

laws; one finds that they remain vaguely expressed and open to abuse. Such is the effect of an "education tax" to prevent Jewish emigration, and which results in an "internal immigration."

Thus Chambre's general conclusion is that during the period of de-Stalinization increased rationality has been evidenced both in economic theory and in the formulation of laws. But he hastens to note that "rationality" here does not mean what Weber et al. meant by it. It means "conforming to the vision of the new Soviet man as presented by the party."

In concluding, Chambre points out that whereas Marx had undertaken a thorough critique of the Hegelian state, Lenin did no such thing for later bourgeois states—thus leaving the Soviets unable to resolve difficulties such as the following one: "If the system of laws is nothing but a social superstructure, the authority of which is based on an infrastructure which is an economic structure considered to be sound—i.e., a system where all the means of production are collectivized and put to work for the benefit of all of society—every element of discrimination has to have been eliminated, even if at one time it may have seemed necessary to discriminate" (p. 468).

This book must be considered the best commentary on developments in Soviet theory during the period in question—proving that sometimes the least obviously political study of Soviet events can have the greatest explanatory power for these same events.

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L'ISBA D'HIER ET D'AUJOURD'HUI: L'ÉVOLUTION DE L'HABITATION RURALE EN U.R.S.S. By *Basile H. Kerblay*. Lausanne: Éditions l'Age d'Homme, 1973. 247 pp. Paper.

This volume, by a distinguished French Slavist who is currently professor of Russian and Soviet civilization at the Sorbonne, has a scope considerably beyond its modest title. Professor Kerblay has in fact analyzed the entire rural housing situation in the Soviet Union, both in its historical-ethnographic aspect and in its current sociological one. He has done a first-rate job. I have seen nothing in English to equal it in ethnographic insight or historical grasp, and although some of the author's judgments on current matters are controversial, they are always sober and carefully documented.

The book is divided into an introduction, a relatively brief section on the traditional peasant dwelling (pp. 25–93), and an extended discussion of post-revolutionary rural housing conditions (pp. 94–202). A short historiographic appendix entitled "The State of Studies of the Russian Peasant Wooden Dwelling" and an extensive bibliography complete the book.

I have no criticisms of substance to offer. The author handles his sources, including the Soviet press and literary works on public affairs, with admirable care and restraint. As one who has been raked over the coals by his Soviet colleagues for using this kind of source, I wish Kerblay luck. I do not see how a better job could be done by a Western researcher in the absence of actual field work in the Soviet Union, which unfortunately does not seem to be in prospect.

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