

survived the early 1940s while sharpening their critical eye on the world. That outcome makes this book an essential text for readers who seek to understand Russia today.

MARTIN J. BLACKWELL
University of North Georgia

Moscow 1956: The Silenced Spring. By Kathleen E. Smith. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2017. 434 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Maps. \$29.95, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.60

In her cleverly titled new book, Kathleen E. Smith traces the trajectory and impact of reform in Russia over the course of a particularly eventful year: 1956. She argues that Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" criticizing Iosif Stalin, delivered in February of that year, sparked a variety of responses that went far beyond what he had imagined. The resulting tumult of questions and demands threatened Party hegemony, so that by December officials moved to curtail public discussion. Leaders could not re-impose Stalinist control, however, and their attempts to muzzle critics lead to more radical critiques. This swing between thaw and freeze, liberalization and crackdown, set a pattern for the rest of the Soviet epoch and continues to influence Russia's government today.

This is a thoroughly-researched work drawing on a wide range of sources, including formerly classified party documents, memoirs, and interviews. Smith's characterization of the thaw as fluctuating between "openness and discipline" (341) is in line with the recent historiography that she cites, including works by Stephen Bittner, Miriam Dobson, Denis Kozlov, William Taubman, and others. What distinguishes this book, however, is its structure, scope, and nuanced depictions of individual lives.

Smith has organized the book chronologically, with a chapter for each month of the year. She begins with a summary of the Stalinist system and Khrushchev's ascent within it. She then describes the composition, delivery, and reception of Khrushchev's Secret Speech, including an absorbing account of debates within the presidium about whether and how to condemn Stalinist terror. The next few chapters examine the problems facing former inmates as they were released from the gulag and struggled to achieve official rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Smith then describes various kinds of people—writers, filmmakers, tourists, scientists, students—taking advantage of new freedoms and sometimes pushing against the limits of reform. She ends by analyzing the Central Committee's decision to suppress what it deemed the proliferation of dangerously anti-Soviet views.

Smith explains in her introduction that she chose to focus mainly on urban Russians, especially members of the intelligentsia, and she acknowledges some of the important topics she omitted, such as nationality policy, rural life, and relations with China. Nonetheless, she covers a lot of ground. Like a good realist novel, this book teems with intriguing personalities. Smith has woven the stories of more than twenty different people into the narrative, ranging from Elena Stasova, an Old Bolshevik, to the aptly named Revol't Pimenov, whose demands for free speech and public opposition to the Soviet invasion of Hungary led to his arrest for anti-Soviet propaganda. Smith's portraits of party stalwarts, restless young writers, idealistic students, and traumatized gulag survivors are written with flair, empathy, and psychological nuance. She also provides vivid descriptions of a variety of settings, including farms in Kazakhstan that were created as part of Khrushchev's "Virgin

Lands” campaign; a biological research station nine hundred miles from Moscow, which became a haven for scientists studying genetics and evolution in defiance of Lysenkoism; a cruise ship taking select Soviet citizens to visit western Europe; and museum galleries in Moscow and Leningrad where visitors made sense of their first sight of Pablo Picasso’s art.

Smith’s work demonstrates the value of narrative history as a genre; focusing in on one year enables her to elucidate the complex interactions that comprise historical change. She teases out the ways in which party leaders and citizens responded to one another’s words and actions and traces the interplay between developments within the Soviet Union and abroad (particularly Poland and Hungary). Just as valuably, Smith’s biographical portraits reveal how historical actors grappled with ethical and emotional dilemmas, providing a sense of how it feels to live through turbulent times.

This wonderful book will fascinate anybody concerned with postwar Soviet society, the difficulties of democratization, or how individuals experience history.

DEBORAH A. FIELD
Adrian College

The Olympic Games, the Soviet Sports Bureaucracy, and the Cold War: Red Sport, Red Tape. By Jenifer Parks. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017. xxvi, 205 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. \$95.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.61

A welcome addition to the recent scholarship on the late Soviet period, Jenifer Parks’ book provides a thoroughly-researched account of the Soviet Sports Bureaucracy and the Olympic Games. Parks begins the story in 1952, when the Soviet Union entered the Olympic Movement, and takes it up to the 1980 Moscow Games. Parks uses the organization of the 1980 Olympiad as a means to examine some of the paradoxes of late socialism. The international nature of the Olympic Movement—as this book amply demonstrates—offers fresh insights into Cold War relations.

The Soviet attempt to democratize the Olympics is a central theme in the early part of the book, apparent in the first chapter’s discussion of *massovost’* (mass participation in sports) and *masterstvo* (sporting mastery). These key elements caused varying degrees of tension in Soviet sports and physical culture. When dealing with the Olympics, *massovost’* was usually favored, with Soviet sporting officials focusing on broader inclusion for the people’s democracies. In this way, as Parks shows, Soviet Olympic interests could be aligned to the Olympic rhetoric of peace. All was not rosy, however, and as one might expect, discussion of performance-enhancing drugs appears early in the narrative. Sports doping was an international problem by the 1952 Games, and Soviet scientists were already involved in developing methods to enhance performance.

Parks provides thorough examination of the sports bureaucracy, reimagined after Nikita Khrushchev’s decentralization initiatives in 1959. The emphasis on *massovost’* increased at this point, and was accompanied by an urge for more acceptance of personal responsibility on the part of bureaucrats, including those in the sports bureaucracy. A good balance is struck between assessing domestic changes within the Soviet sports bureaucracy, and how these affected relations with the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Importantly, discussions with international delegations highlighted the need for competence in foreign languages, sporting knowledge, and diplomatic skills. Parks links this nicely to broader themes of the Khrushchev period, including moral education and contact with foreigners. Gender, another key aspect of