

Summaries of articles

***Germanic Mythology and Nazism:
On an Early Work of Georges Dumézil***

C. GINZBURG

*The article analyzes the ideological and methodological implications of some passages on contemporary Germany in Georges Dumézil's book *Mythes et dieux des Germains* (1939). A chapter of Dumézil's intellectual biography is therefore placed in the wider context of the attitude towards Nazism of some leading French intellectuals (including Marc Bloch, Georges Bataille, Roger Caillois, etc.) on the eve of the war.*

***The Social Nightmare of Alexander Zinoviev:
Soviet Power and Society***

W. BERELOWITCH

The paper attempts to analyse the social thought of Alexander Zinoviev, whose works aspire to develop theory, set free from the Soviet official ideology, of the "communist society". The most original points are Zinoviev's conceptions of the relations between state (or power) and society, between collectivity and individual, which he identifies. In his views, Zinoviev shows an interesting melting of Russian traditions of scientism and determinism on one hand and leninist (totalitarian) concepts on the other hand.

***Social Conflicts and Economic Fluctuations
in the USSR, 1950 – 65***

J. SAPIR

The Soviet economy is acquainted with regular fluctuations touching at the same time investment and employment as well as such financial factors as credit and savings. These fluctuations are related. They are the manifestation of a cycle which one encounters in those economies reputed to be socialist functioning along the lines of the

Soviet model. The behaviour of the different social groups (laborers, peasants, white-collar workers) and the conflicts which develop are the cause of these movements which present a definite analogy with those experienced by the German war economy of 1916-1918.

***Demographic Change and Strike Waves
in St. Petersburg, 1905 – 14***

L. HAIMSON and E. BRIAN

The core of this article is devoted to an analysis of demographic changes in St. Petersburg between 1900 and 1910, with particular emphasis on the strata of industrial workers employed in different districts and branches of industry. Various findings of the analysis suggest a close relationship between the processes of urbanization which, to differing degrees, these various strata of St. Petersburg workers experienced during this decade and the patterns of strike actions that they came to display by the eve of the First World War.

The results of a quantitative analysis of labor unrest among all workers of the Empire under Factory Inspection during the 1905 – 07 and 1912 – 14 strike waves are summarized in the introduction of the article. These results, in turn, strongly suggest that our findings concerning the workers of St. Petersburg represent an extreme but illustrative case of more general tendencies in the dynamics of labor unrest in Imperial Russia by the eve of the War, pointing to the impact of processes of urbanization—even more than that of the factor of urban concentration—on the intensity and character of industrial strikes.

Is there too much democracy in the USSR?

M. FERRO

Beginning with an observation of K. Tchernenko who asks if “the excess of democracy doesn’t jeopardize discipline,” Marc Ferro examines the meaning such an appraisal might have. In juxtaposing the origins of the operation of the Soviet regime to the contemporary institutional system, he observes that in certain centers of power the border between the leaders and the lead can be porous: moreover, during the Brejnevian period one moves more and more, with the increase of the level of knowledge, from a polymorphous power to an institutional polymorphism while at the different echelons of power the democratic idea becomes disassociated from the notion of pluralism or of the freedom of expression. But is it irreversible?

***The Prosopography of the Shanghai Elites
During the Republican Epoch: 1911 – 49***

M.-CL. BERGERE, N. CASTELINO,
CH. HENRIO and P.-Y. HO

This essay is an attempt to use prosopography as a tool for the analysis of Chinese society during the Republican period (1911 – 49). It deals with four different social groups of the Shanghai area: cotton mill owners, municipal leaders, academicians and journalists. Each group is the objet of a thorough study based on similar variables (geographical and social origins, education, political experience, etc.). It shows that, in spite of certain differences, a general and common portrait of these elites can be drawn that presents the image of active modernizers deeply rooted in Chinese culture and judiciously using the traditional social network for their purposes.