



histories. This author or authors is called collectively the Deuteronomist. The final redaction came during the postexilic period with the Priestly History (P), which was interpolated into the texts of J. E. and the Deuteronomist historian.

What Van Seters argues, however, is the opposite of this traditional view: "The Court History made use of, and supplemented, the Dtr history, and not vice versa...; the notion of an eye-witness account of events (of the reigns of Kings David and Solomon) has to be abandoned and with it the standard reconstruction of history writing in Israel." In other words, J does not exist as an eye-witness document of the tenth century, and to the proof of such a thesis Van Seters marshals a variety of arguments, both internal and comparative. Arguing from the unity of both style and outlook, Van Seters posits the Dtr historian as the first Israelite historian, who "attempted such a wide-ranging integration of forms in order to set forth within one work the whole foundation of Israelite society." He sees in Dtr's methodology evidence of the use of materials parallel to those found in other Near Eastern civilizations, such as king lists, inscriptions, chronicles, memorial texts, etc.; and he attempts to establish parallels in styles and composition as well.

Van Seters's thesis is an intriguing one and sure to provoke controversy. How well, then, does he establish his case? In the end, I think, the results are mixed. Certainly, Van Seters is absolutely correct when he states that it is much more productive to look at the text as a whole rather than break it down into discrete units; and in his close analysis of the biblical text he is persuasive in his argument for the unity of outlook and style. He is right to argue that to date a

narrative unit by its form alone is a "dubious procedure," and his critique of the traditional historical approach is, in many ways, long overdue. In his discussion of Herodotus, he rightly notes that classical scholars no longer view the historian as a mere collector of stories but, rather, as a skilled author who utilized his sources consciously and critically; and he skillfully applies the same type of analysis to the biblical text.

Nevertheless, serious problems arise in regard to Van Seters's own approach to the comparative materials. Because of the non-existence of the Israelite historical documents on which Dtr may have based his narrative, Van Seters's argument is built on a series of conjectures that he admits are all too often shaky. For example, in discussing the Egyptian "historical novel," he says: "To what extent such techniques, or the particular motifs themselves, were transmitted from one region to another is a question that perhaps will never be satisfactorily answered"; and elsewhere, in a discussion of Levantine memorial texts, he says that "such texts were probably not unknown in Israel and Judah, even if none has yet been found." Such examples are so numerous as to seriously undermine at least this part of Van Seters's argument.

There is also, at least for this reader, a methodological difficulty inherent in the structure of this book. Because the text is divided into geographical units, there is no sense at all of comparative chronology; and within the individual chapters themselves, the author often gets so entangled in the details of the historical documents under consideration that he loses sight of his argument. In addition, he seems at times to be more intent on offering a critique of previous theories than on stating his own

case; his discussions of other scholarship often border on the polemic.

Nevertheless, *In Search of History* is a stimulating and welcome, if not totally convincing, contribution to the difficult questions of ancient historiography and biblical criticism. W V

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN IMPERIAL  
RUSSIA AND THE SOVIET UNION**  
edited by Gregory Guroff  
and Fred V. Carstensen

(Princeton University Press: x + 372 pp.;  
\$12.95-\$40.00)

Thomas Magstadt

This book is the product of a symposium funded by the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. It contains essays by fifteen American scholars, some of them distinguished, and by one Soviet academician, Boris V. Anan'ich, a member of the USSR Academy of Science Institute of History in Leningrad. In attempting to illuminate economic development in Russian and Soviet society, these essays look at entrepreneurship in different historical periods as well as under a random assortment of rubrics.

Cyril Black attempts to give entrepreneurship its proper definition. Uncertainty and risk-taking, he notes, are basic to a broad definition, while innovation is the key to a much narrower definition. Black favors a concept "that includes functions not only of innovation but also leadership, management, the mobilization and allocation of resources for particular ends, risk taking, marketing, and certainly cost control...." This, unfortunately, is a semantic smorgasbord, not a definition. Indeed, the same sort of confusion permeates most of the volume. Lack of clarity and consensus among the many authors about the very term that is at the heart of the whole enterprise is a serious, if not fatal, flaw.

There are other problems. Is entrepreneurship in Imperial and Soviet Russia continuous or discontinuous? Evidence for both can be cited, but which pattern predominates? Black asserts at the beginning of the book that "the evolution toward a planned economy in the Soviet Union continued imperial policies, although to be sure in a much more intense form, rather than departing radically from them." Similarly, Carstensen and Guroff, in their concluding chapter, state that "fundamentally, these chapters challenge the periodization of Russian history that takes the Revolution of

1917 as the great watershed and point of discontinuity in Russian history."

And yet Joseph Berliner, who provides one of the very best papers of the collection, anticipates that "as the reader...moves from the preceding chapters to the ones that follow, while noticing the threads of continuity, he will surely be struck by the sharpness of the discontinuity." In his view: "The nature of entrepreneurship is vastly different, as are the economic problems associated with it." Socialism and central planning combine to produce an economic/institutional setting very unlike that of the earlier developing economies of the West. The "Red-expert problem," the question of appropriate incentives, and "the fact that there is no lawful way in the socialist economy to transfer the risk of entrepreneurship from the state to individuals" differentiate the Soviet economy from its czarist predecessor as well as from its contemporary free-market competitors. In addition, the elimination of spontaneity through comprehensive planning, the resistance of centrally planned economies to the reorganization of production and to structural diversity, and the reluctance of bureaucratic "entrepreneurs" to form dynamic new companies when old ones become inefficient or obsolescent are salient features of Soviet-type economies.

Finally, the external environment has been both a source of economic "disequilibria" and a spur to those new combinations that Berliner believes to be the "essence of technological progress." He closes with an intriguing observation about the consequences of one important continuity. In old Muscovy, most international trade was carried on by resident foreigners; as a result, Russian knowledge about foreign producers was second-hand. Today, Soviet knowledge of foreign technology, acquired mostly from books and periodicals and "foreign businessmen coming to Moscow as of old to sell their products and machines and factories," is similarly handicapped. In contrast to the Japanese, Americans, West Germans, and others, Soviet technocrats, engineers, and managers are not permitted to scour the globe in search of new products and techniques: "When technology is advancing rapidly, a nation whose entrepreneurs are not a full part of the international intercourse in ideas and information cannot expect to keep abreast of that advance."

One other essay of special interest is that of the lone Soviet contributor. Boris Anan'ich's study of the crucial decades just prior to World War I is scholarly and insightful. He notes that Alexander II's reforms of 1860 had a "tremendous influence"

on the Russian economy but precious little impact on the autocratic system of czarist rule. He argues cogently that Russia needed the dynamism of private initiative and entrepreneurial freedom but that, under the rigid system of czarist rule, the state would not relinquish its tight controls and restrictive business law. As a result, state and society were set on a collision course that culminated in the October Revolution.

Other articles deserve honorable mention: Roy and Betty Laird on innovation in Soviet agriculture; Gregory Grossman on the Party as manager and entrepreneur; Paul Cocks on attempts dating back to the late 1960s at institutionalizing the transfer of new technology from research to production through "science production associations." Cocks, for example, notes that "the slow and ineffective passage of ideas into practice remains the principal deficiency of Soviet science and technology organization."

Despite glaring inconsistencies in the

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scope, method, length, and quality of the essays in this volume, a few contributions are first rate, and several others contain enough subject matter of general interest to make it worthwhile reading for a fairly wide audience. However, most essays in the first half of the book will have appeal only to a very few historians with a special interest in Russian socioeconomic history or in comparative economic development. WV'

## POWERS OF THE PRESS: TWELVE OF THE WORLD'S INFLUENTIAL NEWSPAPERS by Martin Walker

(Pilgrim Press; ix + 401 pp.; \$20.00)

*Arnold Zeitlin*

Almost any weekend evening at about 10:30 the telephone will ring in a news agency bureau somewhere in the United States and the voice of an editor from headquarters in New York will boom accusingly: "The *New York Times* is reporting on Page One that...." This is usually the first word the outlying bureau has had that the *Times* scooped it on its own ground. Despite the lateness of the hour, the shaken bureau supervisor will set about trying to get within minutes a story that a *Times* reporter may have worked days to uncover.

It is a nightly routine in news agency offices to scrutinize the front and inside pages of the *Times*. Television news executives examine it for their own news agenda. Stories exclusive to the *Times* on Thursday appear in hastily rewritten form in *Time* and *Newsweek* over the weekend. No newspaper in the United States sets the national and international news agenda more firmly than the *New York Times*.

Such is the influence Martin Walker, a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*, has tried to isolate and illustrate in anecdotal accounts of the *New York Times* and eleven other dailies from ten countries: *The Times* of London, *Le Monde*, *Die Welt*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Pravda*, *Al-Ahram*, *Asahi Shimbun*, the *Washington Post*, the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, the *Melbourne Age*, and the *Rand Daily Mail*. The selection leans heavily toward the Empire, and Walker does not pretend that these are the most influential. His explanation for not selecting others is simply that "books must end somewhere, and choices must be made."

Conceding that influence is impossible to define, he offers his own invention: "Press influence is the power, by right of publication, to impose a newspaper's values and