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Review Of "Many Shades of Red: State Policy and Collective Agriculture" By M. Meurs

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Review

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expenditures in excess of revenues, and financing both import surpluses and government debts through foreign borrowing, the entire package being simply unsustainable in the face of high levels of foreign indebtedness from the outset. In an interesting discussion of corporate governance questions associated with bank debt portfolios, Stephan concludes, of course, that a German-type system of governance is the appropriate one for Hungary.

PHILLIP J. BRYSON
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Many Shades of Red: State Policy and Collective Agriculture. Ed. Mieke Meurs. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999. vii, 249 pp. Notes. Index. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$62.00, hard bound.

This book contains case studies of collective farming in Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Hungary, and Russia, plus introductory and concluding chapters. The focus is primarily on the cooperative farm sector; only a few of the essays touch upon the state farm or private agricultural sectors. The approach is primarily historical, and the focus is on exploring the forces underlying the collectivization process and the changes that have occurred in these collective farm systems since they were established. Among other things this means that the various case studies do not address a common set of the management, economic, or social aspects of the collective farm system. Since the papers were first delivered at a conference in 1991, we learn little about the problems encountered in the process of decollectivization.

The chapter on Bulgaria by Mieke Meurs, Veska Kouzouharova, and Rositsa Stoyanova tells the strange story of how a country with the most equal distribution of land in east Europe in the precollectivization era ended up with the most consolidated farm sector. Although the authors describe the various governmental policies along this path, the underlying political, economic, and social factors receive relatively little attention so that readers are left with what is primarily a historical description, rather than a causal analysis.

Justin Lin's chapter on China presents an overall view of the Chinese agricultural sector after the communist revolution. The author competently surveys the changing organizational forms, the government's agricultural policies, and performance results. Given the wide range of topics covered, little that he presents is new.

By way of contrast, the chapter on Cuba by Carman Diana Deere and Niurka Perez covers some fascinating and new research results. They analyze the semivoluntary collectivization process and carefully sort out the different incentives offered the farmers in various years to persuade them to join the collectives. The authors also have a brief but interesting analysis of changing work incentives on the collective farms, a theme discussed by the editor in the introductory chapter as well.

Imre Kovach's short chapter on Hungary focuses primarily on the changing organizational forms of the agricultural sector and on the relevant governmental policies. Unfortunately, the reader gains little appreciation of the results of the radical decentralization of control over the farms, why their performance was disappointing, and the rich and varied system of subcontracting by which the Hungarian farms overcame some of the initial shortcomings of the collectivization model.

The chapter on Russia by Victor Danilov deals primarily with the state of prerevolutionary Russian agriculture and with the various steps in the collectivization process. We learn almost nothing about how these collectives work, the performance of these farms, or, indeed, what happened after 1935.

The introductory and final chapters by Meurs, the editor, highlight the similarities and differences within the collective farm sector in the five countries. Meurs's major thesis is that the experiences and lessons learned in these case studies apply to the development of a cooperative farm sector in other nations, including the capitalist west. Unfortunately, most of the case studies do little to advance this claim of policy relevance.

Although I found many interesting ideas and materials in this collection, it is not a reader-friendly book. Since the authors do not follow a similar outline or address the same issues, the varied national experiences are difficult to compare. The reader is also referred to tables that do not exist, to numbers without units, to tables of five-year plans without the

dates of these plans, to mysterious acronyms defined only pages later, to columns of percentages that do not add to 100 percent, and to numbers in the text that do not exactly correspond to the tables under discussion. The index is also quite inadequate for a book presenting such detailed information.

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Slawische Buchillustration im 20. Jahrhundert: Rußland—Polen—Tschechien—Slowakei. Ed.

Ulrich von Ritter with the assistance of Bodo Zelinsky. Literarische Bilderwelten: Internationale Buchgraphik in Europa und Übersee, vol. 6. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1998. 237 pp. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Plates. DM 298.00, hard bound.

This handsomely presented and well-illustrated volume presents 91 examples of twentieth-century Slavic illustrated books from the Ulrich von Ritter Collection, a marvelously rich holding in books from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries that has been the subject of five other volumes in this series, as well as several other catalogues from the Herzog August Library in Wolfenbüttel of the 1980s. Scarcely known outside central Europe, this material is fairly evenly distributed across sections on Russia (35 entries), Poland (27 entries), and the Czech and Slovak Republics (20 and 10 entries, respectively). The selection does not quite live up to the title, however, as only 11 of the imprints predate World War II (10 of them Russian from the 1910s and 1920s)—albeit several postwar imprints actually reproduce illustrations from much earlier (for example, nineteenth-century illustrations by J. Przyłuski for Ignacy Krasicki's *Monachomachia czyli Wojna mnichów* [Monachomachia or the war of the monks, II-4] and by Michał Elwiro Andriolli for Adam Mickiewicz's nationalistic *Pan Tadeusz* [II-8]). This disparity is probably due to von Ritter's claim in his introduction that "artistic significance from this period between the world wars is scarcely to be found in all of the eastern countries" (2). If in keeping generally with so fine a collection spanning several centuries, this conservative view ignores the revolutionary changes wrought by the Czech surrealists, Hungarian constructivists, and other avant-garde circles. Fortunately the short historical essays that accompany each country section are more comprehensive. Piotr Hordýnsky, writing on Polish book illustrations of the twentieth century, insists that "a diversity of styles and techniques in book illustration is especially noticeable in the era between the wars. Traditional and modern tendencies develop next to each other" (80). Although progressive tendencies are occasionally found (Sergei Tschechonin's illustrations for his 1924 monograph by Abram Erfos and Nikolai Punin [I-18] or Natal'ia Goncharova's colorful iconic illustrations for a 1921 French edition of Aleksandr Pushkin's *Tale of Tsar Saltan and His Son Glorious and Powerful Prince Gvidon Saltanovich and His Beautiful Swan Princess* [I-6]), the works chosen here are largely traditional. Yet this leaves ample opportunity for inventiveness and imaginative fantasy, given texts from both world literature (Slovakian Gabriel Štrba's nearly hallucinatory renderings using mixed intaglio techniques for a 1986 edition of Homer's *Odyssey* [IV-51]) and endemic production (Aleksandr Kurkin's illustrations for a 1985 edition of folktales assembled by the nineteenth-century historian Aleksandr Afanas'ev, *Trois royaumes, Contes populaires russes* [I-8]). Delightful spontaneous sketches by Felix Topolski accompany a *Polish Drinker: Dictionary and Bacchanalian Anthology* from 1959 [II-18], while the traditional and powerfully progressive are made one in Grzegorz Dobiesław Mazurck's linocut *Madonna Strafed by Bullet Holes* for an anthology of Polish Marian poetry, *Pod Twoją obronę* (Under your protection [II-13]) from the end of martial law. Each entry is accompanied by representative illustrations (many in color) and a fulsome description of both text and images by the team of sixteen contributors, who helped with translation and a full array of research matter including indexes by illustrator and author (with subdivision for titles) and brief but extremely useful biographical sketches for each of the illustrators. The essays accompanying the groupings of books begin to live up to the promise of the title of the volume. Natalia Borissowskaja considers twentieth-century Russian illustration from its Jugendstil beginnings in the "Mir iskusstvo" (World of art) group through the constructivists (including El Lissitzky and Aleksandr Rodchenko) to Vladimir Favorskii, whose renewal of the woodcut