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ROBERT D. WARTH

On the Historiography of the Russian Revolution

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION has not yet achieved the status of the French Revolution as an academic preserve for battalions of professional historians, but few are likely to deny that its impact on the twentieth century is already more profound than that of the French upheaval on the nineteenth. The fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution is now upon us, and it is a melancholy commentary on the uncertain intellectual climate of the Soviet Union that despite lavish funds, abundant trained personnel, and access to archives and primary sources unavailable in the West, Soviet historians have failed to produce a work of permanent importance on this crucial episode of modern Russian history. Yet the stifling orthodoxy of Stalinism has given way to the uncertain but relative freedom under his successors, and the auguries point to a further mellowing of the party line as Soviet society haltingly approaches the educational and living standards of the Western world. Nevertheless, until the pressures of ideological conformity are significantly relaxed, "bourgeois" scholars will continue to dominate the historiography of the Russian Revolution and Soviet studies generally.¹

¹ For the purposes of this essay the Russian Revolution may be roughly defined as the events of 1917, of which the fall of the monarchy in March and the Bolshevik seizure of power in November form two distinct climaxes. The Russian tradition (based on the Old Style calendar) has been observed in referring to the "February" and "October" revolutions. For bibliographies consult Charles Morley, *Guide to Research in Russian History* (Syracuse, 1951), and E. N. Gorodetskii, ed., *Velihaia obtiabr'shaia sotsialisticheskaia revoliutsiia: Bibliograficheskii ukazatel' dokumental'nykh publikatsii* (Moscow, 1961). See also Michael Karpovich, "The Russian Revolution of 1917," *Journal of Modern History*, II, No. 2 (June 1930), 258-80, for a discussion of historical periodicals (both Soviet and émigré), documentary collections, memoirs of tsarist figures, and other sources published before 1930. With some exceptions the present essay excludes unpublished material, periodical articles, collections of documents, the articles and speeches of the Bolshevik leaders, military memoirs, and works concerned primarily with the tsarist period before the revolutionary crisis. The comparative history of revolution, of which Crane Brinton's *Anatomy of Revolution* (rev. ed.; New York, 1965) may be regarded as the standard work, is another area which it seemed advisable to exclude. Writers who have dealt with the "significance" of the Russian Revolution (variously defined) are legion, and no attempt has been made to discuss material which is more ideological than historical. For an interpretive "typology" that includes some of these more discursive works, see James H. Billington, "Six Views of the Russian Revolution," *World Politics*, XVIII, No. 3 (April 1966), 452-73. My own principle of selection is necessarily subjective, but I have sought to cover the works of leading participants and foreign observers and to examine most of the important or tendentious secondary works published in Western languages. No de-

Before World War II comparatively few historians of the Atlantic community were concerned with areas beyond the traditional confines of Western civilization. Journalists and other "amateurs" were the chief interpreters of the Soviet scene, and even with the unprecedented boom in Russian area studies in recent years, especially in the United States, there has been a curious reluctance on the part of the professionals to plunge boldly into the mainstream of Russian history—that is, the major themes and issues rather than the marginal, the practical, or the convenient. This is particularly true of the Russian Revolution and its antecedents, although the number of specialized monographs in the field has now reached respectable proportions. But a work of synthesis based on new documentation and the latest research is long overdue.

The fluctuations of Western opinion regarding Soviet Russia have, of course, been reflected in the literature on 1917, above all the Bolshevik Revolution. The preoccupation of the Allied powers with winning the war in 1917–18 gave rise to a flood of printed matter denouncing the Bolsheviks as German dupes or agents and revealing little understanding of the historical roots of Bolshevism or of the circumstances which allowed Lenin and his colleagues to seize power with such remarkable ease. The crowning folly of this blend of outraged patriotism and political naïveté was the publication by a United States government agency of the spurious "Sisson Documents" under the garish title *The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy* (Washington, 1918).²

The memoirs of Allied diplomatic and military personnel, though scarcely more sophisticated on the whole, do have the merit of providing firsthand material otherwise unobtainable. The most useful of the ambassadorial accounts is that of the British envoy, Sir George Buchanan.³ A high Tory by political conviction, he was a political diplomatist of the old school and an honest if stolid observer. By contrast, the memoirs of the American representative, David R. Francis,⁴ are painfully superficial and furnish a case study on the perils of amateurism (and of political appointments) in the foreign service. French Ambassador Maurice Paléologue's "diary" (it shows evidence of later retouching) is an elegant but overly turgid literary composition which conveys the mood and flavor of the old regime in St. Petersburg.⁵ But for revolutionary events it is frequently uninformed and misguided. Paléologue was replaced in May 1917 by Joseph Noulens, a professional politician considered more acceptable to the democratic Provisional Government than his aristocratic predecessor. The choice was not a happy one, and Noulens's memoirs are in large part a bitter lament, unleavened by sympathy or insight, against the weakness and follies of the Kerensky government and the iniquities and

tailed appraisal of Soviet scholarship has been attempted, but I have chosen the most significant works illustrative of the changing party line.

² These documents, long regarded skeptically by most scholars, were conclusively proved to be forgeries in George F. Kennan, "The Sisson Documents," *Journal of Modern History*, XXVII, No. 2 (June 1956), 130–54.

³ *My Mission to Russia and Other Diplomatic Memories* (2 vols.; Boston, 1923).

⁴ *Russia from the American Embassy* (New York, 1921).

⁵ *An Ambassador's Memoirs* (3 vols.; London, 1923–25).

treachery of the Bolshevik regime.⁶ The reminiscences of the Belgian ambassador are colorful but add little to other accounts.⁷

The only substantial recollections by Allied officers are almost parodies of the proverbial "military mind": opinionated, ultraconservative, and politically ingenuous. In *With the Russian Army, 1914-1917* (2 vols.; London, 1921), Major General Sir Alfred Knox, the British military attaché, displays a stubborn incomprehension of the difficulties confronting the Provisional Government. But he is more informative than General Henri Niessel, head of the French military mission, who deals with a later period in his *Le triomphe des bolchéviki et la paix de Brest-Litovsk* (Paris, 1940). Less personal than Knox and padded with material available from the public record, Niessel's book is a disappointing complement to the jeremiad of the French ambassador.

The trio of unofficial representatives—R. H. Bruce Lockhart of Great Britain, Raymond Robins of the United States, and Jacques Sadoul of France—were men of initiative, intelligence, and good will, far more flexible and knowledgeable than their nominal superiors. Unfortunately, only Lockhart wrote a personal narrative,⁸ and it is exasperatingly terse on the events of 1917 (he was absent during the last months of the year). Yet of all the foreign observers on the Russian scene with at least quasi-official status, he alone recorded his experiences in a manner that does justice to the vivid kaleidoscope of revolutionary Russia. Quite apart from its historical value, *British Agent* remains a minor classic of popular autobiography. Robins, though a talented speaker and a dynamic personality, apparently lacked self-confidence as a writer and authorized William Hard, a successful journalist, to tell his story for him.⁹ The finished product lacked depth and subtlety and oversimplifies the Russian situation, sometimes to the point of gross distortion, but it faithfully expresses Robins's point of view, and as such it documents an important segment of the Revolution. As one of the earliest spokesmen for an accommodation with the Soviet government, Robins became something of a martyr in the eyes of those who felt that the Western powers had bungled their relations with the Bolsheviks from the beginning.¹⁰ The forbidding image of Stalinist Russia and the vicissitudes of the cold war have, in general, dealt unkindly with his reputation, an instructive example of historiographical fashion and the climate of opinion. Sadoul, a socialist who was eventually converted to communism, left in a series of letters to his friend Albert Thomas, a French cabinet minister, an astute commentary helpful in piecing together

⁶ *Mon ambassade en Russie soviétique 1917-1919* (2 vols.; Paris, 1933).

⁷ Jules Destrée, *Les fondateurs de neige* (Brussels, 1920).

⁸ *British Agent* (New York, 1933). His *The Two Revolutions* (London, 1957), a product of his mature reflections, is a brief interpretive narrative, with some personal interpolations, that does not add materially to our knowledge.

⁹ William Hard, *Raymond Robins' Own Story* (New York, 1920).

¹⁰ The most convincing case for this thesis is presented in William Appleman Williams, *American Russian Relations, 1781-1947* (New York, 1952). See also Frederick Lewis Schuman, *American Policy Toward Russia Since 1917* (New York, 1928). More critical appraisals of Robins may be found in George F. Kennan, *Russia Leaves the War* (Princeton, 1956), and Christopher Lasch, *The American Liberals and the Russian Revolution* (New York, 1962).

the intricate story of Allied-Bolshevik contacts in the winter of 1917–18.¹¹

Among scores of works by foreign journalists and miscellaneous observers who played no personal role of consequence in 1917, few are now of interest even as primary sources. The major exception is John Reed's masterful evocation of the October Revolution, *Ten Days that Shook the World* (New York, 1919). A Bolshevik partisan and a founding father of American communism, Reed was already something of a legend when he died of typhus in a Moscow hospital in 1920. Although written in haste and flawed by exaggeration and minor inaccuracies, the book conveys a sense of immediacy and personal participation that is rivaled by no other account of the Bolshevik seizure of power. It was praised by Lenin in a special foreword and thereafter adopted by the Soviet regime as a kind of unofficial textbook on the glories of October. The consolidation of Stalin's dictatorship rendered it unsuitable from the standpoint of party orthodoxy, for Reed had ignored the existence of Stalin (then an obscure figure outside Bolshevik ranks) and featured such ex post facto "traitors" as Leon Trotsky. One of the incidental details of Nikita Khrushchev's de-Stalinization program was the republication of *Ten Days*. But doctrinal incongruities remain: Grigorii Zinoviev, Nikolai Bukharin, and other Old Bolsheviks executed in the Great Purge have never been rehabilitated, except by indirection; yet Reed treats them with respect. The latitude permitted a dead author does not apply to a living author, however, and the Soviet historian who enters the sacred precincts of the October Revolution must of necessity master the nuances of party politics and ideology.

Other works that fall within the pro-Bolshevik category suffer by comparison with Reed but are not without interest. By far the best is Morgan Philips Price, *My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution* (London, 1921). The author was the *Manchester Guardian's* correspondent in Russia and served for many years as a Labor member of Parliament. Uneven and at times didactic, the volume is the most distinguished and persuasive eyewitness history over an extended period (the February Revolution through the early stages of the civil war) written by a non-Russian. Less reportorial and more interpretive than Reed (and thus with a bias more openly displayed), it generally eschews the stilted Marxist vernacular that soon came to be the hallmark of Communist literature. The portions based on his newspaper dispatches are sober and well reasoned; if other passages seem to miss the mark, one has only to sample the rapid outpourings of most of the correspondents in Russia to appreciate his achievement. Price's retrospective comment lacks humility but is difficult to refute: "I do not regret one word that I wrote then, and I am certain that, on most issues, my attitude turned out to be the correct one."¹²

Albert Rhys Williams's *Through the Russian Revolution* (New York, 1921) resembles Price's *Reminiscences* in tone, though Williams, an independent American journalist, never substantially altered his "fellow traveler" views in later life. His book is impressionistic, rambling, and often trivial, redeemed to some extent by numerous vignettes illuminating the bitterness of the class

¹¹ *Notes sur la révolution bolchevique* (Paris, 1919).

¹² "Witnesses of the Revolution," *Survey* (London), No. 41 (April 1962), p. 17.

struggle and the mood of the masses. Bessie Beatty, a correspondent for the *San Francisco Bulletin*, is as irritatingly diffuse as Williams but expresses herself in *The Red Heart of Russia* (New York, 1918) so circumspectly that her sympathy for the Soviet government is implied rather than stated. The same is true of Louise Bryant (Mrs. John Reed), who focuses more sharply on certain scenes and incidents in *Six Red Months in Russia* (New York, 1918), a collection of her newspaper and magazine articles.

At the opposite end of the political spectrum, the number of foreign commentators is naturally more plentiful. Perhaps the most intransigent is Robert Wilton, the London *Times* correspondent, in his *Russia's Agony* (New York, 1919). He devotes more space to historical background than is customary among journalists and is obviously better informed than many of his colleagues on the factual details of the February Revolution. The remainder is little more than a tract of the times. His hero is General Lavr Kornilov, whose unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the Provisional Government in September 1917 led directly to the Bolshevik triumph. The villains are the "pseudo-Jews of the Soviet" and such inoffensive scapegoats as Minister of Agriculture Viktor Chernov, "a hybrid Socialist-Revolutionary with Bolshevik leanings and pro-German tendencies." Despite a similar title, *Russia's Ruin* (London, 1919), by the London *Daily Telegraph* correspondent, E. H. Wilcox, is less offensive to reason and more temperate in language. Impersonal in tone and rather conventional, it is based on articles that originally appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*. E. P. Stebbing's *From Czar to Bolshevik* (London, 1918), another version by a British patriot of conservative views, is less pretentious and presents in diary form impressions garnered in the period from July to October. The most elaborate commentary by a French journalist is that of the *Petit Parisien's* correspondent, "Claude Anet" (Jean Schoffer). His *La révolution russe* (4 vols.; Paris, 1918-19) gives an almost day-by-day recital of events (and many documents) in which the moderate socialists of the Soviet are considered harbingers of Bolshevism.¹³

None of the works so far discussed is indispensable to historians of the Revolution, but their cumulative impact, as adjuncts to the more significant recollections of the leading Russian participants, is far from negligible. On the February Revolution and its background, the voluminous testimony before the Extraordinary Investigating Commission of the Provisional Government¹⁴ dwarfs the efforts of individual memoirists, few of whom were in a position to observe more than fragments of the total picture. The role of Tsar Nicholas II, the Empress Alexandra, and the unsavory Rasputin affair has been fully documented by a host of royal relatives, courtiers, officials, and others.¹⁵ For the less colorful circumstances surrounding the fall of the monarchy there are surprisingly few firsthand narratives. The most highly regarded is that of the conservative nationalist leader in the Duma, Vasili

¹³ J. W. Bezemer has surveyed most of the literature produced by Western observers in *De Russische Revolutie in Westerse Ogen* (Amsterdam, 1956).

¹⁴ *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima* (7 vols.; Moscow, 1924-27).

¹⁵ See Karpovich, pp. 261-63, 266-67.

Shul'gin. His *Dni* (Leningrad, 1926) is a brilliant chronicle, and despite political views that disqualified him from public office even during the initial phase of the Provisional Government, he depicts men under pressure with an uncanny accuracy that seems to belie the narrowness of his background. The president of the Duma, Mikhail Rodzianko, was the most strategically placed of any public figure. Yet his memoirs, given the melodramatic title *The Reign of Rasputin* (London, 1927) in the English edition, are uniformly pedestrian and contain few revelations of real importance.

On the fortunes of the Provisional Government, its leading spokesman has been Alexander Kerensky, minister of justice, war minister, and finally prime minister. A prolific and determined apologist for his regime, Kerensky produced in *The Catastrophe* (New York, 1927) and *The Crucifixion of Liberty* (New York, 1934) the major works of his early exile, rather thin and unconvincing fare. Loosely organized and apparently intended as memoirs, they are vitiated by the kind of empty rhetoric associated with political speeches in general and Kerensky's in particular. Much more satisfactory is his formal autobiography, *Russia and History's Turning Point* (New York, 1965). There are no surprises and few novelties—indeed there is considerable repetition—but the tone is less shrill, and a good many gaps in previous accounts of his activities in 1917 are filled in. One cannot avoid noticing, however, a distressing incomprehension of the circumstances that brought Bolshevism to the fore. Half a century of historical perspective has done nothing to eliminate Kerensky's blind spot. For him, Lenin is simply a German collaborator and the Bolsheviks a sectarian band of traitors.¹⁶

Kerensky's colleagues, most of whom joined the anti-Bolshevik emigration, proved to be an unusually reticent group. A number became active in émigré politics and wrote for obscure Russian-language publications. Whether because of disinclination, personal troubles, or publishing hurdles, only three produced major works: Pavel Miliukov, Viktor Chernov, and Iraklii Tsereveli.¹⁷ Miliukov, the leader of the Constitutional Democrats (Kadets), was foreign minister in the first cabinet until forced out in May by popular agitation associated with his imperialist war aims. He was also a distinguished historian, and his lengthy treatment of the Revolution¹⁸ should have carried the double authority of trained scholarship and inside knowledge. It is instead special pleading disguised as a history. Such value as it has derives from the highly subjective viewpoint of the author, for Kadet partisans have not recorded their thoughts in any large numbers.¹⁹ Miliukov's memoirs, though

¹⁶ Of more lasting value to scholars is the monumental collection of documents edited by Kerensky and Robert Paul Browder: *The Russian Provisional Government, 1917* (3 vols.; Stanford, 1961). Kerensky's *Prelude to Bolshevism: The Kornilov Rising* (New York, 1919) presents his testimony before the Provisional Government's Commission of Inquiry and his interpellated comment.

¹⁷ The memoirs of Vladimir Nabokov, head of the chancellery of the Provisional Government, are of considerable value: *Arkhiv Russkoi Revoliutsii*, I (Berlin, 1921), 9–96.

¹⁸ *Istoriia vtoroi russkoi revoliutsii* (3 parts; Sofia, 1921–24).

¹⁹ Apparently the only other party member to write an extensive history was Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, the wife of the British journalist Harold Williams. Her *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk* (London, 1919) is now badly dated but contains some firsthand information.

they break off in the summer of 1917 and are occasionally inaccurate in factual details, provide a more candid appraisal of the February Revolution and his brief period in office.²⁰

Chernov, a Socialist Revolutionary and the minister of agriculture under Kerensky, also chose to write a general history.²¹ He had the advantage of greater hindsight—an easy wisdom after the fact that appears all too often—as well as plentiful source material. While Miliukov blames Kerensky and his colleagues of the moderate left for weakness and irresolution in the face of the Bolshevik threat, Chernov finds that successive coalitions were too far to the right to meet the elemental demands of the masses. It is a just criticism not only of Miliukov but also of the numerous critics who have denounced Kerensky's personal deficiencies as if they were the key to the failure of the Provisional Government. Almost unique among anti-Bolshevik historians, Chernov understands the play of social and economic forces and their resolution in the October Revolution. His history ranks with the best that we have, not because it presents new information based on exhaustive research but because of its distinctive and forceful interpretation. Yet in his role of government minister the author consistently appears to good advantage as a radical social reformer constantly at odds with his conservative associates. Since his actual performance was considerably more restrained, the built-in bias, so notable in Miliukov's case, is an irritating reminder of human frailty among politicians turned historian.

The memoirs of Tsereteli, a Menshevik leader of the Petrograd Soviet who served briefly as minister of posts and telegraph, are the most detailed of any government official on the first months of the Revolution (to the end of July).²² Verbose on insignificant points and overly contentious at times, the work is unduly terse where it might be of special value. The Miliukov foreign policy crisis in May, for example, has long been an overworked subject, but information on the routine business and inner workings of the Soviet is not plentiful. Nevertheless, these memoirs constitute our most valuable primary source from the government side.

The most remarkable memoirs, indispensable to any historian of the Revolution, are those of Nikolai Sukhanov.²³ A left-wing socialist nominally associated with the Menshevik Internationalists, Sukhanov was a member of the Petrograd Soviet's executive committee and a talented journalist with intellectual integrity and unrestrained curiosity. His sardonic and inimitable style recaptures the essence of revolutionary Petrograd as no other eyewitness (with the possible exception of John Reed) has done. He was by no means the dispassionate observer he is sometimes said to have been. He gloried in political disputation and never pretended to conceal his distrust of the "bourgeoisie" or his contempt for those socialists who advocated prolonging a war that he, no less than Lenin, regarded as an imperialist crime. His

²⁰ *Vospominaniia* (New York, 1955).

²¹ *The Great Russian Revolution*, trans. Philip E. Mosely (New Haven, 1936).

²² *Vospominaniia o fevral'skoi revoliutsii* (2 vols.; Paris, 1963).

²³ *Zapiski o revoliutsii* (7 vols.; Berlin, 1922–23). Joel Carmichael edited, abridged, and translated the work as *The Russian Revolution, 1917* (New York, 1955).

ambivalent attitude toward the Bolsheviks (as well as a loquaciousness that extended to seven volumes) prevented his work from receiving more than limited praise and temporary notoriety in the Soviet Union, where it was studied with keen interest by party intellectuals in the 1920s. His caustic and offhand treatment of Stalin, who "produced . . . the impression of a grey blur, looming up now and then dimly and not leaving any trace," was only the most glaring departure from the new orthodoxies of Stalinism. Sukhanov had made an uneasy truce with the Soviet regime but was convicted of treasonable activities at the so-called Trial of the Mensheviks in 1931 and dispatched to a forced labor camp.

A striking contrast to Sukhanov's fate is furnished by the career of Vladimir Voitinskii, a fellow member of the Petrograd Soviet's executive committee. Originally a Bolshevik, he became a strong supporter of the Provisional Government and eventually established an international reputation as an economist while residing in Germany and the United States. His modest autobiography repeats much that is generally known about the Revolution but provides little-known details on the situation at the front, Lenin's personality, and Kerensky's vain attempt to oust the Bolsheviks from Petrograd.²⁴ Raphael Abramovitch, a Menshevik leader who emigrated to the United States, has several relevant chapters in his *The Soviet Revolution, 1917-1939* (New York, 1962). Despite odd bits and pieces of information drawn from personal knowledge and out-of-the-way sources, the book is a mediocre performance of dubious value to specialists and of little interest to the general reader.

On the Bolshevik side the massive quantity of the memoir literature is less impressive than its trivial quality. None of the leading participants save Trotsky ventured into print, and of the second rank only Aleksandr Shliapnikov, another member of the Soviet executive committee, launched a full-scale project. His memoir-history, while undistinguished as prose, is a lengthy and valuable miscellany on the first months of the Revolution and includes many documents in the text and in the appendixes.²⁵ The early volumes were subjected to increasingly hostile strictures in the Soviet press for supposed Trotskyist tendencies and for their failure, in effect, to elevate Stalin to a status commensurate with his later importance. The fourth volume was published with difficulty and then suppressed. Only one copy is said to survive in the Western world.²⁶

Trotsky's contribution to the historiography of the Revolution is a literary masterpiece, however skeptical one may be of his translator's claim that it is "scientific history."²⁷ Trotsky chose the third person singular in referring to himself, and from internal evidence one may judge that his research was

²⁴ W. S. Woytinsky, *Stormy Passage* (New York, 1961).

²⁵ *Semnadtsatii god* (4 vols.; Moscow, 1923-31).

²⁶ Robert H. McNeal, "Soviet Historiography on the October Revolution: A Review of Forty Years," *American Slavic and East European Review*, XVII, No. 3 (Oct. 1958), 271.

²⁷ *The History of the Russian Revolution* (3 vols.; New York, 1932). For a more extended appraisal of his *History*, see Robert D. Warth, "Leon Trotsky: Writer and Historian," *Journal of Modern History*, XX, No. 1 (March 1948), 27-41.

reasonably thorough (he disdained reference notes or a bibliography). But the power and verve of his narrative, the confident, almost insolent, boldness of his analysis, and the venomous portraits of his political allies and opponents—only Lenin is above the melee—do not derive from historical scholarship. They are the products of a revolutionary temperament and a writer of genius. It is of course to Trotsky's enforced leisure as an exile from the Soviet Union that we owe this brilliant affirmation of the Bolshevik triumph.²⁸ One of the political and cultural ironies of our time is the estimable reputation that the work has enjoyed in the democratic West, while the author's homeland, sorely in need of a literary epic enshrining the party in its heroic year, continues to anathematize him as a traitor and to proscribe his writings. Considering the sinuosities and abrupt reversals in the party line, the future rehabilitation of Trotsky—or at least his *History*—is not beyond the bounds of credibility. His anti-Stalinist credentials are certainly unimpeachable, and his version of the Revolution, if it does not square with current dogma, presents no insuperable barriers of fact or interpretation—given judicious editorial attention. Thus, he edged away from the idea that the February insurrection had been a spontaneous affair, a self-evident proposition previously accepted even by the Stalinists. The mass rising, he insists, was led by “conscious and tempered workers educated for the most part by the party of Lenin,” a long stride toward the party doctrine then being formulated that the Bolsheviks played a vital role in overthrowing the monarchy.

The “liberalism” of the 1920s failed to encourage Soviet scholars to undertake the arduous task of assessing the revolutionary year. Even the eminent Marxist historian Mikhail Pokrovskii, whose abstract school of economic determinism dominated the social sciences until the mid-1930s, backed away from so formidable an undertaking.²⁹ The best that could be done was a popular study by S. A. Piontkovskii, still the most accurate and least tendentious produced by a Soviet historian. Trotsky is given full credit for his revolutionary accomplishments, and Stalin is mentioned only twice, each time incidentally.³⁰ A more ambitious project followed shortly afterward, a documentary narrative to which Bukharin, Stalin, Rykov, and other party notables contributed. The style and interpretation are rather simpleminded, but the volumes are still useful as a primary source and as a semiofficial record of the party's historiographical views on the eve of Stalin's dictatorship.³¹ Both works were doomed by the march of political events. Within a few years the intellectual straitjacket had become so tight that scholars sought refuge in the trivia of the remote past or safeguarded more substantial researches by appropriate quotations from the Marxist classics (*tsitatnichestvo* or “citation-

²⁸ Trotsky's *My Life* (New York, 1930), though disappointingly succinct on 1917, should not be overlooked as a primary source and a fine example of autobiography.

²⁹ Some of his writings dealt with aspects of 1917, and he edited a collection of scholarly essays: *Ocherki po istorii oktiabr'skoi revoliutsii* (2 vols.; Moscow, 1927).

³⁰ *Oktiabr' 1917 g.* (Moscow, 1927). It was translated into French as *Histoire populaire de la révolution d'octobre* (Paris, 1927).

³¹ I have had access only to the English edition: W. Astrov, A. Slepkov, and J. Thomas, eds., *An Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution* (2 vols.; New York, 1928).

mongering" became a fine art in the Stalin era and has since shown no signs of languishing).

The chronic and embarrassing reluctance of the historical craft to venture upon the dangerous terrain of 1917 finally was overcome by allowing the researchers and writers to remain under the protective wing of Stalin and his associates, who formed an editorial board to oversee the production of an official history. In 1935 the first installment of a projected multivolume work on the Revolution and civil war appeared covering the "bourgeois-democratic revolution" and the period of the Provisional Government.³² In predictable fashion Stalin is depicted as Lenin's faithful subordinate, while Trotsky is ignored except to acknowledge that he was admitted to Bolshevik ranks in the summer of 1917 and to refute one of his "treacherous" legends. Seven years passed before the second volume was published, a lavishly detailed study of the "great proletarian insurrection." The party credo on the historical front had solidified in the interval, and Trotsky is depicted as a mendacious semi-Menshevik who skillfully sought to sabotage the Bolshevik rising in October by calling for its postponement. His presidency of the Petrograd Soviet, his leadership of the Military Revolutionary Committee, which organized the seizure of power, and even his appointment as commissar for foreign affairs in the new Soviet government are passed over without a word. To these flagrant examples of falsification by omission may be added the grotesque inflation of Stalin's role in the October days. Lenin's humble disciple of the first volume becomes the head of the hitherto unknown "party center" which is said to have directed the armed insurrection in Petrograd through the Military Revolutionary Committee. The other party luminaries in 1917 are similarly promoted or demoted, reviled or praised, depending upon how they fared during the Great Purge of the 1930s. Aside from these grave abuses of scholarly integrity and frequent departures from simple good taste, the volumes are essential to all students of the Revolution, for they make use of archival sources and other materials (with appropriate citations) unobtainable outside the Soviet Union.

Because of World War II, and presumably because of problems associated with the historiography of the civil war and Stalin's still more outrageous requirements for historical fabrication, the later volumes in the series were delayed indefinitely with no indication that they would ever appear.

Stalin's death in 1953 and Khrushchev's celebrated "secret" speech at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 prepared the way for a cultural renaissance that promised more than it fulfilled.³³ Although the new leadership was understandably reluctant to probe more deeply into the causes of intellectual dry rot than the "cult of personality," historians and other scholars were encouraged to break away from the stultifying dogmas of the past. The flirtation with liberalism was abruptly checked by revolutionary ferment in Poland and outright rebellion in Hungary. *Voprosy istorii*, the leading Soviet histori-

³² M. Gor'kii et al., eds., *Istoriia grazhdanskoi voiny v SSSR*, Vol. I (Moscow, 1935).

³³ See Robert D. Warth, "Stalin's Ghost and the Khrushchev Thaw: Soviet Historians in the Crucible," *Antioch Review*, XX, No. 4 (Winter 1960-61), 417-25.

cal journal, had meanwhile ventured too far along the road of de-Stalinization, and its editorial board was purged. But in 1957, in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the Soviet regime's hallowed year, the same journal featured articles on the Revolution that could not have been printed in Stalin's day.³⁴ In the same year the third volume of the long-delayed history of the civil war was published, and the series was rapidly completed with the appearance of two more in 1959 and 1960. The downgrading of Stalin's exploits during the civil war in these official volumes, coupled with Khrushchev's renewed onslaught on the Stalinist image in 1961, demonstrated that Soviet historiography on the October Revolution again had fallen behind the practical needs of the Soviet state.³⁵ The chief work of the Khrushchevian exegesis is a collaborative volume edited by P. N. Sobolev and others, *Istoriia velikoi oktiabr'skoi sotsialisticheskoi revoliutsii* (Moscow, 1962). Here the Lenin cult reigns supreme. Trotsky is cast into the Orwellian memory hole, Stalin is mentioned only in passing (always camouflaged well down in a list of party notables), and Zinoviev and Kamenev appear briefly only for purposes of castigation. Unfortunately, the desanctification of Stalin does not guarantee the production of intellectually honest history. One may anticipate a new flood of literature on "Great October" in this semicentennial year, reflecting of course the Brezhnev-Kosygin view of party requirements on the historiographical front.

In contrast to the hackneyed stereotypes that cripple Soviet efforts, the salient features of Western scholarship on the Russian Revolution are variety and versatility. There is no consensus, though a majority of historians, as befits their training and environments, betray an implicit distaste for the Bolsheviks as compared with their democratic rivals. It has usually been sufficient, at any rate, for Soviet publicists to consign even the most conscientious work to the bottomless pit of "bourgeois-imperialist historiography."

The early attempts to make sense out of the Russian turmoil were only incidentally concerned with the tribulations of the Provisional Government or the reasons for the Bolshevik ascendancy. Systematic investigation lagged well behind the more obvious task of recording the surface phenomena of Soviet communism for the outside world. Since the obsolescence of this sort of publication is swift and sure, it would serve no purpose to comment upon the various works—most of them by journalists—that devoted more than perfunctory attention to Russia in 1917. In the early years of the Soviet regime the only secondary work that recreated the events of 1917 with accuracy, understanding, and consistency of interpretation was Edward Alsworth Ross's *The Russian Bolshevik Revolution* (New York, 1921). A professor of sociology

³⁴ For a survey of Soviet work on the October Revolution, see M. E. Naidenov, "Velikaia oktiabr'skaia sotsialisticheskai revoliutsiia v sovetskoi istoriografii," *Voprosy istorii*, No. 10 (Oct.), 1957, pp. 167–80.

³⁵ Documentary collections continue to furnish a safe channel for historical investigation. The most ambitious project was sponsored by the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences: *Velikaia oktiabr'skaia sotsialisticheskai revoliutsiia: Dokumenty i materialy* (9 vols. in 10 parts; Moscow, 1957–63). A supplemental *Khronika sobytii* (5 vols.; Moscow, 1957–62) was published under the same auspices.

at the University of Wisconsin and a liberal in the Progressive tradition, Ross had traveled in Russia during the latter part of 1917.³⁶ His book is now antiquated, but it did provide the first clear and substantial account of what had happened and presents the startling thesis—startling at least to most Americans—that the Bolshevik *coup d'état* was not a bizarre accident of history but had been determined by the needs and aspirations of the Russian masses.

During the decade of the 1920s little was done to advance beyond the useful but still inadequate pioneering contribution that Ross had made. He was not a trained historian, and of those who were few ventured as far as publication. The one major exception was James Mavor, a reputable Canadian authority on economic history. His *The Russian Revolution* (New York, 1929) attempted far too much—a survey of the political and economic history of Russia from World War I to the early 1920s. It is based on inadequate and poorly assimilated source material, and the exposition is commonplace in judgment and awkward in style. Nor do minor errors of fact and quixotic interpretations add to the authority of the work. But since it is reasonably objective and was the only documented study available, it would be unfair to appraise it by present standards considering the uncertain state of our knowledge at the time. A Jesuit scholar, Edmund A. Walsh of Georgetown University, sought a popular audience with his *The Fall of the Russian Empire* (Boston, 1928). By emphasizing the dramatic and personal, especially the tragic fate of the Romanov family, he constructed an entertaining but shallow narrative in which the brief section on the Provisional Government forms no more than an epilogue to the fall of the dynasty. Another popular history, that of the German writer Michael Smilg-Benario, focused more sharply on 1917 and presented the most elaborate treatment that had thus far appeared.³⁷ The two volumes lacked the literary embellishments that might have attracted a wide audience and are somewhat deficient as a research contribution, but they may still be consulted with profit as one of the best longer narratives.

Three French works of more than routine interest vied for public favor in the early 1930s. The best was Lydia Bach's *Histoire de la révolution russe* (Paris, 1930). Its scope is limited to politics, for three further volumes were projected but never completed. Generally more reliable than its predecessors, at least on political matters, the book fell short of being the comprehensive and authoritative guide that might have been expected thirteen years after the Revolution. Victor Serge's *L'An I de la révolution russe* (Paris, 1930) is more subjective and gives primary attention to the first months of Bolshevik rule. Jean Jacoby's *Le Tsar Nicolas II et la révolution* (Paris, 1931) has no intrinsic value but remains something of a curiosity because of its royalist

³⁶ His personal impressions, as contained in *Russia in Upheaval* (New York, 1918), are inconsequential.

³⁷ *Der Zusammenbruch der Zarenmonarchie* (Zurich, 1928) and *Von Kerenski zu Lenin* (Zurich, 1929).

interpretation and the perpetuation of the legend that the British ambassador helped to overthrow the monarchy.

The appearance of William Henry Chamberlin's *The Russian Revolution, 1917–1921* (2 vols.; New York, 1935)³⁸ at last fulfilled the need of a detailed scholarly history by an impartial investigator. That it is still the standard work on the Revolution and civil war (Volume II is devoted to the latter) is a tribute to the author's skill and industry and at the same time reflects on professional historians for their failure to supersede it. Chamberlin was the *Christian Science Monitor's* correspondent in Russia from 1922 to 1933 and had a unique opportunity to consult research materials that have since been withdrawn from public use. His political views, which were sympathetic to the Soviet Union in the 1920s, became quite hostile during the course of the next decade, and he developed into an articulate ultraconservative on most questions of public policy. These personal idiosyncrasies nowhere intrude upon a book that must be considered a model of objectivity. The very absence of commitment can be a weakness, however, and the author wisely chose to present a heavily factual chronicle and to leave the finer points of interpretation to later and more specialized researchers. The somewhat colorless but always serviceable style lacks the driving intensity of Trotsky's or Reed's, and this, too, reflects the passionless detachment of the spectator rather than the participant. With the perspective of over thirty years, the limitations of Chamberlin's history are more readily apparent. The narrative is simply too compact to deal adequately with the broad framework and subtle ramifications of 1917, while the publication of new evidence has added a new dimension to familiar events. The documentation is often sketchy or imprecise, and though the bibliography is impressive there are gaps indicating that certain items were either overlooked or unavailable. A fresh approach is needed that will at least assemble the latest information and rework the old sources.

The most conspicuous lacuna in Chamberlin—the cursory treatment of the tsarist regime on the eve of the February Revolution—is rectified to some extent by Michael T. Florinsky's *The End of the Russian Empire* (New Haven, 1931) and Bernard Pares's *The Fall of the Russian Monarchy* (New York, 1939). Florinsky, a Russian émigré who joined the faculty of Columbia University, was the first to attempt a scholarly work on the subject. A topical rather than a chronological analysis, it was part of a large-scale collaborative work on the economic and social history of World War I. The author deals almost exclusively with politics and the wartime economy, and, despite the need for a thorough study of this vital period, his summary of economic conditions has not yet been surpassed. Pares, for many years the dean of British authorities on Russia, confined himself to personalities, political intrigue, and military history during the reign of Nicholas II (including the tragic fate of the royal family). In this field he continues to be our most reliable guide and has supplanted Florinsky's tentative chapters on the imperial couple and the government during the war. Pares modestly subtitled his book

³⁸ Reprinted in 1952 with a new introduction by the author.

A Study of the Evidence, and he does indeed slow the pace of the narrative by indulging too freely in side excursions, stylistic mannerisms, and the by-products of research.³⁹ But it has charm and taste as well as authority. The gravest defect, the failure to touch upon social and economic problems or to consider the state of the masses, gives a curiously warped effect to this story of high politics. The full history of the old regime and the February Revolution remains to be written.⁴⁰

The actual overthrow of the monarchy has been skillfully related by Gérard Walter, a prolific French authority on revolutionary movements and leaders.⁴¹ The two additional volumes that were to carry the history through the Bolshevik Revolution have not appeared. An awesome bibliography testifies to his knowledge of the literature, but a quasi-Communist bias and minor inaccuracies pointing to undue haste in composition impair an otherwise superior work.

Of the other endeavors to cover a substantial period of the Revolution—aside from biographies, monographs, and general histories of Russia—the only noteworthy additions are E. H. Carr's *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923* (3 vols.; New York, 1951–53), Alan Moorehead's *The Russian Revolution* (New York, 1958), and Joel Carmichael's *A Short History of the Russian Revolution* (New York, 1964). In purpose, execution, and viewpoint the first two are utterly dissimilar. Carr's three volumes form part of his mammoth and scholarly *History of Soviet Russia*, still in progress, and the relevant portions on 1917 do not pretend to be more than an analytical précis of the Social Democratic movement, especially the Bolshevik party, before the October Revolution. Moorehead, a talented literary craftsman with no claim to special knowledge of Russia, has written the only extended treatment of the Revolution expressly designed for popular consumption.⁴² It is an absorbing and colorful narrative based on a limited number of English-language sources and the "exhaustive research," financed in part by *Life* magazine, of a group of investigators headed by Stefan T. Possony, a specialist on what may be called the "Communist conspiracy." Had all this labor been devoted to

³⁹ Pares had firsthand knowledge of the period and was personally acquainted with many of the Duma leaders. His *My Russian Memoirs* (London, 1931) is of considerable interest on 1917.

⁴⁰ The best summary of the reign of Nicholas II is Richard Charques, *The Twilight of Imperial Russia* (Fair Lawn, N.J., 1958). George Katkov's *Russia 1917: The February Revolution* (London and New York, 1967) was made available to me in page proof after this article was completed. A fascinating study emphasizing political intrigue in Duma and court circles, it is based on a thorough acquaintance with the literature, especially obscure émigré publications. The author writes as a sophisticated though not uncritical apologist for the old regime, and although his work is of permanent value, it is highly tendentious and presents a rather fanciful interpretation of the February Revolution as a product of German intrigue and anti-tsarist agitation by the Duma "liberals" (many of them supposedly linked by ties to freemasonry). This conspiracy thesis owes much to the work of Sergei Mel'gunov (see below), notably his *Martovskie dni 1917 goda* (Paris, 1961).

⁴¹ *Histoire de la révolution russe* (Paris, 1953).

⁴² Two possible exceptions may be noted: John Shelton Curtiss, *The Russian Revolutions of 1917* (Princeton, 1957), and Alban Gordon, *Russian Year: A Calendar of Revolution* (London, 1935). The former is clear, concise, and accurate but designed as a brief survey for college students; the latter occasionally lapses into semifictional techniques.

original research on the revolutionary events themselves, the result might have yielded rich dividends. It was expended instead on an examination of diplomatic records to prove "that the Germans played an important role in bringing Lenin and the Bolsheviks to power." The text fails to support the author's absurd contention, though there is much futile speculation amid fragmentary evidence that Germany did provide funds for the Bolsheviks in 1917.⁴³ One may charitably conclude that Moorehead was led astray by his patrons and advisers, whose desire to "expose" Bolshevism casts discredit upon the whole enterprise. Carmichael's *Short History*, though somewhat conventional and rather narrowly based on Sukhanov and a limited number of standard sources, fulfills its purpose admirably as a modest but reliable and readable guide. If it lacks the dramatic luster and stylistic flourish of Moorehead's account, it more than compensates by a sophisticated expertise that places it in the front rank of revolutionary historiography.

Only within recent years have historians begun the prosaic but certainly vital assignment of examining the Revolution in microcosm. The most impressive of these specialized studies is Oliver H. Radkey's two-volume history of the Socialist Revolutionary party in 1917-18.⁴⁴ The research is exhaustive, the organization and analysis superb, and the prose clear and incisive. The verdict that the SRs destroyed themselves is harsh but irrefutable considering the staggering weight of the evidence. Yet the author's corrosive judgments are unnecessarily bitter; one may infer that Radkey was grievously wounded when his pristine revolutionary heroes became upon examination only straw men in disguise. Dedicated scholarship of this quality is rare, and it would be optimistic to expect monographs of equal caliber on the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks, and the Kadets.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, party history is one of the virgin fields of revolutionary research. Nor has more than a beginning been made on such topics as the agrarian problem, labor, or the armed forces. Such dramatic episodes as the July Days (the semi-insurrection in Petrograd) and

⁴³ The most significant documents relevant to the controversy have been published in Z. A. B. Zeman, ed., *Germany and the Revolution in Russia, 1915-1918* (London, 1958). A supplementary collection, edited and with an excellent introduction by Werner Hahlweg, is *Lenins Rückkehr nach Russland 1917* (Leiden, 1957).

⁴⁴ *The Agrarian Foes of Bolshevism* (New York, 1958) and *The Sickle under the Hammer* (New York, 1963). Radkey's *The Election to the Russian Constituent Assembly of 1917* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950) is slightly beyond the chronological scope of this essay but may be mentioned as the standard work on the subject.

⁴⁵ Leonard Schapiro's *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (New York, 1959) includes a brief chapter on the Bolsheviks in 1917. It is supplemented by the same author's *Origin of the Communist Autocracy* (London, 1955), which devotes three short chapters to Bolshevik tactics in 1917. Adam B. Ulam, *The Bolsheviks* (New York, 1965), a brilliant interpretive history of the party focused on Lenin, contains a lengthy chapter on the revolutionary year. Robert V. Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), is chiefly concerned with the Communist opposition in the 1920s but has a suggestive chapter on Bolshevik factions in 1917. Among the Anarchists, now virtually a forgotten political group, the only substantial statement of their views to my knowledge is "Voline" (Vsevolod Eichenbaum), *Nineteen-Seventeen: The Russian Revolution Betrayed* (New York, 1954), the essential part of a longer work (from the nineteenth century to 1921) entitled *La Révolution inconnue* (Paris, 1947). Unconventionality is its major recommendation.

the Kornilov movement also need further elucidation. The role of the soviets has not been studied in detail, but Oskar Anweiler's *Die Rätebewegung in Russland 1905-1921* (Leiden, 1958) goes far to fill that gap in a more broadly conceived work on the soviet movement. The Orthodox Church has been ably considered as part of a broader canvas in John Shelton Curtiss's *Church and State in Russia* (New York, 1940), concerning the last years of the empire, and *The Russian Church and the Soviet State, 1917-1950* (Boston, 1953).

Foreign affairs have been dealt with in Robert D. Warth's *The Allies and the Russian Revolution* (Durham, N.C., 1954) and Kennan's *Russia Leaves the War* (Princeton, 1956), the latter a beautifully written account of early Soviet-American relations.⁴⁶ The war aims of the major belligerents are thoroughly examined in the context of the Russian upheaval in Arno J. Mayer's *Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917-1918* (New Haven, 1959). As for the impact of the Revolution abroad, Stephen R. Graubard's *British Labour and the Russian Revolution, 1917-1924* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956) and Leo Stern's *Der Einfluss der grossen sozialistischen Oktoberrevolution auf Deutschland und die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung* (Berlin, 1958) are suggestive of what can be done on this subject. They have little in common with each other, for one is the sober monograph of an American scholar and the other a doctrinaire study by a German Communist. Foreign opinion of the Revolution is a neglected field, but Leonid I. Strakhovsky's *American Opinion About Russia, 1917-1920* (Toronto, 1961) is a useful if excessively brief survey.

The outlying portions of the Russian Empire are now receiving some attention. Richard Pipes's *The Formation of the Soviet Union* (2d ed.; Cambridge, Mass., 1964) is the fundamental work on the nationalities of European Russia and Central Asia in the early years of Soviet rule. The chapter on 1917 is encyclopedic but inevitably sketchy in attempting to include so many peoples and regions. Firuz Kazemzadeh's *The Struggle for Transcaucasia (1917-1921)* (New York, 1951) is chiefly concerned with the civil war but devotes some attention to 1917. John S. Reshetar, Jr., has a chapter on the activities of the Ukrainian Rada in 1917 in his *The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1920* (Princeton, 1952), and C. Jay Smith, Jr., briefly surveys developments in Finland in 1917 in his *Finland and the Russian Revolution, 1917-1922* (Athens, Ga., 1958). Nothing of importance has been done on Siberia or the Russian Far East.⁴⁷

Perhaps the most inexcusable failing is the absence of a thorough study of the Bolshevik Revolution. Neither Chamberlin's nor Trotsky's of the more general histories is really satisfactory, and no non-Communist historian has seriously investigated the transition to Bolshevik rule outside Petrograd and Moscow. The seizure of these two cities was obviously the key to power,

⁴⁶ Richard H. Ullman's *Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917-1921*, Vol. I: *Intervention and the War* (Princeton, 1961) adds little on the events of 1917.

⁴⁷ Alexander Park, *Bolshevism in Turkestan, 1917-1927* (New York, 1955), is perfunctory on 1917.

and Sergei Mel'gunov, a Russian émigré of pronounced rightist views, has examined the circumstances with admirable zeal in his *Kak bol'sheviki zakhvatili vlast'* (Paris, 1953). His argument that the coup was uncertain, haphazard, and poorly managed counters the Soviet legend of the dedicated party led by the infallible Lenin. But his conclusion that the Bolsheviks were a small group of fanatics who usurped power against the overwhelming opposition of the Russian masses is less convincing. This conspiracy thesis has long been fashionable in the West, though scholars have refrained from lending credence to the more unsophisticated variations.⁴⁸ The October Revolution lacks the epic qualities celebrated by Soviet historiography, but it was a good deal more than an armed rising by an isolated band of conspirators.

One further dimension of the revolutionary saga needs expansion: biography. The technique that Bertram D. Wolfe used so successfully for an earlier period in his *Three Who Made a Revolution* (2d ed.; Boston, 1955), a triple biography of Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin, could well be applied to 1917. There are few first-rate studies of the leading actors, although the production of Leniniana in the Soviet Union rivals the similar cults of Napoleon in France and Lincoln in the United States. Yet a biography worthy of Lenin's exalted position in modern history continues to elude its many practitioners. The older standard lives by Boris Shub⁴⁹ and Gérard Walter⁵⁰ have been superseded by Louis Fischer's *Life of Lenin* (New York, 1964). A distinguished effort which makes use of recently published Soviet sources, it is unfortunately not quite the scholarly and comprehensive biography that has so long been needed, nor is it adequate on Lenin's crucial role in 1917. Stefan T. Possony's *Lenin: The Compulsive Revolutionary* (Chicago, 1964) is an erratic performance, too much concerned with the conspiratorial aspects of his career. Robert Payne's *Life and Death of Lenin* (New York, 1964), while of peripheral interest to specialists, has literary merit as a popular and quixotic study of Lenin the man.⁵¹

Trotsky has been more fortunate in finding a biographer of the caliber of Isaac Deutscher, a former Polish Communist who has displayed a rare gift for both popular journalism and literate scholarship. His *The Prophet Armed: Trotsky, 1879-1921* (New York, 1954), the first of a trilogy, is a contemporary classic and furnishes a particularly full account of Trotsky's role in 1917. The same author's *Stalin* (New York, 1949) is an admirable if somewhat less illustrious example of the biographer's art (Deutscher lacked the rapport with Stalin that he had with Trotsky). For the most part it supplants Boris Souvarine's *Stalin* (New York, 1939), a pioneering and strongly hostile interpretation by a former leader of the French Communist

⁴⁸ For an intriguing example of this "primitive" view of the Bolshevik conspiracy, see Louis Paul Kirby, *The Russian Revolution* (Boston, 1940).

⁴⁹ *Lenin* (Garden City, 1948).

⁵⁰ *Lénine* (Paris, 1950).

⁵¹ For a more detailed analysis of these three biographies of Lenin, see Robert D. Warth, "Lenin: The Western Image Forty Years After," *Antioch Review*, XXIV, No. 4 (Winter 1964-65), 530-37.

party. Robert Payne's *Rise and Fall of Stalin* (New York, 1965) is less sensational than his *Lenin*, though subject to the limitations of a popular treatment.

The lives of the other Bolshevik chieftains have not been studied in any detail. Among the "bourgeois" politicians, certainly Kerensky and Miliukov are appropriate candidates for full-scale biographies. And Nicholas II has been strangely neglected except for the meretricious effort of "Mohammed Essad-bey" (Leo Noussimbaum), *Nicholas II: Prisoner of the Purple* (New York, 1937).

The Russian Revolution has receded far enough into the past to acquire a certain venerability—even of respectability—akin to the great revolutions of Western civilization, the English, the American, and the French. True, its denouement in a Communist dictatorship alien to the ideology and social structure of capitalist democracy has polarized the world to a degree that was scarcely foreseeable in 1917. The overtones of that continuing cold war have unfortunately invaded the historiography of both contestants, but the West has for the most part escaped the intellectual sterility of political dictation. The outlines of the Russian Revolution have now been sketched, and the devoted labor of a new generation of historians is gradually filling in the details of this grandiose panorama. No historical subject exerts a greater fascination or presents a bolder challenge than the Russian convulsion of 1917. The "definitive" work for our own age remains to be written.