

Jones validates the perspective of the whalers, too. Having interviewed and socialized with many of them, he describes likeable men and women who felt a deep bond with the sea and who, through difficult economic and political times, enjoyed the bonds of camaraderie and a good income plying the waters in search of their prey. Some readers may feel this sense of empathy compromises Tucker Jones's ability to sufficiently apportion blame for the mass slaughter of sentient creatures. On the other hand, he clearly emphasizes the heroic role of many Russians (some of them whalers) who acted at personal risk to preserve and transmit records and to confront state whaling. In other words, there are definite heroes in this story, but the villains are harder to find.

This is an important read for anyone interested in Soviet or environmental history, marine conservation, or oceanography.

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La société des voleurs: Propriété et socialisme sous Staline. By Juliette Cadiot. Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2021. 321 pp. Notes. Bibliography. €24.80, paper. doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.218

In this meticulously researched book, Juliette Cadiot traces how the concept of “socialist property” evolved from a political slogan about the necessity of protecting scarce resources to a concept enshrined in Soviet law. Cadiot suggests that the Stalinist state increasingly derived its legitimacy from the protection of socialist property (10). State decrees, the main of which were issued in 1932, 1940, and 1947, penalized an expanding “universe of theft,” that is, illegal economic activities ranging from petty thievery to large-scale systematic embezzlement. Theft of socialist property took on major importance in the Stalin period; anything that involved “the seizure of resources that could be seen as representing social or political danger” was harshly punished, often more so than murder or other serious crimes (12).

Cadiot begins by looking at how socialist property was defined and how thefts of it were policed in Chapter 1. The Department against the Theft of Socialist Property (*Otdel po bor'be s khishcheniiami sotsialisticheskoi sobstvennosti*) was created in 1937 and given expansive powers. At the same time, those responsible for policing thefts of socialist property, from the police all the way up to judges, were frequently embroiled in scandals, as they were (or were perceived to be) engaged in theft themselves because they often helped themselves to confiscated goods.

Chapter 2 explores the application of ever stricter penalties for theft, resulting in a major increase in incarceration of thieves, including many minors and other vulnerable groups. Even as the penalties stiffened, there was widespread sympathy for petty criminals, Cadiot finds; the figure of “the apple thief as a victim of Stalinist repression” was later used to push for carceral reform (114). This chapter also looks at how the accused and their families coped with stringent punishments, in particular, by trying to cultivate patronage relations with judges along ethnic and regional lines. Judges had latitude to soften sentences and often did, but this flexibility sometimes increased their corruption.

Chapter 3 covers the relationship between theft of socialist property and the underground economy. Opportunities for, as well as forms of, economic crime involving stolen socialist property, including diverted funds and resources, multiplied in the postwar period, as Cadiot notes. Many fraudulent enterprises took cover behind legal and grey-market activities or by creating fake receipts for sales of goods that

went to the private sector. They relied upon bribing state authorities, like inspectors, to look the other way. The sophistication of such frauds increased, despite strengthened penalties, resulting in losses estimated in the billions of rubles.

Chapter 4 is a case study of one such illegal enterprise: the “Khain affair.” Khanan Aronovich Khain ran a textile factory in Kyiv. He was accused of diverting surplus fabrics to market and bribing local authorities, and of running a “counter-revolutionary” band of thieves. The Khain affair, Cadiot notes, must also be connected to postwar antisemitism in Ukraine: all of the accused were Jewish, and the trial trucked in antisemitic stereotypes. Khain and his associates were convicted in 1952 and executed in 1953, a rare example of the death penalty for economic crime in those years. The case was later reexamined after Stalin’s death; the conviction for “counter-revolutionary” activity was reversed, but not the conviction for thievery.

The last chapter listens to “the voices of thieves,” looking at how they explained and interpreted their actions, especially in their appeals for mercy. Most emphasized miserable social and economic conditions and portrayed their acts of theft as an aberration in life trajectories that otherwise emphasized their integration with Soviet society (254). “To explain themselves. . . [thieves had to justify] their place in this society, even when they did not follow, know, or grasp its rules, especially those for the protection of socialist property,” Cadiot observes. “They sometimes even stumbled over the concept, the contours, the value, the exact content of this concept” (261).

In the conclusion, Cadiot reflects on post-Stalinist developments and the fact that theft of socialist property remained endemic in Soviet society for the remainder of its existence. After the collapse of communism, post-Soviet capitalism expanded opportunities for theft and corruption as oligarchs managed to acquire state property through illegal and corrupt means. The concept of “socialist property” Cadiot argues, helps explain “why the accusation of theft is so important in the Russian imaginary,” for example, in jailed opposition leader Aleksei Naval’nyi’s critiques of current President Vladimir Putin’s kleptocratic reign (301–2).

Cadiot’s book is exhaustively researched, making use of an impressive number of archival sources, including newly declassified files from the political police archives in Ukraine. If it has one drawback, it is simply that the abundance of small case studies is overwhelming, making it easy to lose the thread of a chapter’s argument. That said, the incredible amount of detail offered reinforces Cadiot’s point about the massive “universe of theft” the Soviet system both created and tried to eliminate. This book is required reading for those interested in the history of Soviet crime and punishment and of the second economy, but also for those interested in the porous border between those who committed crime and those who policed it.

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Une histoire de la psychiatrie soviétique. By Grégory Dufaud. Paris: Éditions de l’Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2021. 314 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Photographs. Tables. Maps. €23.00, paper.
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One of the challenges facing historians of east European psychiatry, like in any underdeveloped subject, is that there are few survey-style overviews that capture historical change over a long period. Instead, scholars in this area—and indeed we are growing in number—confront something of a staccato historiography: a number of fascinating articles and book chapters, but little that ties it all together. Grégory Dufaud’s recent