

memento for the aging and ailing Prokofiev of a life-time friendship that was broken off by Miaskovskii's death on August 8, 1950. Prokofiev would never again take up his long-planned "biography of myself."

The original Russian text of these interrupted memoirs was readied for publication by M. G. Kozlova, a first-rate scholar, to judge by her work here. Her critical apparatus cannot be faulted, and her annotations are a model of thoroughness. The Soviet edition duly credits her scholarship and her central role in the book's appearance (Sergei Prokof'ev, *Avtobiografiia*, edited and prepared by M. G. Kozlova [Moscow, 1973]). Yet Kozlova's name is given no prominence whatsoever in the American edition. The nominal American editor, David Appel, admits in his explanatory note that "the literary groundwork for these memoirs was established by the Russian editor M. Kozlova" (p. vii), and he points to her critical report, which is reproduced in an abridged version as the preface to the notes at the back of the American edition. Such niggardly acknowledgment scarcely seems just from an American editor whose own role consisted in "undertaking . . . to fashion these chapters for American readers" (p. viii)—an undertaking that entailed, as far as I can tell from comparing the Russian and American editions, cutting out presumed redundancies in Prokofiev's text. Guy Daniels's English translation manages to capture much of the tone and style of Prokofiev's often inventive, always idiomatic, and sometimes quite idiosyncratic Russian.

The major disappointment in Victor Seroff's biography of Prokofiev stems not from it ending too soon, but from it reappearing in the first place—more than a decade after its original publication (Funk and Wagnalls, 1968)—reprinted exactly in its original form with none of its egregious errors and misprints corrected. The book was flawed from the first by a florid, journalistic style and an unseemly exaggeration of Seroff's own minuscule role in Prokofiev's life. His imbalanced approach is epitomized by the inordinate attention he devotes to discussion (and speculation) about Prokofiev's marital situation after 1941 and by the scant interest he shows in Prokofiev's music. Music, after all, is the *raison d'être* for a Prokofiev biography, yet Seroff's meager observations would do scant credit to concert program notes. How can Harrison Salisbury, quoted on the back cover, call this inaccurate, imbalanced, and tendentious work "a brilliant and perceptive study"?

I first reviewed Seroff's book ten years ago, and I refer readers of *Slavic Review* who want more information to that critique, which was published in *NOTES of the Music Library Association* (26, no. 3 [March 1970]: 519–21).

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LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

Vladimir Petrov's short, highly negative review of Dina Rome Spechler's *Domestic Influences on Soviet Foreign Policy* (*Slavic Review*, 39, no. 3 [September 1980]: 503–504) deserves a response, for it misrepresents the purpose, power, and importance of this study.

Spechler undertook to map divergent perspectives within the Soviet establishment regarding the Middle East crisis of October 1973, the state of *détente* at the time, and the relationship between the two. Toward this end, she analyzed one-month runs of five Soviet newspapers, using traditional Sovietological techniques of identifying consistently divergent terminology and doctrinal formulations. Her methodology was not quantitative content analysis, but was more systematic than much traditional Kremlinology—and therefore more persuasive in contending that the observed differences were real.

The main finding of this study was that four relatively coherent views of the relationship between U.S.-Soviet relations and the Middle East crisis could be discerned in the Soviet press. The images discussed and outlined by Spechler are subtle, and they support related findings by Franklyn Griffiths to the effect that four, not two, tendencies are observable in

Soviet elite perspectives on international relations. On this level, Spechler's book is rich with insight and provides a methodological and substantive basis for important future research — both academic and governmental.

Unfortunately, and for reasons that are not readily apparent, Spechler made exaggerated claims for her findings, generalizing them beyond the evidence at hand. That is, she simply asserted (without demonstration) that the newspapers served as outlets for the expression of given institutional interests and Politburo spokesmen. Professor Petrov has properly taken her to task for this. What he has failed to do, however, is alert the reader to the fact that these claims were very much a secondary (or tertiary) component of the book. Indeed, they were largely a sidelight. As a result, readers of *Slavic Review* were denied the opportunity to learn what the book was really about.

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PROFESSOR PETROV REPLIES:

I am happy for Professor Breslauer that he found Spechler's book "rich with insight" and representing a "methodological and substantive basis for important future research." I am sorry I did not. I detect many more than four "tendencies" among "Soviet elite perspectives" on international relations but am unable to demonstrate that these reflect domestic influences upon policy rather than minor exceptions from it, more by individuals than by institutionalized interest groups. Although she wisely focused on a single case, Spechler, in my view, has failed in her approach. Her method may or may not have been sound, but method is no substitute for knowledge, less so for perception. Domestic inputs in Soviet foreign policy formulation remain a badly understudied subject of great importance.

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