

book relates to the Revolution of 1905, when the S.R.'s were confronted with a vastly expanded arena for revolutionary political activity. Perrie is less concerned to assess motives or condemn failures than Oliver Radkey, whose work deals only briefly with the behavior of S.R.'s before 1917; she focuses instead upon an analysis of the social composition of the S.R. Party and the peasant movement in 1905-7. Her investigations suggest that the largest share (45.6 percent) of S.R. Party members active in 1905 were workers and artisans. According to statistical material taken from the work of S. M. Dubrovskii and A. Shestakov, and from contemporary research of the Imperial Free Economic Society, the repartitional commune provided the organizational structure for most peasant attacks upon gentry property, while the active revolutionaries in the village tended to be "middle" peasants who neither hired labor nor hired themselves out to work for others. Although the research of the Imperial Free Economic Society is methodologically flawed, and further analysis of S.R. Party membership is needed, as it stands Perrie's evidence poses a striking challenge to conventional Marxist and non-Marxist assessments of the S.R. Party and the peasantry in 1905 and afterward. In the context established by her work, the stubborn but increasingly defensive S.R. insistence upon communal peasant attitudes and a laboring poor, which included both "middle" peasants and hired hands, does not appear utopian. At the same time, Perrie's account makes it difficult to claim that in 1905-7 S.R.'s denied the capitalist propensities of the "strong" commune peasant, the possible limits to revolution in a backward society, or the dangers of spontaneous peasant violence. In their response to the peasant question, the S.R.'s emerge as activists who were at least as realistic and certainly as fallible as their political rivals. If we are to understand the evolution of Socialist Revolutionary Party leaders into the political incompetents of 1917, it will be necessary to look to S.R. policy on questions of party organization and the state, and to the work begun by Manfred Hildermaier on the demoralization of the S.R. Party in the wake of the Stolypin assault upon the peasant commune.

ESTHER KINGSTON-MANN

University of Massachusetts, Boston

V. D. NABOKOV AND THE RUSSIAN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, 1917. Edited by *Virgil D. Medlin* and *Steven L. Parsons*. Introduction by *Robert O. Browder*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976. viii, 188 pp. \$12.50.

Vladimir Dmitr'evich Nabokov was an eminent Russian liberal and Kadet who, during the February Revolution, became head of the new Provisional Government's chancellery. From that position he was able to observe, and even participate in, the inner circle of the government during the critical first two months of the revolution, and he remained active in the revolution as a Kadet leader even after leaving the chancellery. These two vantage points, plus his own acumen, make his memoir one of the most valuable sources on the revolution. The book is especially useful as a description of the work of the Provisional Government and of the concerns of the men active in 1917, because Nabokov's account, written in 1918, has not been colored by the experiences of 1919-20 which tint so many similar accounts. Perhaps most valuable, however, is his series of sketches of the members of the government, probably as balanced and fair a set of descriptions to be found in any of the literature on the revolution, although not without its own biases.

This presentation, translated and edited by Virgil Medlin and Steven Parsons, is rounded out by Robert Browder's introduction and by the inclusion of Baron B. E. Nol'de's appreciation of Nabokov, originally published in 1922. The editors' footnotes

are quite helpful, although a clearer explanation of the role of a chancellery in a European government might have helped Americans better understand Nabokov's position. One can always quarrel with translations, but this one seems quite good and readable. (Who can argue with a translation corrected by the author's own son when that son was the famous author and English stylist, Vladimir V. Nabokov?) The Nol'de article is not as well done, and the first paragraph contains that nightmare of translators, the negative which did not get translated.

REX A. WADE
University of Hawaii

PETR TKACHEV, THE CRITIC AS JACOBIN. By *Deborah Hardy*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1977. xiv, 339 pp. \$12.50.

This is the second biography in English of one of the more controversial figures of the Russian revolutionary movement. Unlike some of the radicals he knew and argued with, Tkachev did not succeed in creating an organization that influenced the course of events in Russia. Nor did he leave behind him a doctrine with which to inspire the opponents of tsarism who were seeking a solution to the problems of economic underdevelopment. If Tkachev has any claim to a place in the revolutionary pantheon, it is largely because of his role as a possible precursor of Lenin, with whom he shared similar views on the need for "a tightly disciplined conspiratorial party." The extent of Tkachev's and Lenin's debt to Blanqui has been disputed by scholars and socialists who have been disturbed by the liberties Lenin is supposed to have taken with Marxism.

Unlike A. L. Weeks, the first Western biographer of Tkachev, Deborah Hardy eschews, for the most part, any attempt to link Tkachev with Lenin. Instead, she provides a detailed account of his social background, copious writings, and revolutionary activities at home and abroad, which were fairly typical of prominent Russian rebels in the 1860s and 1870s. With the help of archival material in Western Europe, and a wide range of printed sources in Russian, Hardy records and discriminatingly analyzes Tkachev's intellectual development, his journalistic endeavors, and his attempts to create a circle of like-minded individuals who would be unwilling to accept either Bakunin or Lavrov as their guide.

Tkachev emerges as a lonely and secretive man, better at wielding the pen than at organizing resistance to authorities or making converts among fellow revolutionaries. As a writer he displayed wide interests and a degree of realism that was uncharacteristic of many of his contemporary rivals who competed for the attention of the educated public. Hardy's careful biography tells us all we need to know about Tkachev and his impact during his lifetime.

IVAN AVAKUMOVIC
University of British Columbia

THE PRECARIOUS TRUCE: ANGLO-SOVIET RELATIONS 1924-27. By *Gabriel Gorodetsky*. Soviet and East European Studies series. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1977. xiv, 289 pp. \$18.95.

Building skillfully on the solid foundation laid by Richard Ullman in his three-volume study of Anglo-Soviet relations in the early years of the Bolshevik regime, Gabriel Gorodetsky has taken up the story and carried it from the advent of the first Labour government to the rupture that followed the Arcos raid. In the process he shows, in the first place, how fearfully symmetrical this relationship was. On either side strong