proceedings elucidate a central historic paradox articulated by the keynote speaker. Wilbur Cohen was former HEW administrator and Secretary under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. He directed passage of the Medicare law, then saw it implemented. Cohen theorized in his keynote address that Medicare "was born more of social conviction than of research findings". Ironically this publication, which Cohen prefaces, reverses his caveat. It is a useful reference for current policy analysts, and perhaps a factual source for social scientists. For the humanities scholar, however, its bare-boned, contemporary perspective sparks little creative insight into the deep impact of this legislation on American culture, society, and politics.

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DAVID JORAVSKY, *Russian psychology: a critical history*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1989, 8vo, pp. xxii, 583, £45.00.

This volume presents nothing less than a comprehensive history of psychological thinking in Russia, embracing experimental and applied psychology, neuropsychology, philosophy of mind, and the psychologies expressed in the classics of Russian literature or implied in the country's political ideologies. The chronological canvas is broad as well. After an introductory chapter on the emergence of scientific psychology in nineteenth-century Europe, Joravsky proceeds to what he calls the "genteel disintegration" of the pre-revolutionary era in Russia—meaning the separation of psychological thinking into literary, philosophical, academic-experimental, and physiological-reflexological compartments. From there he surveys what he terms the "genteel integration" of the post-1917 era, culminating in the attempt to create a synthesis of literary, philosophical, and experimental psychologies led by Lev Semenovich Vygotsky. Finally he treats the "plastic unity" of orthodox Pavlovism and Soviet-style psychiatry forged during the Stalin era. A brief coda on the post-Stalin years concludes the work.

In a vast, multifaceted argument, conveniently outlined in the book's preface, three theses stand out. The first—that there was, and is, something distinctive about Russians' ways of treating the topics listed above—will excite little controversy. The second thesis is more provocative. Joravsky espouses no psychological viewpoint, but argues that the war of schools and succession of fashions that is so endemic in psychology was inevitable. Because the psyche itself lies between mind, brain, and society, "the modern science of mind was predestined at conception to flounder between philosophy and neurophysiology and social science, as it has for more than a century now" (p. xv). Such corruscating scepticism will win no friends among readers who prefer their histories of science to consist of cheerleading for the ultimately "right" side, or indeed with anyone who wants to believe there can be scientific knowledge in psychology, however defined.

Joravsky's third thesis builds on the other two. Given the inevitable fractiousness in psychology in the West generally, he maintains, the history of psychological thinking in Russia is understandable as an extraordinarily complex interplay between two sets of forces. On the one hand, the academics continued to claim that they could explain the whole of the psyche from some piece of it; on the other hand, political ideologists were sure that they already possessed wisdom on humankind, but still required the technological services psychologists and psychiatrists could provide. In this interplay of forces Joravsky finds no essential discontinuity from the relatively open discussion of the 1920s to the Stalin era.

Along the way, Joravsky rescues a number of important scientists from ideologically-mandated historical straitjackets. Ivan M. Sechenov, "the father of Russian physiology", for example, was not a proto-materialist. Despite the title of his most famous book, *Reflexes of the brain*, he was a mind-body dualist and a political liberal, whose attempt to create a "medical psychology" by discovering neural centres for excitation and inhibition was an abject failure. The teacher-student lineage Soviet writers have constructed from Sechenov to Ivan Petrovich Pavlov, which is often cited uncritically by Anglo-American writers, is largely legendary.

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Moreover, Pavlov's colleagues recognized that his postulated "cortical" reflexes and his later concept of "second signal system", with which he claimed to conquer the citadel of mind, were "illusory physiology", despite their respectful or fatuous praise for the Nobel laureate. Nonetheless, both the Party leadership and the educated public persisted in the naïve belief that mind is or soon would be reducible to brain. This shared scientific fantasy sustained Pavlov's reputation and his funding in Russia; it ultimately made possible the artifical unity of psychology and neurophysiology in the Stalin era.

As for Soviet psychiatry, Joravsky acknowledges that the political bosses left authority over the insane largely to the acknowledged experts. The fundamental fact remains, in his view, the power of an essentially Stalinist mentality to continue dominating the profession long after the dictator was gone. His explanation is that "something within psychiatry, a persistent need to equate intuitive convictions with scientific knowledge, generated an enduring affinity between doctors of the mind and the authoritarian leaders of their country" (p. xix). This is consistent with other recent scholarship on psychology, psychotherapy, and psychiatry under Nazism, which shows that in these cases, too, professionals functioned most effectively as transporters—if need be, as enforcers—of dominant cultural values when they imagined themselves to be altruistic, objective practitioners of applied science. These findings have disturbing implications for professional practice elsewhere as well. If Joravsky is correct, then non-Soviet psychiatrists' condemnation of their Soviet colleagues is short-sighted at best, hypocritical at worst.

This tale is one of massive failure at all levels—those of science, of the attempted political direction of science, and of common humanity. Joravsky is deeply critical of the fragmentation and specialization characteristic of modern thought, and not only in Russia. He mourns most the separation of scientific "knowledge" from literary "wisdom". And yet, he fully acknowledges how necessary naturalistic and materialistic assumptions are for science of any kind to work, and how elusive the values of understanding and creative imagination treasured by the literary artist must seem from such foundations. Though he wants to weave a tapestry of wistful ironies in the spirit of Chekhov, he creates instead a Dostoyevskian universe, tragic, dark, and hopeless. Now that the Brezhnev era is past, a post-Communist era dawns in Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union itself appears on the way to disintegration, this book could be read as an elegaic testament—if so much of it did not hit so close to our smug, self-satisfied Western home. This powerful, provocative work of mature scholarship will become more than a standard reference to be cited piously. It will be the target of choice, a neccessary touchstone for work on this topic for some time to come.

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C. C. CHEN in collaboration with FREDERICA M. BUNGE, *Medicine in rural China. A personal account*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989, 8vo, pp. xix, 218, illus., $35.00.

This is a fascinating personal account of how a Chinese physician trained in modern medicine devoted over 50 years to developing ways of introducing scientific medical care into a predominantly rural society at a time when few physicians saw the health of country people as their responsibility. C. C. Chen, a 1929 graduate of the Rockefeller-sponsored Peking Union Medical College, has given a vivid account of his struggles to bring modern medical care to the peasantry during a period of great social and political changes.

The first part of the book describes the confrontation between traditional Chinese and modern Western medicine after the latter's introduction into China on a large scale by missionary doctors in the mid-nineteenth century, and the fatal family illnesses which led Chen to embark on a medical career and seek new means to fight disease. There follows a description of the author's pioneering experimental work at Dingxian, a county in Hebei Province, which attracted attention both at home and abroad and which anticipated the rural health service developed in China in recent years.

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