

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

I should like to use the columns of the *Slavic Review* to urge every department, program, and institute in the Russian and East European field to require every one of its graduate students to acquire command of French and German, as well as of the Slavic and other languages of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe necessary for effective teaching and instruction in the Slavic and East European field.

Most of us, young and old alike, have grown up in a country in which knowledge of languages of other peoples is exotic. Generally, we have learned the necessary Slavic and other languages so late in our training that few have acquired mastery of French and German, both of which are absolutely essential for anyone serious about scholarship and effective teaching about the Slavic and East European world. I am often distressed to note that the author of an otherwise excellent book by an American scholar was utterly ignorant of both primary and secondary sources essential for his work because they were published in French or German. This makes our scholarship parochial in an ever shrinking world and is frankly disgraceful.

I write now because of a review in the *American Historical Review*, 87, no. 4 (October 1982): 1079, by Professor Hans Torke of the Freie Universität of Berlin, an able German scholar. Torke has taught and carried on research in the United States, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe. He knows English and French and other Western languages as well as Russian and other Slavic languages necessary for research in our field. He wrote in the review that he had "once pledged not to review any more American books whose authors totally disregard German-language publications on their subjects" because "simply too many American scholars seem to be convinced that the study of Russian history is possible without the knowledge of German (or French)." He noted that he had written that review of an otherwise excellent book largely to emphasize that the young author had totally ignored literature in German and had therefore completed a flawed volume.

This shortcoming is our responsibility, not that of the government. Few of us engaged in research and instruction in this field require those we help train to master these essential languages. We should simply raise our standards, require command of French and German, and end this disgrace in our scholarship.

ROBERT F. BYRNES

Indiana University, Bloomington

TO THE EDITOR:

I read with interest the exchange between Prof. Demitri Shimkin and Academician Julian Bromlei (*Slavic Review*, 41, no. 4 [Winter 1982]: 692–99). Unfortunately, neither mentioned an element that must be present in far greater quantity before there can really be an intellectual dialogue between Soviet and Western anthropologists. Neither the establishment of a common corpus of ethnographic information, nor the restatement of hypotheses, nor the pursuit of joint research, nor a discussion of the place of anthropology in the social science spectrum in the Soviet Union and the West can be accomplished without a greatly increased program of translation from Russian and other Soviet languages into English.

It is unfortunate that when Columbia University Press published *Soviet and Western Anthropology*, Tamara Dragadze's stimulating report of the conference (published in *Current Anthropology*, 19, no. 1 [March 1978]: 119–28) was not included. Many of the articles cited in *Soviet and Western Anthropology* have been translated into English in the journals *Soviet Anthropology and Archeology* and *Soviet Sociology*. As a potential teaching tool, the body of literature in these two journals is significant, including a