

educated Jews. On their own, Jewish doctors in Minsk organized to take care of Jewish *lishentsy* and the Jewish poor. A year later, the District Party Commission could not figure out who had given them permission.

The suppression of Jewish religious observance was spotty throughout the twenties, with a number of strange twists. A case in point is kosher meat. Despite propaganda against ritual slaughter, as late as 1928, 98 percent of the beef in Minsk was not only kosher but sold to the Red Army. Ritual slaughter was accompanied by a version of the *korobka*, the imperial kosher tax. Like its predecessor, the Soviet *korobka* was used for the needs of the community, which now included support for rabbis and clandestine religious education. Another oddity was circumcision, which continued to be practiced among party members. When found out and threatened with expulsion, young husbands tended to blame their wives and mothers-in-law. As Bemporad notes, this precisely replicates the opening of Isaak Babel's "Karl-Iankel"—making that writer more of a realist than is sometimes supposed.

In the late thirties everything unraveled. The label "Bundist" achieved the same effect as "Trotskyist" elsewhere. But the purges in Minsk were in one respect unlike purges elsewhere, because they took down the city's specifically Jewish leadership as well as its Jewish cultural elite, in anticipation of the repressions of 1948–53. In 1937 the previously lionized writers Izi Kharik and Moyshe Kulbak were executed, along with the ex-Bundist, ex-Evsetsiia secretary Osherovitsh. Following the war, Minsk could no longer be called a Jewish city—except, perhaps, as the site of the murder of Solomon Mikhoels. This book does great justice to its lost history.

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Faux coupables: Surveillance, aveux et procès en Ukraine soviétique (1924–1934).

L'exemple de M. Gruševskij et S. Efremov. By Alain Blum and Yuri Shapoval. Collections Mondes Russes et Est-Européens. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2012. 352 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. Tables. €29.00, paper.

The activity of the secret police in any country is one of the most difficult subjects to study. Because it is by definition secretive, its documents are often unavailable or destroyed. Not leaving documentary evidence behind is, after all, part and parcel of espionage. Nevertheless, recent access to the files of the secret police of some former communist countries, such as East Germany, Poland, and Lithuania, has proved enlightening. While the archival situation in Russia concerning the secret police under Iosif Stalin is depressingly bleak, that of Ukraine is far better. The kinds of documents used in the important work under review here are mostly off-limits in Russia. *Faux coupables* will be particularly useful to scholars of Russia unfamiliar with Ukrainian affairs.

Both Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi and Serhii Iefremov were well-known Ukrainian intellectuals in the 1920s. Both took part in Ukraine's political life as patriots during the upheaval following Russia's February revolution, with Hrushevs'kyi assuming the presidency of the first independent Ukrainian state in early 1918. Ultimately, he chose to emigrate abroad, only to return to Soviet Ukraine in 1924, while Iefremov chose to stay. Neither fully capitulated to the Bolshevik rule in the 1920s, although Hrushevs'kyi was far more accommodating and sometimes even subservient toward the Bolsheviks.

The Soviet government never trusted them and never stopped collecting infor-

mation on them and anyone close to them. This volume reveals the extent of police surveillance very well. In the ten years of work under discussion in the book, the police deployed at least thirty-nine informers for Hrushevs'kyi. As Alain Blum and Yuri Shapoval amply show, once one came under police suspicion, one's fate was, for the most part, sealed. As the authors state, the police meant to destroy any "anti-Soviet" organizing "before it even existed" (158). Blum and Shapoval examine how the police ultimately destroyed Hrushevs'kyi and Iefremov psychologically through terror (though they were not physically tortured while under arrest). In 1929 Iefremov was indicted as the leader of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (Spilka vyzvolennia Ukraïny, SVU), fabricated by the secret police, and died in the gulag in 1938. Hrushevs'kyi, who had at that time been spared, was arrested in 1931 and implicated in another Ukrainian nationalist group fabricated by the police. Sent to Moscow, he promised political compliance with the Soviet government, was released, and in 1934 died under somewhat mysterious circumstances. Twenty relevant and intriguing documents are reproduced in French in this book. Another some three hundred documents that could not be included in the book are supposed to be available on the Internet. Unfortunately, they could not be found on the website specified in the book (last access attempted in November 2013). Readers should be aware, however, that many of these documents (including Iefremov's diary) are in print in Ukrainian.

Ukraine specialists may have some reservations. More care could have been taken with the Ukrainian language. It is odd, for example, to see such well-known Ukrainians as Hrushevs'kyi rendered in French transliteration of Russian as "Gruševskij." Documents in Ukrainian were first translated into Russian and then into French. Many records, including those of the SVU affair, are written in Ukrainian. L. Ie. Bidnova, for instance, who was also implicated in the SVU affair, used Russian in her first police interrogation. When she understood that her interrogator spoke Ukrainian and was willing to let her speak Ukrainian, she switched to that language; otherwise, things would have been strange for an affair in which Ukrainian intellectuals were accused of Ukrainian nationalism.

One important matter not explicitly discussed in the book is the police use of provocateurs. The authors hint at it but do not examine it in any detail. This is probably the most secretive of all secret police activities, and documents are naturally difficult to access. Nevertheless, in analyzing the mechanism of Soviet repression, this is a matter of utmost significance. One wishes Blum and Shapoval had found a way to explicitly discuss this difficult issue.

These caveats aside, this is an excellent exposition of how individual lives were consciously destroyed in the Soviet Union, and it should be read widely.

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Gareth Jones: Eyewitness to the Holdomor. By Ray Gamache. Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2013. viii, 241 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Plates. \$84.50, hard bound.

A joke from the Soviet era common in the communist countries of eastern Europe, one of scores of such examples of humor that were part information and part commentary, goes like this:

A child tells his teacher, "I have a cat and she just had six kittens, and all of them are communists." The teacher is very pleased that her efforts at in-