

could draw on the first-hand knowledge of the participants (former Chief of the General Staff Marshal Shaposhnikov was general editor of the volume under review). Many of the General Staff studies that became available to a wider audience after the collapse of the Soviet Union have been translated in to English by David Glantz and Harold S. Orenstein, but the study for the Battle of Moscow, and for the Berlin Operation at the other end of the war, had been conspicuously absent. Thanks to Richard W. Harrison, this is no longer the case—under review here is the study on the Battle of Moscow, and a similar volume on the Berlin Operation should be in print by the time you are reading this.

This volume deals with the fighting around Moscow from the latter phase of German offensive operations near the Soviet capital in mid-November 1941 to the end of January 1942, and was first made available to a limited military audience in 1943. After eventual declassification this study was finally openly published in Russian in 2006—elsewhere I have made use of a 2009 version of this study in Russian attributed to Boris Shaposhnikov. Like David Glantz and Harold S. Orenstein for other similar volumes published by Frank Cass, Harrison is an ideal candidate for translating a General Staff study, thanks to his background in Russian area studies and military history, and his time spent working in Russia. Elsewhere I have praised his biography of Soviet military theorist G. S. Isserson, *Architect of Soviet Victory in World War II*. His translation is generally excellent. It is difficult to find the right balance between conveying the feel of the rather formal Russian in the original and attaining readability in contemporary English, and Harrison has certainly remained true to the feel and typically the letter of the original Russian. The result is a source that, although not a particularly flowing read, will be of considerable value to a wide audience. From historians of the German military looking for a Soviet perspective on military events, to senior undergraduate students in search of what might be deemed primary source materials for an extended essay, this translated study should prove to be a very useful addition to the literature.

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Gerovitch, Slava. *Soviet Space Mythologies: Public Images, Private Memories, & the Making of a Cultural Identity*. Pitt Series in Russian and East European Studies. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015. xix + 232 pp. \$27.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-8229-6363-9.

Based on prodigious research, and framed within interdisciplinary theoretical constructs, Slava Gerovitch has written a fascinating cultural history of Soviet space mythology and technology. While drawing on private diaries, published documents, and interviews with key actors in the space project, this book explores not only space myths, but also how counter-myths played a constructed role in public discourse. This complex analysis of myth-making develops a notion of how collective memory shapes social identities, and provides the reader with an interesting understanding of how individual participants publicly describe themselves and remember the past.

Chapter 1 explores key myths of the space age, looking at numerous memoirs and commemorative festivities as cultural vehicles navigating historical events. Gerovitch argues while there was a master narrative orchestrated by the state, not all space mythologies were constructed from above, and that counter-memories by its participants eroded the official version. Chapter 2 is a fascinating account of how the quasi-nostalgic image of the Stalin era—as an era of efficient, bureaucratic management—was in fact a constructed collective memory, propagated by the space engineers in the Khrushchev era out of their frustration with the chaotic organizational structure of their own contemporary times. Chapter 3 explores the tension between the public image of Soviet cosmonauts and their professional identity. Gerovitch elucidates how Soviet propaganda portrayed cosmonaut heroes bravely flying their spacecraft into the unknown void; but the cosmonauts, in actual fact, were assigned a limited role on board of the highly automatized spacecraft and flight process.

In chapter 4, Gerovitch examines, and extensively transcribes for the reader, the endless narratives of the April 1961 Gagarin flight: each time the story was told and retold it was not only embellished,

but gradually grew into a myth. In chapter 5, Gerovitch brilliantly deconstructs the popular notion of a fixed “national style” in space engineering. Here he elucidates the complexity of engineering cultures and the various negotiations among groupings in geopolitical contexts—especially regarding the debates over automation of spacecraft.

Gerovitch’s final chapters continue to explore the cosmonaut myth both past and present. Here he paints some interesting analogies to the Stalin era and aviation history. Yet unlike Stalinist aviators, the cosmonauts set a moral example and carried a political message, rather than actually blazed a trail or career path for others. The cosmonauts’ professional accomplishments made them into celebrities, yet tragically, in their function as celebrities, they no longer needed their actual professional identity and role. The book ends with an epilogue assessing myth and identity in post-Soviet culture. When Gorbachev’s glasnost struck, veteran engineers, cosmonauts, and politicians began telling stories that deconstructed the past myths—we learn of failures of space missions, pressures to launch by politically motivated politicians, and tensions and divisions within the space industry itself. In the post-Soviet landscape, new problems developed with new forms of counter-memory arising, especially the privatization of memory and how this myopically promoted the framework of particular individuals and their own institutions.

Several chapters in the book, albeit in more condensed versions, had previously been published elsewhere as distinct essays. Therefore the book at times reads like an archipelago of succinct essays, on interrelated topics, that on occasion repeats some analysis addressed earlier. Yet with these relatively minor editorial criticisms aside, this is a work of profound importance in the cultural history of technology. Elegantly written, with cogent analysis of the process of myth-making, this work dramatically deepens our understanding of the Soviet space project writ large. Namely, Gerovitch portrays a complex tension between master narrative from above and counter-narratives from below, adds greatly to our understanding of mythology and thus describes how historical events are remembered and then retold in different historical epics, and finally offers the reader a nuanced understanding of the tensions between cosmonauts’, and the technical intelligentsia’s, professional identity and public image.

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Vihavainen, Timo, and Elena Bogdanova, eds. *Communism and Consumerism: The Soviet Alternative to the Affluent Society*. Eurasian Studies Library 7. Leiden: Brill, 2016. xxiv + 172 pp. \$120.00. ISBN 978-90-04-30396-6

This collection of six articles—three by one of its editors—is peculiar in a number of respects. “The focus,” writes Timo Vihavainen in the introduction, “is on Russia proper within the Soviet society in the 1960s, which was the crucial period when the Soviet Union really tried to create a new kind of consumer without the consumerist mentality. This topic,” he adds, “has been very little studied so far” (p. xi). One of the peculiar things about the book is how far from its advertised focus it strays. The first two substantive chapters, by Vihavainen, provide intellectual historical overviews of consumption and consumerism in Western philosophy and Marxist-Leninist ideology. The 1960s are not especially prominent in either. The third chapter, by Olga Gurova, is also broadly cast. Dividing the Soviet era into four periods (asceticism, *kul'turnost'*, dematerialization, and individual values), it synthesizes thirty-five years of scholarship on consumption, beginning with Vera Dunham’s “Big Deal” and James Millar’s “Little Deal” and proceeding through conceptualizations by Victor Buchli and Susan Reid, among others. Only with the fourth chapter, by Larissa Zakharova, does the chronological focus narrow to the 1950s and 1960s—albeit without a single reference to anything beyond 1963. Since Vihavainen’s concluding chapter samples post-Soviet opinions from St. Petersburg and Petrozavodsk about the meanings of *intelligenty* and *meshchane*, only Elena Bogdanova’s contribution, based on research into citizens’ complaints about the shortages, and the poor quality of goods and services, focuses on the 1960s and 1970s.