

MICHEL BAKOUNINE ET SES RELATIONS SLAVES, 1870–1875. Annotated by *Arthur Lehning*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974. xcii, 586 pp. 220 Dglds.

This fifth volume of the monumental *Archives Bakounine* is the largest to date, with nearly six hundred pages of documents and notes and a seventy-five-page introduction by the editor, Arthur Lehning. A sequel to the previous two volumes in the series, which centered on Bakunin's *Gosudarstvennost' i anarkhiia* (1873) and on his relations with Sergei Nechaev between 1870 and 1872, it deals with Bakunin's relations with the Slavs—Poles, Serbs, and Czechs, as well as Ukrainians and Russians—from 1870 until 1875, the year before his death in Bern at the age of sixty-two.

Included among the documents are Bakunin's eulogy to Alexander Herzen (who died in January 1870), and his letters to Nicholas Ogarev, Peter Lavrov, and his young disciples Nicholas Zhukovskii, Michael Sazhin (better known as "Armand Ross"), Vladimir Holstein, Alexander Oelsnitz, and Zamfir Ralli. Bakunin's letter of April 8, 1870 to *Der Volksstaat* on the revolutionary movement in Russia and a number of his articles, brochures, and programs are also included. The most important of the latter items are *Quelques paroles à mes jeunes frères en Russie* (September 5, 1869, with his celebrated advice to "go to the people"); *La peine de mort en Russie* (February 7, 1870); *Nauka i nasushchnoe revoliutsionnoe delo* (March 1870); *Vsesvetnyi revoliutsionnyi soiuz sotsial'noi demokratii* (March 1870); *Intrigi g-na Utina* (July–August 1870); a preface and two articles for the collection *Istoricheskoe razvitie Internatsionala* (1873); and the programs of Bakunin's International Brotherhood (1872–73). For items written in Russian, French translations are provided in addition to the original texts. There are also thirty-seven appendixes, including letters and documents relating to the Hague Congress of 1872 and to Polish and Serbian revolutionaries in Zurich.

Arthur Lehning, the foremost living authority on Bakunin, once again exhibits the thorough command of his subject and the meticulous attention to detail which have made this entire series a model of scholarly editing. Volume 5, like its predecessors, is handsomely produced with interesting portraits and facsimiles of letters, manuscripts, and title pages. It will be an essential acquisition for research libraries but, given the astronomical price, individual specialists will probably want to wait for the paperback edition being prepared by Champ Libre of Paris.

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NIZOVYE KREST'IANSKIE ORGANIZATSII V 1917–PERVOI POLOVINE 1918 GODOV: NA MATERIALAKH NIZHNEGO POVOLZH'IA. By *G. A. Gerasimenko*. Saratov: Izdatel'stvo Saratovskogo universiteta, 1974. 341 pp. 1.55 rubles.

G. A. Gerasimenko, author of numerous books and essays and chairperson of the Saratov University History Department, is the leading Soviet expert on the Russian Revolution in the Volga region. The book under review originated as the author's Moscow University doctoral dissertation. It is his most ambitious and successful work.

Because few Soviet historians have studied the revolution in the countryside, they do not have a "generally acknowledged opinion" on the local peasant organizations which emerged in 1917–18. Gerasimenko's monograph is one of the first to

examine more than one type of peasant institution and, therefore, is a welcome addition. Yet, the book is not as valuable for its broad interpretations as for the detailed data the author has gleaned from national and regional archives, local newspapers, and published documents.

Focusing on local peasant organizations in Saratov and Astrakhan oblasts in 1917 and the first half of 1918, Gerasimenko discusses the emergence, structure, social make-up, and role of volost executive committees, land committees, volost zemstvos, and peasant soviets. His analysis of the volost executive committees is important. Even though they included "antidemocratic" elements (members of the rural intelligentsia and kulaks), the author argues that the committees represented the interests of the middle and poor peasants, particularly because the Stolypin peasants (the *khutoriane* and *otrubshchiki*) had lost their influence in village meetings (*skhody*). Thus, the author subscribes to the interpretation of Soviet historians such as O. N. Moiseeva, I. I. Mints, A. M. Andreev, and E. N. Burdzhlov. (Perhaps a "generally acknowledged opinion" is in the making.)

Gerasimenko then convincingly argues that the Provisional Government attempted to destroy the influence of the executive committees and land committees because they reflected the interests of the peasants. The revived volost zemstvos—which were the least peasant in outlook of the institutions examined—almost succeeded in this endeavor. But then the October Revolution brought the Bolsheviks to power. In the aftermath, peasant soviets clashed with the zemstvos as a definite shifting and realignment took place among the strata of the peasantry. Some *bedniaki* became *seredniaki*; some former Stolypin peasants became *seredniaki* with kulak pretensions. The *seredniaki* were a pivotal group whose support the Soviet regime needed. Gerasimenko's description of the middle peasants' composition—while fascinating and suggestive—fails to delve into peasant attitudes. His conclusion is that the middle peasants' support of the bourgeoisie forced the Soviet government to incorporate the "proletarian line" in the countryside and to create the Committees of the Poor.

Gerasimenko neglects several key issues. The large German and Muslim populations never appear in the otherwise rich mosaic that he presents. More disturbing is his reluctance to give credit to the Left SRs. Their support of the Bolshevik program, especially at the Third and Fourth Saratov Province Congresses of Peasant Soviets, made a Bolshevik "victory" in Saratov possible.

These criticisms aside, *Nizovye krest'ianskie organizatsii* is essential reading for anyone working on a social history of the Russian Revolution.

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LEON TROTSKY. By *Victor Serge* and *Natalia Sedova Trotsky*. Translated by *Arnold J. Pomerans*. New York: Basic Books, 1975 [1951, 1973]. viii, 296 pp. \$10.95.

TROTSKY: AN APPRECIATION OF HIS LIFE. By *Joel Carmichael*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975. 512 pp. + 8 pp. photographs. \$15.00.

Almost any library catalog will show more entries by Trotsky than about him. His own books continue to find readers and publishers (not only among his followers), but there is quite a modest body of biographical literature. The books considered here extend but do not greatly strengthen the list of works in English about Trotsky.