

natural evolution, too, by the inherent logic of its constitutive forces led to destruction. What are we left with? Yaney's own methodological and conceptual inadequacies preclude him from dealing with factors that were not inherent in the system—in short, forces outside the self-contained pattern he projects onto the imperial institutions. And one must admit of some skepticism about Yaney's reliability in guiding us through the complexities and dynamics of institutional history in the light of such linguistic horrors as *predsedatel zemskogo uprava* (p. 231), *uezdnyi chlen okružnoi sudy* (p. 236), and “imperial chief apartment” for *imperatorskaia glavnaia kvartira* (p. 252)!

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ROSSIIA I VELIKAIA FRANTSUZSKAIA BURZHUAZNAIA REVOLIUTSIIA KONTSA XVIII V. By K. E. Dzhedzhula. Kiev: Izdatel'stvo Kievskogo universiteta, 1972. 452 pp. 2 rubles.

K. E. Dzhedzhula holds that bourgeois historians have undervalued the importance of the French Revolution for Russian history, misunderstanding or ignoring Russia's role in the revolutionary decade, and excluding Russian domestic developments from the broad currents of social and economic change which were transforming European institutions. To redress the balance, he argues that internal developments in autocratic Russia were generating indigenous antifederal, anti-absolutist social movements; that the French Enlightenment, the cutting edge of the bourgeoisie's attack on royal absolutism, similarly provided an arsenal of ideas for educated Russia; and that the Revolution itself not only sharpened and reinforced these “progressive-democratic tendencies,” but sparked a violent reaction against domestic “Jacobinism” and fostered a predominantly counterrevolutionary foreign policy. The arguments and evidence he musters to develop these general propositions are of unequal value, and there are some extraordinary lacunae.

The third chapter, which covers peasant riots, mutinies in the armed forces, revolutionary circles, and the literature of protest—both published and underground—is useful. Dzhedzhula summarizes a considerable body of unpublished material, and though his attempt to connect peasant uprisings causally with the French Revolution is unconvincing, he defines a substantial enlightened group which was responsive to the Revolution and which foreshadowed the Decembrist generation. The remainder of the book is less impressive. French cultural influences are documented in excruciating detail, but since the focus is exclusively French, and the discussion primarily concerned with contacts rather than the substance of ideas, the result is to distort the entire intellectual picture. A monolithic view of the Enlightenment is particularly indefensible in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, while to ignore English and German contributions creates a demonstrably false impression of educated Russia.

Dzhedzhula's discussion of the autocracy's reaction to the Revolution is, if anything, even less satisfactory. His long concluding chapter, which argues that the struggle against the Revolution dominated Russian foreign policy, rests largely on antirevolutionary rhetoric and lacks solid political evidence. Given the period's complexities, and the wealth of archival as well as published sources available to analyze them, it is difficult to take this selectively documented and highly argumentative exposition seriously. On the domestic side, Dzhedzhula chooses to define reaction

primarily as repression, ignoring broader policy issues, and making no effort at all to penetrate the ideology of reaction as a positive political force. Considering the importance of this issue for Europe generally, and its particular significance for Russia's nineteenth-century development, its absence here greatly reduces the volume's value. Finally, the author's attempt to show Russia's comparability with Europe can be termed at best unproved. Drawing on familiar secondary sources, he describes population growth, increase in the number of factories, the enlargement of trade, and changes in agriculture. The data are presented uncritically; sheer magnitudes carry the argument; and, leaving the validity of the material cited aside, which in itself is a major problem, the absence of any comparative or structural analysis means that there is no demonstrated basis for the author's conclusions. In sum, despite points of interest, the book is disappointing. The scholarship is dated and often superficial; critical points are either undeveloped or are developed unsuccessfully; and, in the end, our understanding of either Russia or the revolutionary period is not much advanced.

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KREST'IANSKII VOPROS V PRAVITEL'STVENNOI POLITIKE ROSSII
(60–70 GODY XIX V.). By V. G. Chernukha. Leningrad: "Nauka," 1972.
226 pp. 74 kopeks.

In recent years Soviet and Western scholars have shown a growing interest in the evolution of tsarist government policies and institutions prior to 1917. In this book V. G. Chernukha traces state attempts to resolve important administrative and fiscal problems remaining after the 1861 emancipation. The author uses new archival materials to analyze the history of the "peace mediators" (*mirovye posredniki*), government tax policy, and the vigorous though unresolved debate over the efficacy of the peasant commune as a cornerstone of the state's attempt to secure its administrative and financial interests in the 1860s and 1870s.

After 1861 the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Finance continually tried to strengthen the government's administrative hold on the countryside and to insure prompt and full receipt of the confusing multitude of taxes, obligations, and redemption payments upon which the state treasury depended. Unfortunately, poor harvests and peasant arrears were chronic, and such administrative actions as tax advantages or the sale of the debtor's movable property provided no solution. A peasant without tools or livestock could only remain a debtor. Ministers and other high advisers understood the need for comprehensive change, and the whole complex of agricultural policy was referred in 1872 to a new commission headed by P. A. Valuev.

The author successfully argues that there was general support in high bureaucratic circles as well as among landowners and "liberal" economists for elimination of the communal forms of land tenure and responsibility. The internal government debates reveal both varying shades of *conservative* bureaucratic thinking and the interesting fact that on the question of the commune, habitual bureaucratic disunity was replaced by general agreement. Bariatinsky, Shuvalov, and Timashev could agree with Valuev and Reutern on the advantage of private peasant enterprise—though of course for different reasons. Why did the attempts to abolish the commune and to institute comprehensive tax reforms fail? The answer must be sought first