

an insistence on "the free play of forces of body and spirit." He also says that Marx was primarily a philosopher of subjectivity, that the dialectic and social classes play a secondary role; he disputes the contention of classical Marxism that individuals exist only to the extent that they participate in entities like social relations, relations of production, countries, and so on. Such views naturally have generated plenty of controversy in France, and this edition is sure to bring the wrangling to the English-speaking world.

By subjectivity Henry means human affectivity, everything from human needs viewed abstractly to bodily motion. Throughout Henry's often forbidding exercise in interpreting Karl Marx, the laborer's inner self serves as the key that unlocks the texts.

Many of Henry's themes are familiar to students of non-Soviet Marxism, yet his method of arriving at familiar-sounding conclusions is original and often startling. He maintains, for example, that Marx stuck with the same cluster of philosophical intuitions throughout his career. The progress of Marx's works was a matter of sharpening his insights with increasing precision and power. Many others have claimed as much, but Henry pursues his ideas through a scrutiny of the text so close and resourceful that other treatments seem slapdash in comparison. He often turns up hermeneutic wrinkles that confound positivistic or Stalinist interpretations of Marx. (Louis Althusser's theory of an "epistemological break" between Marx's earlier and later work is a *bête noire* for Henry.)

Also like many other students of Marx, Henry considers economics a realm of mere appearance—"the mask that reality wears." It is a fallen world rooted in the specific subjectivity of myriad individuals. Nevertheless, Henry's Wildean conception of subjectivity prevents him from lapsing into vulgar idealism; his highly ramified understanding of the inner life differs sharply from the sundry ideologies attacked by Marx himself. Indeed, Henry's discussion of issues in political economy is as stimulating as it is conscientious. The book demands to be read for the economic chapters alone.

Unfortunately, Kathleen McLaughlin's translation bristles with obscurities. And the difficulty probably does not reside with Henry, for in France he has the reputation of a mellifluous stylist. Moreover, I am told, the English footnotes mostly lack the spirited polemics that light up the French volumes. Perhaps because cutting the 965-page original required too much compression, *Marx: A Philosophy of Human Reality*

often reminds the reader of Hegel's night in which all cows are black.

In *Marx and Human Nature: Refutation of a Legend*, Norman Geras advances an interpretation somewhat at odds with Henry. Geras argues that Marx never disputed the existence of a human nature that underlies all social and ethnographic variety, despite the widespread belief that he did. Marx's dismissal of reactionary shibboleths concerning human nature should not be taken for an outright rejection of the concept as such.

Much of the book carefully analyzes Marx's sixth thesis on Feuerbach, often mentioned by Althusser and his cronies as proof of Marx's presumed abandonment of human nature. Geras demonstrates that this brief paragraph on Feuerbach does not bolster the Althusserian position, as is commonly thought. "Marx did not reject the idea of a human nature," Geras concludes. "He was right not to do so."

Geras addresses a single issue and is convincing in showing that the repudiators of human nature in Marx's writing base their opinion on slender evidence. He also opposes conservatives who claim that socialism founders on the ingrained violence in man, that people will always be cruel and competitive. Like Wilde, Geras reminds us that our nature is far more flexible than is often allowed. As human beings we deserve better. (Geras does not cite Wilde either, I should add.)

Geras's style clogs his argument. He couples an inability to manage pronouns with a pedantic habit of treating the printed page like a blackboard, constantly requiring a glance back to figure out what the various subheadings refer to. I know he is capable of better because he wrote the Althusser entry in an excellent new reference work, *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, edited by Tom Bottomore, with Laurence Harris, V.G. Kiernan, and Ralph Miliband on the editorial board. Here Geras judiciously weighs Althusser's contribution in the pan and recognizes its influence without granting it any truth.

Life is short and scholarship is depressingly long; there is an urgent need for books that save time. Bottomore's dictionary addresses this need with aplomb and erudition. Instead of chopping through a forest of tomes on, say, political economy, how much more pleasant it is to consult a reliable summary, meandering through the related entries on value, surplus value, and so on, following a sequence of definitions to get a handle on the whole. The forthright opinions that abound in the entries do not mar

their educational value; the editor wisely avoided striking an inappropriately "objective" tone, allowing the distinguished, eclectic list of contributors to speak freely.

The sources are given for those who wish to delve further. Some might be annoyed by this nonstop issuing of promissory notes—topics are routinely deemed "worthy of much serious further study"; still, the nature of the enterprise makes for a collection of points of departure. Besides, this *Dictionary* is a powerful tool, a boon to students who need a helpful outline to guide them through a welter of interrelated concepts. (Spurred by these entries, for example, I want to peruse Rudolf Hilferding and a few other neglected figures.) My estimate is that Bottomore's effort will quietly shape everyone's reading in the field for years to come. [WV]

**AMERICA IN THE WORLD:
A GUIDE TO U.S. FOREIGN POLICY
by Wallace Irwin, Jr.**

(Praeger Publishers; xv + 246 pp.; \$31.95/
\$10.95)

Paul Zigman

Progressivism is usually associated with domestic political reform. Peaking at the turn of the century, it sought to combat the growing power of corporate trusts and urban machines by restoring to government a sense of "morality," that is, by eschewing special interests and focusing on objective, common public purposes.

This progressive activism at home was mirrored in the rhetoric and often the conduct of government policy abroad. To Woodrow Wilson, for example, as John Morton Blum has put it in *The Progressive Presidents*, "moral principle entailed a duty to end colonialism both in practice and by example; to fulfill the mission of America by parading the benefits of republican government, democratic elections and competitive markets; and to work for peace through 'orderly processes of just government based upon law.'"

With the end of World War I, support for progressivism collapsed. Smitten by what appeared to be the heavy costs of international idealism, Americans turned inward. But if progressivism was down, it was not out. On the foreign front the torch was passed to a new type of institution. These were private, nonpartisan educational organizations such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (established in 1910), the Foreign Policy Association (1918), and

the Council on Foreign Relations (1921). All shared a similar objective: to develop, in the face of America's isolationism, an informed, articulate audience for "enlightened" international policies, which meant, in the 1920s and '30s, collective security and the League of Nations. Their approach included network building, widely circulated publications, and a seemingly endless series of meetings, seminars, and luncheons.

The strategy worked. By the late 1930s a strong political foundation had been laid for the increasingly open internationalist policies pursued by Franklin Roosevelt.

The interwar success of these foreign policy organizations was matched by a string of postwar successes. In the late 1940s and throughout the '50s these organizations proved crucial in constructing the cold war consensus about America's global military and economic obligations. In the 1970s they focused efforts among policy-makers and much of the public upon recognizing and responding to the changing international environment, to shifts in power among U.S. allies and adversaries, to the rising significance of economics, environment, and energy, and to the emergence of a North-South axis in international relations.

Wallace Irwin's *America in the World* belongs to these recent efforts. Sponsored by the Foreign Policy Association (where Irwin served as editor from 1976 to 1980), the book's objective is educational; it attempts to draw for the general reader a quick map of America's foreign policy terrain.

Though at times frustratingly sketchy, the book manages to construct a solid beginner's framework for understanding the often "bewildering" global scene. Part I focuses on the United States. It looks first at the fundamentals of the international system of which this country is a part—in particular the general characteristics and goals of the national actors central to it. The section goes on to present an excellent outline of the historical record, beginning with the colonists, and ends with a more conventional, but still useful, view of the country's principal foreign policy institutions.

Parts II and III focus on the international environment, on the regional concerns of Europe, Northeast Asia, the Third World, and the Western Hemisphere, and on such substantive issues as war, peace, human rights, economics, ecology, and world order. Again, the view is conventional but useful.

Irwin's final chapter is his best. His framework fully in place, he sets out a series of insights about foreign policy practice that are not only short, simple, and wise, but

relevant to professional and amateur alike. About "getting the facts," for example, Irwin writes:

"We all tend to select (or let somebody else select for us) those facts that fit a familiar pattern and confirm our opinions and hunches. Especially in a field as full of ambiguity as foreign policy, it is important to leave room in our minds for surprising facts and ideas—those that upset our preconceptions and make us think in new ways about familiar problems, or open our minds to unfamiliar ones."

Still, despite the book's admittedly modest aims and many achievements, something is missing. The problem lies in the discussion of the foreign policy process. Moving in an orderly fashion from harried president, to unresponsive bureaucracy, to meddlesome Congress, to inconsistently active public, the discussion tends to treat the process as largely distinct from its domestic policy counterpart. This is a problem common to much of the work of America's nonpartisan foreign policy organizations. Perhaps ten, and certainly twenty or thirty, years ago, such a description would have sufficed. No longer.

The fact is that domestic politics no longer stops at the water's edge. Sitting at the international table, once reserved for a fairly predictable set of actors, is a host of new, and often uninvited, guests. They bring new concerns and interests as well as new ways of achieving their objectives. Today, for example, state governors battle missile deployments, mayors pursue export policies, congressional subcommittee chairmen cut deals with foreign governments, and voters

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cast ballots on nuclear freezes.

In short, foreign policy calls for understanding and skills quite unlike those developed over the years by America's progressive foreign policy community. By failing to recognize this changing domestic dimension of the U.S. foreign policy process, the community risks irrelevance—however important its analysis of foreign policy's changing external dimension.

THE GREAT FRONTIER: FREEDOM AND HIERARCHY IN MODERN TIMES

by William H. McNeill

(Princeton University Press; 71 pp.; \$13.95)

Kalman Goldstein

This slim volume by a master of world history is a distillation of McNeill's research and writing on human civilization and a further contribution to his argument against a microcosmic, or parochial, focus. In two essays, originally the Charles Edmundson Lectures at Baylor University for 1982, the author criticizes American claims to uniqueness and the Turner thesis of frontier democracy. For McNeill, global frontiers are better characterized by social hierarchy and constraining contacts with the "mother" culture than by anarchic freedom or pioneer equality.

Historically, says McNeill, change has embodied challenge and response; and it is violence and displacement, epidemiological onslaught, cultural differentiations, and struggles for dominance that have shaped the frontier. Whether enforcing military sanctions against an encountered "enemy" or replacing a decimated population with a subject labor force (slave, serf, peon, or indentured), frontier societies have extended old hierarchies or created new ones. These lead to, or are complemented by, graded hierarchies based on material success or on the ability to link the new communities to their civilized base. Thus the Spanish *encomendero*, the French Canadian *seigneur*, and Virginia's sons of English squires quickly brought a "slender simulacrum of European polite society" to the wilderness. Even the mountain men were incipient entrepreneurs tied umbilically to the provincial gentry, who, in turn, were economically and psychologically the shadow of the European elite.

In trying in such a brief volume to illustrate his thesis with examples from several cultures and epochs, McNeill runs the risk not only of truncated presentations and jar-