

book's strength is the painstaking detail with which the author has analyzed the passport system and the passport itself. Baiburin does not presume to have written an exhaustive history of the passport, but, in the Russian tradition of topic-based study, he appears to believe this is possible (xvi, 19). This approach, however, often leaves the author with insufficient room for analysis—both for interrogating his conclusions and for productively extending his investigation. Baiburin writes, for example, that citizens without passports were “unclean,” but this seems unnuanced, since collective farmers, the largest cohort of passportless citizens, were a celebrated “class.” Also, many readers may wish to have learned more about how Soviet identity documents relate to those elsewhere. The author gestures to the wider European context (15, 24, 36–37, 59) but does not include a sustained discussion. Indeed, no mention is made of the use of identity documents in other totalitarian states or in the colonial world.

A virtue of the book is the author's use of a non-narrative bureaucratic document to analyze self-perception, the starting point for which is the concept of identification. However, for Brubaker and Cooper, identification does not encompass the individual's sense of oneself. For this, they propose the term “self-understanding.” Baiburin's own approach to the subjective side of things is a bit opaque. In his introduction, he bundles the different approaches of Jochen Hellbeck and Oleg Kharkhordin without comment (14–15). Still, the book remains a valuable step toward further study of how identity documents shaped the Soviet self. How did these documents—not only passports but also employment books (*trudovye knizhki*) and other texts—influence the self-perceptions of Soviet citizens? Can connections be drawn between the authorial self as constructed in these documents and as fashioned in “freer” forms such as diaries and memoirs (beyond the faint echo or tight embrace of social and national categories)? And what of the work of history, written even in the post-Soviet period? Might a relationship exist between a modern state's effort to comprehensively categorize its population and a scholar's effort to exhaustively chronicle his topic? As we move further along the path that Baiburin has helped to identify—in fact, as we write histories of any kind—this question, it seems to me, deserves consideration.

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Spatial Revolution—Architecture and Planning in the Early Soviet Union. By Christina E. Crawford. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022. xv, 385 ppg. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Plates. Maps. \$35.00, hard bound. doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.325

This study analyzed the growth of three cities crucial to jump-starting the industrial potential of the fledgling Soviet state—Baku, 1920–1927, Magnitogorsk, 1929–1932, and Kharkiv, 1930–1932. Baku in Azerbaijan had immense oil reserves; Magnitogorsk in Russia was the model Soviet steel town; Kharkiv in the Ukraine built tractors and machines. Situated far away from Moscow, they showcased a country-wide network of state-supported industrial nodes. Eighty-seven new towns, planned to house some five million workers, were to be situated in the underpopulated Urals, Siberia, and the Soviet Far East.

The breakneck Soviet industrialization drive of the late 1920s and mid-1930s enacted Joseph Stalin's first two Five-Year Plans, echoing the analogous but much lower intensity developments abroad. Soviet planners visited English garden cities and industrial towns, housing developments in Weimar Germany, and American oil

towns. Foreign expertise helped the Soviets to unleash and develop their country's industrial potential.

The first oil well drilled in Baku in 1871 turned the shoreline settlement on the Caspian Sea into a chaotic, unhealthy boomtown. Its street patchwork grew from a medieval Islamic core surrounded by middle-sized Russian colonial settlements and a large-scale industrial grid built by czarist entrepreneurs. The restless, underpaid workers were crowded inside quarters that were plagued by cholera, typhus, and dysentery. In the mid-1920s Azneft, the Azerbaijan oil company, built workers' housing based on Garden city prototypes, soon augmented by two and three-story buildings. The 1927, Baku General Plan proposed a comprehensive, regional solution to replace the entire area's sprawling road network. Wide boulevards would weave through the city, linking it to the outlying industrial zones. Housing and industry received equal due. New roads connected the previously separated neighborhoods. Public institutions and services were equitably distributed. Parks and trees shaded the otherwise dusty city. Significantly, local planning officials, not the central state apparatus in Moscow, transformed Baku.

A 1918 competition announced the birth of Magnitogorsk, a plant intended to produce "all the steel that Russia might need" (51). The site, four days by train from Moscow, was a geological wonder—an iron ore mountain protruding from the steppe. The Civil War stalled the birth pangs of the Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Works until 1926. A mine was developed north of the mountain, a factory to its west, and a rail yard nestled in between. Workers settled down in dugouts, yurts, and shacks, waiting years for proper housing. The 1929 competition brief for Magnitogorsk outlined a model *sotsgorod* (socialist city) featuring an exemplary residential commune. Urbanists and disurbanists proposed alternative visions for the brief, while ideologues pronounced the traditional family's demise. Henceforth communes would raise children. Canteens would prepare meals, freeing parents from home-making chores for factory work. Ultimately, the competition results were disappointingly inconclusive. Except for the Kirov District, the entire site sidestepped master plans, and the competition became more of an intellectual exercise, prompting further theoretical discussions. Socialist theory generated for Magnitogorsk was applied in a new *sotsgorod* near Kharkiv.

Stalin's desperate need for foreign currency, obtained by selling grain, combined with his ruthless collectivization of Soviet agriculture underpinned the creation of the Kharkiv Tractor Factory and the attendant *sotsgorod*. In the 1920s, the Soviets imported most tractors from the United States. American architectural and industrial firms were then invited to design the factory complex and to transfer technological knowhow to the Soviets for building their own machines. Workers were housed in four-story and six-story, walk-up minimal living units lacking private kitchens, bathing facilities, and toilets. Canteens provided communal dining. Nurseries, kindergartens, and schools cared for the children. Survivors from the Kremlin-orchestrated horrific *Holodomor* in Ukraine were absorbed into the ranks of unskilled laborers constructing Kharkiv and other industrial centers.

During the fifteen years discussed, the Soviet state was hell-bent on multiplying industrial nodes throughout the countryside and transforming its citizens into model socialist workers. Baku, Magnitogorsk, and Kharkiv energized the immense ideological undertaking. In each case the city planners and builders encountered site specific problems that forced them to make hands-on, pragmatic decisions countering nebulous socialist theories. The study at hand contains a wealth of competition literature, master plans, photographs, and architectural drawings, augmenting the narrative explaining how each city erratically progressed to its completion. This exhaustive, clearly-conceptualized study is an invaluable and

permanent addition to the literature about the early Soviet Union's industrialization and urbanization.

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Internationalist Aesthetics: China and Early Soviet Culture. By Edward Tyerman. New York: Columbia University, 2022. xiv, 354 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$35.00, paper.
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China in the early Soviet cultural imagination is an extremely interesting case that sheds light on the evolution of the Soviet project, from the early anti-imperialist socialist internationalism to the Stalinist imperial project. China proved to be a litmus test of early Soviet perceptions and political intentions, revealing both the nature of Soviet messianism and the contradictions within Soviet internationalism that later led to its degeneration into Stalinist imperialism.

In his analysis, Tyerman reveals different aspects of what he defines as an “internationalist aesthetic.” This notion allows the author to connect the sphere of politics with the sphere of culture. Proceeding from the assumption that “cultural texts may provide imaginary resolutions to real contradictions,” the author coined the term “internationalist aesthetics” to define “this collective attempt to express and resolve the contradictions of internationalism through the production of culture” (5).

Tyerman's book is among a whole series of first-rate studies (by Katarina Clark and Michael David-Fox) that have focused on the culture of Soviet internationalism. But it examines not only international relations matters, but also broader issues of nation-building that are relevant to understanding the dynamics of “the national question” within the USSR, where the problems of colonialism, overcoming the imperial legacy, nationalism, and the construction of national cultures were very much at the core of political battles in the 1920s and 30s.

The author turns to the close reading of cultural production, the corpus of which is not particularly large. Most of it was produced by Sergei Tretyakov. He rightfully takes center stage in the book as a theorist of documentalism, as a writer, as a playwright, and as a cultural mediator. Among the texts under consideration are mainly biographies, travelogues, short stories, plays, documentaries, and the ballet *The Red Poppy* to music by Reinhold Gliere and a screenplay by Mikhail Kurilko. The author has managed, however, to avoid the complete fixation on the personality of Tretyakov. There are also Boris Pilniak, Sergei Eisenstein, and Vsevolod Meyerhold to name a few.

The book is richly documented. The author demonstrates a deep familiarity not only with the material but also with the context—critical literature and secondary sources; making extensive use of archival materials, he recreates the cultural environment, the whole network of interconnections that make up the fabric of culture. All this makes his analysis persuasive and insightful, and his arguments easy to grasp. The structure of the book also contributes to this. Each of the four chapters is devoted to a different medium. The first one deals with literature (fiction, travelogues, and biographies), the second with translating China onstage (plays and ballet), the third one with documentaries; and in the last and fourth, documentary and factualism.

The book combines textual analysis and insightful and sophisticated interpretation with comprehensive historical commentary. The author draws connections between aesthetics and politics. As for the “internationalist aesthetics” itself, it turns out to be an effective working tool, allowing the author to understand the very process