

tional provisions to bear against Soviet statutes and regulations. The legal arguments, though not highly refined, seem superior to most of what passes for legal reasoning in official publication. It is possible also that they occupy a transitional place in the continuum of protest: injustice is attributed to more than the personal failings of officials, but in most cases the legal objections have not yet been expanded into criticism of Soviet political institutions. Since the time when the documents sampled in the Brumberg book were written, materials quasi-published in the *samizdat* publication *Chronicle of Current Events* as well as essays like those of Amalrik have marked more advanced stages.

The editor has had less good fortune in the belles-lettres put at his disposal. With the exception of part of Brodsky's verses and Siniavsky's trenchant critique of Evtushenko, they elicit more sympathy than admiration, even in Sidney Monas's engagingly magniloquent introductory essay.

LEON LIPSON  
Yale University

THE LYSENKO AFFAIR. By David Joravsky. Russian Research Center Studies, 61. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970. xiii, 459 pp. \$13.95.

There has been a strong tendency among Western observers of Soviet life, especially the Kremlinologists, to treat Soviet decision-making within the framework of Marxism-Leninism. Many have argued that the rise of the Ukrainian agronomist Trofim Denisovich Lysenko and his followers—and their domination of Soviet agricultural practice—was in great part the outcome of ideological considerations. In *The Lysenko Affair* David Joravsky carefully examines the role of theoretical ideology in the rise of Lysenkoism and the suppression of genetics in the Soviet Union. He thoroughly demolishes the arguments that Lysenkoism was in some way inherently connected with Communist theory and that Lysenko's theories were grounded in valid scientific concepts.

In explaining the emergence of Lysenkoism, Joravsky mentions a multiplicity of factors, ranging from the backwardness of Soviet agriculture to the Stalinist concept of the criterion of practice. He demonstrates that the high level of Soviet achievement in biological science, particularly genetics, was not easily applied to Soviet farming, which used agricultural methods that had been common in Western Europe in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Once Stalin rejected the slow but certain methods of modern agriculture to improve crop yields, he left himself exposed to quacks, cranks, and pseudo scientists who conjured a variety of nostrums to stimulate agricultural abundance. Joravsky reveals that these "agrobiological" cranks, harmless and otherwise, deliberately sought to develop techniques to prevent their theories and experiments from being subjected to rigorous scientific questioning and verification, and often presented distorted data to create the impression of having solved Soviet Russia's agricultural problems. At first such "paper" successes were sufficient to satisfy Stalin's epistemology of truth based primarily on the criterion of practice. Although in 1948 Stalin granted the Lysenkoists a monopoly in the areas of agricultural training and practice, Joravsky reveals that before his death in 1953 Stalin showed signs of doubting the wisdom of his decision to support Lysenko's agrobiology. The fact that he was able to reverse himself, especially in the matter of Lysenko's theoretical views, indicates that Stalin was not completely irrational in the area of agriculture. Interestingly enough,

Khrushchev, who was often knowledgeable about the shortcomings of the Soviet economy, also succumbed to many of Lysenko's nostrums. The demise of Lysenkoism was made possible only with the ouster of Khrushchev.

*The Lysenko Affair* can be read with great profit by students of Soviet politics, economics, and science. It is a thoroughly documented study drawing heavily on Soviet sources, most of which are readily available to Western scholars. The appendixes, which list repressed Soviet specialists (physicists, philosophers of science, biologists, and agricultural specialists) and "bosses" of higher learning, theoretical ideology, and agricultural administration, are fringe benefits contributed by Joravsky. Because his approach is more topical than chronological, his work tends to be highly analytical and somewhat repetitive. Nonetheless, the book is a model of scholarly exposition that goes far in destroying the many myths dealing with the impact of ideology on the development of natural science in Soviet Russia. *The Lysenko Affair* is a profound and penetrating study that should stand unchallenged on the subject of Lysenkoism for some time to come.

MAXIM W. MIKULAK

*Stockton State College, Pomona, New Jersey*

UNDERSTANDING THE RUSSIANS: A CITIZEN'S PRIMER. By *Foy D. Kohler*. New York, Evanston, London: Harper & Row, 1970. xix, 441 pp. \$10.00.

RUSSIA ON OUR MINDS: REFLECTIONS ON ANOTHER WORLD. By *Delia and Ferdinand Kuhn*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1970. 299 pp. \$6.95.

ACROSS THE RUSSIAS. By *John Massey Stewart*. Chicago, New York, San Francisco: Rand McNally, 1970. 256 pp. \$6.95.

PORTRAIT OF A REVOLUTION: RUSSIA, 1896–1924. By *Frédéric Rossif and Madeleine Chapsal*. Translated by *Hazel Kahn*. Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Co., 1969. 160 pp. \$4.95.

This latest crop of books on the Soviet Union includes a personal memoir by an American career diplomat who served as ambassador to Moscow from 1962 to 1966, two typical travelogues by free-lance writers describing tours of the Soviet Union in the 1960s, and a photo album that is a by-product of a French documentary film project on the Bolshevik Revolution.

The diplomatic memoir by Foy Kohler, who retired from the Foreign Service in 1967 to join the Center for Advanced International Studies at the University of Miami, is somewhat mistitled. Rather than a simple reference book for the average reader, as the title suggests, it is a combination of a telescoped history of the Soviet system and a more detailed survey of domestic and foreign aspects of Soviet policy with which the author has had personal experience. He traces the breakup of the Communist monolith as a result of the Sino-Soviet conflict and devotes separate chapters to the principal international issues—Germany, Cuba, Vietnam, and the Middle East—that continue to plague relations between East and West. United States foreign policy toward the Soviet Union is discussed from the official point of view, with virtually no critique of the assumptions that guide the conduct of foreign affairs. This leads to some odd inconsistencies, such as continuous references to a "Communist" challenge, which make little sense in view of the author's own depiction of a fracturing of the once unified move-