

From the Editor:

*Slavic Review* publishes letters to the editor with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be limited to one paragraph; comment on an article should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. The editor encourages writers to refrain from ad hominem discourse.

D.P.K.

To the Editor:

A basic misinterpretation provoked David Macey's distress over my *Mind and Labor on the Farm in Black-Earth Russia, 1861–1914* (*Slavic Review*, vol. 61, no. 3). Macey mistook two secondary aims of the book—assessment of Petr Stolypin's reforms and of the prospects for the peasant economy as of 1914—as its broader goals. He even contends that the book has no coherent argument. In fact, as the introduction (as well as the title) explains, the book is designed to critique the technological acumen and performance of the Russian peasantry as these evolved in the late imperial period. Contrary to Macey's account, it reaches bold, explicit conclusions on the constituent questions and their consequences. It builds to a five-sided explanation for Russian peasant exceptionalism (complete with comparative data on relative levels of technological underperformance, 184–87), and an appraisal of the emergence of differently minded peasants (187–90, 425–26). A mature concluding statement on the technological-economic aspects of Stolypin's reform appears on 371. Moreover, the concluding chapter delineates a three-layered progression of central black-earth Russia's agrarian problem: from technological to social to economic aspects. Namely, refinement of agricultural technique would accentuate conflicts between labor-poor and labor-rich farms. This would slow the formation of communal majorities able to enforce transitions to multifield systems. Next, the rural sector would require effective investment in processing industries for the most practicable multifield systems to thrive. Analysis of the 1920s buttresses the schema. In short, the book takes no shortcuts, and posits clear ideas on a variety of vital questions.

DAVID KERANS  
*Argus Research Corporation, New York*

Professor Macey does not wish to reply.

To the Editor:

I was not surprised to read the petty and malicious criticisms of my book, *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics*, in what nowadays can pass for a review by Donald Kenrick (*Slavic Review*, vol. 61, no. 3). It is a “bad” review not because it is not excessively laudatory but because it ignores the entire theoretical framework and the fundamental arguments, routinely takes points out of context, selects unrepresentative examples, makes demonstrably false statements, and is, by and large, intellectually dishonest. Again, I was not surprised that the book did not get a balanced review because I condemned Kenrick in it for, among other things, making up his data (108) and propagating preposterous charges of “ethnic cleansing” where none existed (246). I was also not surprised that Kenrick accepted the assignment to review a volume that personally attacked him even though he refrained from indicating this in his review since I have long been skeptical about academic ethics (in all fairness, I am not sure that Kenrick, of “London, England,” is an academic). I was somewhat surprised, that the editors of *Slavic Review*

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assigned the book to a Gypsy-activist (he admonishes me for “having little sympathy for the Gypsy”) even though a cursory glance at the volume would have revealed that it was written by a social scientist who deplores the subjectivity and “research methods” of Romaniologists. But I am astonished that the editors sent out a book for review to someone who is repeatedly criticized by name—which duly appears in the index—in the same book. Would you have asked Andrei Zhdanov to appraise Anna Akhmatova’s poems or Gustav Husák to assess Václav Havel’s essays?

ZOLTAN BARANY  
University of Texas

Dr. Kenrick replies:

It has been suggested that I might like to reply to Zoltan Barany’s letter. For any reader who wishes to keep up with the specialist literature in the Gypsy field, but has not yet read Edward Acton’s and my edited *Scholarship and the Gypsy Struggle* (Paul and Company Publishing Consortium), which includes my biography, I can say that I have three degrees and two diplomas, all from the University of London. I have retired from teaching, but am not sure whether I was an academic for I have only delivered occasional lectures at universities and I am anything but a Platonic philosopher. Although committed to helping individual Gypsies with the problems they face in a society that barely recognizes their right to exist as a minority, I am acknowledged as an “expert,” that is, as a neutral witness in this field by the courts in the United Kingdom as well as by immigration and planning tribunals. I approached this book review in the same way, ignoring attacks on my own data (which I will clarify in my future writings). Ethnic cleansing is unfortunately a worldwide phenomenon, as we can read in the papers every day. In my review I concentrated on Barany’s thesis and the facts on which it was based so that readers of the *Slavic Review* could decide whether they want to purchase it for their libraries and perhaps read it themselves.

DONALD KENRICK  
London, England

Editor’s note: In selecting book reviewers, the editor seeks to avoid conflicts of interest that might prejudice the reviewer either favorably or unfavorably toward the book under review. We regret that it is not always possible to realize this goal.

To the Editor:

George Enteen’s review of my book, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia: The Politics of Revisionist Historiography in the Soviet Union, 1956–1974*, as part of his review essay “Recent Writings about Soviet Historiography” (*Slavic Review*, vol. 61, no. 2), was extremely generous. He was also highly critical of certain aspects of my book, however. With a view to initiating discussion, I would like to respond briefly to some of the important issues he raises.

First, Enteen suggests that I have exaggerated the new accounts of collectivization advanced by V. P. Danilov, N. A. Ivnikskii, and their colleagues in the 1960s as a “paradigm shift” because they were “blinded” by the “myth of the kulak.” This criticism misrepresents my argument. I did not state that they achieved a paradigm shift in the 1960s. In fact I noted that in many respects theirs was a moderate critique. True, not until the late 1970s did Danilov explicitly repudiate the myth of the kulak as the “last exploiting class,” but it did not simply “implode.” It was undermined by his group’s strivings to establish the real social dynamics in the countryside on the basis of sustained empirical research, rather than Stalinist stereotypes.

Second, Enteen suggests that I underestimate “the influence of foreign scholarship” on the New Direction historians. I found no evidence whatsoever for external influences on their thinking. Few of these historians had foreign languages. While some might like to credit western scholarship as leavening Soviet revisionism, rereading Vladimir Lenin, intensive research on Russian agrarian and commercial history, and comparative analysis with the developing world were the wellsprings of New Direction new thinking.

Third, Enteen suggests that I understate Ia. S. Drabkin’s challenge to the Stalinist “lie” that Lenin had repudiated world revolution. This seems a matter of emphasis. Drabkin was