

the seventeenth century, when actually the title page and the outside cover state clearly that this is a collection of essays (not a history of the commercial relations), illustrating certain aspects of Russian commerce of scholarly interest. Apparently, the reviewer had overlooked the title page. He then refers to the word "Asiatization," a concept alien to my thought which occurs once in one essay, put ironically in quotes by myself, in connection with Russia's trade turning from westward to eastward. You will have trouble to detect it at all, as I had myself! And then he discusses "serfdom" (which you will have equal trouble in finding mentioned in my book), as well as other "effects" on Russia's internal situation. They do appear in the same essay in a paragraph introduced by my sentence warning against unscientific speculations and making no more than a few asides for the sake of comparison. They do not in the least represent a "position" of mine.

A few lines taken out of 1 1/2 pages, completely out of context, are thus all that the reviewer refers to in a book of 332 pages, while the remaining 330 1/2 pages, based on years of wide research and much new source material, are *nowhere* mentioned.

Certainly, the reviewer deals with questions that may be in his mind, but they do not constitute topics of my book.

I would appreciate it if these points could be brought to the attention of the readers of the *Slavic Review*. Those who are interested in seeing a pertinent review of the book should be referred to, for instance, the *American Historical Review*, where Professor Bickford O'Brien reviewed it in Vol. LXXIII (December 1967), p. 463.

June 9, 1968

WALTHER KIRCHNER
University of Delaware

TO THE EDITORS:

Professor Kirchner regrets that I did not discuss the individual articles in his collection. Considering the space allotted for the review, this was not possible. And Professor O'Brien likewise did not discuss them, perhaps for the same reason. The articles are very closely researched and tend to deal with quite specific topics, and many of them are already well known. It was necessary, therefore, to discuss those elements of the book which presented Professor Kirchner's general interpretation of the "Commercial Relations Between Russia and Europe, 1400 to 1800." Although I am still critical of his interpretation, I do agree that it is peripheral to the main purpose of the book, which is to republish a number of articles.

June 19, 1968

THOMAS ESPER
Case Western Reserve
University

TO THE EDITORS:

Professor Robert D. Warth's thoughtful and eminently fair review of my book *The Young Stalin: The Early Years of an Elusive Revolutionary* (*Slavic Review*, June 1968) indicates that I tried to "expose" Stalin.

It may be of interest in this regard that several years ago I signed a contract to do a book tentatively entitled *Stalin and the Terror*, dealing with the 1930s. Each book has a natural life of its own, and as my research progressed I found myself delving into Stalin's early life to determine his character and personality before 1917. From that searching and study *The Young Stalin* evolved.