.

There is no mistaking Graziosi's immense erudition and openness to all points of view. The passionate fascination with everything connected with Soviet history that wafts from these pages is quite engaging. Nevertheless, the narrative history left me somewhat cold. It consists almost entirely either of assertions that I am familiar with and agree with, assertions that I am familiar with and do not agree with, and (most frustratingly) assertions that are new to me but are necessarily left undeveloped here. I also came away with the impression that any actual "rethinking" has been more intensive in some subject areas than in others. For example, the political history of the pre-Stalin period seems to me still dominated here by arguments and stereotypes that have been around for a long time. The main value of Graziosi's narrative is perhaps the substantial one of documenting the Standard Story of Soviet history, circa 2010.

For those of us who enjoy reading annotated bibliographies (I am one), the final fourth of the book that is devoted to "questions et débats" can often be engrossing. In an opening section, Graziosi gives a whirlwind account of the entire course of the historiography of the Soviet Union. The format of the remaining chapters does not allow any real discussion of specific issues, but they do point the reader toward the basic works on a topic and put these works in useful relation to each other. No doubt these chapters will be more often consulted on particular topics than read straight through. All in all, *Histoire de l'URSS* is an ambitious work of synthesis by an extremely knowledgeable historian.

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***The Socialist Alternative to Bolshevik Russia: The Socialist Revolutionary Party, 1921–1939.*** By Elizabeth White. BASEES/Routledge Series on Russian and East European Studies, no. 68. London: Routledge, 2011. ix, 180 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. \$150.00, hard bound.

Elizabeth White's book explores the political and intellectual history of the small colony of exiled Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) in Prague after 1919. Among the SR members of the Russian community in Prague were Viktor Chernov, the principal theoretician of the SR party (PSR), and most of the members of the party's foreign delegation, including Marc