

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.

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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.

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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