

## Book Reviews

Michael Holzman. *Spies and Traitors: Kim Philby, James Angleton, and the Friendship and Betrayal that Would Shape MI6, the CIA, and the Cold War*. New York and London: Pegasus Books, 2021. 278 pp. Index. \$27.95, Hardcover.

Anyone interested in world of spy craft and espionage is at least vaguely familiar with the story of the British/Soviet intelligence agent, Kim Philby, and the failure of the intelligence community to recognize his traitorous activities for over two decades. Philby began working for British intelligence services during World War Two, in 1940, and held a number of key and significant posts that put him at the center of intelligence gathering networks and facilitated his friendship with James Jesus Angleton, a central figure in the American counterpart, the Central Intelligence Agency. It was only in 1963 that he was identified as a member of a spy ring, eventually known as the Cambridge Five, that had been sharing British secrets with the Soviet Union during the war and into the emerging Cold War.

Holzman is no stranger to this topic, having authored several other books on individuals involved in espionage, including James Angleton. This book is best defined as a dual biography of two men who were friends and colleagues for six years, but during the entire time the one (Philby) was exploiting the other (Angleton). Holzman believes that despite the work already done on these two individually, the best way to understand the men, their motivations, and their impact on both their own organizations and the Cold War more generally, is to examine them through this lens of parallel and, simultaneously, intertwined lives. The result is a dense text, with sometimes shared chapters, sometimes alternating chapters, and an enormous number of acronyms. There is a great deal of information here from the men's families and childhoods to their lives as young men searching for meaning and purpose. While Philby was drawn to communism and began to work for the NKVD as early as 1934, Angleton wrote poetry, joined the army, and entered Harvard Law School. By the time Angleton was asked to join the OSS in 1943, Philby was already an important figure in Britain's MI6. There were several instances when Philby might, and perhaps should, have been discovered as a Soviet double agent, but various circumstances worked to his advantage and he continued to be trusted. When he was finally exposed, the damage he had done to the British and American intelligence networks was

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enormous, as was the human cost of his actions. General Douglas MacArthur, for example, would later assess that Philby's betrayal had caused the injury, capture, or death of as many as 30,000 soldiers.

Holzman's book is not an easy, fluid read, even for those interested in the history of intelligence work and spies. Holzman's research relies on American and British archives, and a few translated Russian sources. It is rich with detail, and that may appeal to those already deeply steeped in this history, but an average, interested reader will likely find the book off-putting. On occasion, Holzman delves deeply into particular sources or parts of the overall story so deeply that the thread of his narrative becomes lost. It relies on the assumption that one is already well-versed in the acronyms and genealogy of the various organizations at the center of this episode.

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Victoria I. Zhuravleva, *The Common Past of Russians and Americans: Lecture Course*, Translated into English by Jean MacKenzie, Moscow: Russian State University for the Humanities, 2021, 618 pp. paper.

A lecture course entitled *The Common Past of Russians and Americans* by Victoria Ivanovna Zhuravleva was published just a few short months before the onset of the tragedy of war unfolded in Eastern Europe. Had this review been written prior to the 24th of February 2022, it would have most likely been a more resounding accolade for the author's intention of emphasizing the multidimensional centuries-long partnership between Russia and the United States that had evolved in spite of differences in their political systems, withstanding ample ideological disagreements. (331)

Although ultimately predictable, events of the past year once seemed inconceivable even for scholars of the history of Russian-American relations. Revisiting narratives of common heritage, however nuanced, perplexed, and at times distorted, were persistently deemed a means of averting the escalation of brewing discord with its irreversible catastrophic outcome. The presupposition that a mutual support at critical moments of national and international history, often reinforced with interpersonal encounters and individual inclinations, may help to preserve "the cooperation potential" in multiple spheres, as well as educational or cultural exchanges (331), has now been challenged with the precarious prevalence of "value judgements" over economic rationality and geopolitical pragmatism. (616) Due to an increasingly alarming lack of good will from the leaders and their inexcusable acts aimed at alienating the citizens of both countries, there has been no reciprocated "reset" of images and representations, and as such of bilateral relations. (616-617) Fueled by unfathomable shortsightedness and the unwillingness of all parties involved to mediate, the simmering crisis of the last

decade has transformed into a calamity dubbed by Hal Brands as “one of the most ruthlessly effectively proxy wars in modern history.”<sup>1</sup>

The primary purpose of the lectures may not be to reflect upon the reasons for such a failure, yet the volume offers insights into causes contributing to the current standoff lamentably worsening despite the two nations’ common legacy as ‘distant friends,’ allies in the world wars, and front-runners in the exploration of humanity’s last frontier in space.<sup>2</sup> The analysis culminates in the last three chapters, in which the author examines the formation of collective and personified images of the other nation that proved to be resilient in the backdrop of a changing political and socio-economic climate. (572) Although widely held Russian-American myths have never been completely detached from reality, they reflect it only selectively, to the extent that would correlate with each country’s own development agenda and ideological pursuits. (572) Instead of recognizing “the right of the opposing side to its differences” and “taking into account the other side’s mentality and culture of perception,” mutual representations have often waged a “war of images,” aimed at meeting domestic and political needs, which inevitably revealed internal problems of their respective societies. (572, 596). Creating “conditions for applied anti-Americanism in Russia and Russophobia in the U.S.” (616), this “war of images,” in Zhuravleva’s words, “was and still is one of the main characteristics of the crisis in bilateral relations.”<sup>3</sup>

Rather than being structured chronologically, the course is thematically organized around well-defined cycles of rapprochement between the two countries alternating with deep crises in their relations. In the United States, those periods of hope for a modernizing and rapidly westernizing Russia, accompanied with romantic imagery, gave way to disappointment and Russophobic pessimism (602) over the intrinsic “metamorphosis of American experience” conditioned by Russian reality (565), resulting in a demonic representation (596) of the vast Eurasian outsider. On the other hand, the notion of the ‘American Other,’ central to the formation of Russian own identity, has attained an unprecedented degree of pure abstraction, encompassing numerous tall tales, dreams, and fears that aroused a plethora of feelings, from adoration, to jealousy, to indignation, to bitter resentment.

In addition to traditionally used archival material, the common past of Russia and the United States has been well documented in a panoply of verbal and visual texts, including literary works, journalistic accounts, paintings, cartoons, posters,

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1. Hal Brands, “Russia Is Right: The U.S. Is Waging a Proxy War in Ukraine,” *Washington Post*, 10 May 2022. Available at ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/russia-is-right-the-us-is-waging-a-proxy-war-in-ukraine/2022/05/10/2c8058a4-d051-11ec-886b-df76183d233f\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/russia-is-right-the-us-is-waging-a-proxy-war-in-ukraine/2022/05/10/2c8058a4-d051-11ec-886b-df76183d233f_story.html))

2. As of October 22, Russian-American cooperation in space continues. See Jeffrey Kluger, “The U.S. and Russia Signal Continued Cooperation – In Space, At Least,” *Time*, 7 October, 2022. Available at <https://time.com/6220640/us-russian-space-station-collaboration/>

3. Victoria Ivanovna Zhuravleva, “How Putin’s Russia Perceives the United States: From Obama to Trump,” *Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society* vol. 4, no. 1 (2018): 146. This article is listed for further reading at the end of chapter 12. (595)

and films, that Zhuravleva has scrutinized to ascertain her argument. She has also traced the trajectories of sensational productions and musical performances, manifesting the role of soft power, cultural cross-fertilization, and influences in the evolution of public opinion, and in shaping mutual perceptions and preferences. A widely recognized authority in the field, the author elaborates upon an array of historical, cultural, technological, and socio-economic events that both countries have been involved in at some point within their tercentenary shared experience. These and a stunning constellation of stellar Russians<sup>4</sup> and Americans destined to contribute to the fate of both nations serve as a core holding the series together.

Although thoroughly compiled, the list of facts, names, and encounters may seem overly familiar to experts and peers. Since the course is designed for diverse and broad audiences, it is only occasionally interspersed with episodes that until recently have remained under-the-radar in similar attempts to explore multiple variables of changing attitudes towards one another on both sides of the Atlantic (or the Pacific for that matter!).<sup>5</sup> Thus, in Lecture 9, dedicated to cultural exchanges, Zhuravleva pulls her narrative off a beaten path, discussing the legacy of black female performers who introduced African American cultural idioms in Russia on the cusp of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The story of Coretté Arle-Titz, a spirituals and jazz singer and dancer, who transcended physical and porous cultural boundaries studying classical music in Russia, is remarkable. While back in the United States, in an atmosphere of “rapidly accelerating cultural hierarchy,” various genres were regrettably labeled as “lowbrow” and “highbrow,”<sup>6</sup> in her adoptive land, she managed to make transitions from one artistic milieu to another, looking for harmony and dismissing such a division as ephemeral. Indeed, transfigured by modernity, ancient polyrhythmic and acoustic traditions of African Americans became notably present in the music of Russian composers, such as Stravinsky. (425)

Jazz music held a prominent place as a character in its own right, being featured throughout several lectures to unveil the humanistic element of historical accounts. Thus, it appears in the chapter dedicated to the Russian-American military alliance during WWII (Lecture 7). As an important part of the war-time music front, jazz cultivated strong interpersonal ties between Soviet and

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4. By ‘Russians’ we mean those who hail from the Russian empire, the Soviet Union, post-Soviet Russia, and the former Soviet Republics. The term does not refer to Russian ethnicity, however. For the purpose of this review, it also implies people of other backgrounds, such as Ukrainians, Georgians, those from Baltic States, etc.

5. Two volumes are especially worth mentioning. One is Alexander Etkind’s *The Interpretation of Journeys: Russia and America in Travelogues and Intertexts* (2001), in which the author exposed intertextual manifestations of the Russian American experience. The other is a more recent work by Ivan Kurilla, entitled *Frenemies: A History of Opinions, Fantasies, Contacts, and Mutual (Mis)understanding between Russia and the U.S.A.*, 2018, in which he also followed fateful journeys of notable Russians in the United States and Americans in Russia, many of whom are mentioned in Zhuravleva’s volume.

6. See Lawrence W. Levin, “Jazz and American Culture,” *Journal of American Folklore* 102, no. 403 (January-March, 1989): 6-22.

American servicemen, who brimmed with the “feeling of unity” at the sound of the Glenn Miller’s orchestra, along with Russian songs sung by Lidiya Ruslanova and Leonid Utesov.

During the Cold War, jazz was considered “the State Department’s ideological weapon,” that was supposed “to shatter ideas of racial discrimination in the U.S.” and bring listeners in the Middle East, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, and Latin America “a message of freedom, at once artistic and political.” (521) On the other hand, for the Soviet people it remained “a window into America,” (567) an irresistible source of inspiration for those in search of inner-directedness and privacy apart from pervasive Soviet collectivism. Powered with emotional charge, jazz was identified with an imaginary West, juxtaposing it with the drabness of Soviet experience (566) and officially propagated art forms.

Every lecture is provided with an extensive list for further reading, as well as with references for videos, websites and podcasts that are expected to be posted on the website of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. Throughout the course the materials have been incidentally suggested for interactive learning.

This survey of the common heritage of two nations conjures nostalgia for the times when people of both countries were drawn closer together by genuine curiosity and “the desire to understand and learn about [and from] each other” (331). It once was rewarding and enjoyable to mine for daring personal stories of Russians in America and Americans in Russia, proving that even in the most difficult times, relations between these two countries transcended public diplomacy, remaining more extensive and congenial than the legacy of periodic crises otherwise suggests. The situation has changed, however. Russian infatuation with America faded over the last decades, while “the Russian Self–American Other opposition has retained its constitutive role in the interplay of meanings that defines Russian nationalism.”<sup>7</sup> Russians *en masse* blame the United States for misguided economic leadership, and even explicit policies designed to weaken their country, including the calamitous NATO extension eastward, that has been cited as one of the pretexts for the invasion of Ukraine. In its turn, in the West, Russia has been regarded as a pariah, the nation that turned inwards to its ignoble imperialistic demons, traumatizing the world with impunity ensured by its strategic nuclear arsenal. Even cultural achievements in music, literature, and the performing arts, which had previously worked as mediators, have lost their potency, trapped in controversy, and overtly rejected as a symbolic reincarnation of an enemy. It might be challenging to position the course about the common past between Russia and the U.S. within the radically transformed academic environments, where, on the one hand, materials are being developed to indoctrinate youth, and on the other, the focus of scholarly pursuits is being relentlessly shifted from Russia to other nations from the former Soviet space, including Ukraine, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Unlike the Cold War era, when the popularity of the Russian language was on the rise, since the beginning of the

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7. Zhuravleva, “How Putin’s Russia Perceives the United States. (145)

war in Ukraine, the enrollments have hit historic lows. “Americans are responding to conflict by closing [themselves] off from an adversary,” wrote Caroline Tracey from *Los Angeles Times*.<sup>8</sup> Students have reportedly sought “to distance themselves from anything Russia related.”<sup>9</sup> The war that is raging in Ukraine has become a dreadful shared present for two geopolitical giants, this time fighting on different sides of the barricades. Unfortunately, as during previous periods of ravelment, “the usual hierarchy of images” results in a one-dimensional perception of the devastating developments. Yet, like in the past, the danger of their simplistic interpretation is acknowledged by those scholars who, like Zhuravleva does in her project, push for “a recognition of [their] multi-faceted nature.” (597) Without it, the cyclical pattern of Russian-American relations may cease to exist, giving way to an enduring rivalry with an ever-looming threat of nuclear disaster. Their voices may be barely heard, (597) but they are out there, as evidenced by the design and publication of this course.

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Mark LaVoie, *Reagan's Soviet Rhetoric: Telling the Soviet Redemption Story*, Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2022, 133pp. Index.

For anyone who lived through the 1980s in the United States, a fair reading of *Reagan's Soviet Rhetoric* requires suspending memory of partisan politics and polemics. Ronald Reagan was one of the most profoundly controversial and provocative presidents, at least until recently, and above all this was true on foreign policy. His presidency brought the most tendentious and dangerous years of the Cold War, and it also coincided with the end of that superpower standoff. LaVoie uses content analysis of a selection of Reagan's speeches, from various periods of his life, to explore how his rhetoric evolved from inflammatory, uncompromising, and hawkish cold warrior to sympathetic negotiator with a new friend.

This political scientist found disorienting the book's lack of an introduction detailing its purpose, and more important what is *not* that purpose. “Reagan's changing Soviet rhetoric [is] the focus of this book....[It] is interested in how Reagan ... created a narrative in which the once irredeemable Soviet Union was redeemed.” (pg. 2). Reagan was a controversial figure and the end of the Cold War was a monumental historical moment. Content analysis may be used to explain political outcomes, but this book makes no effort to do so, and the author would have done well to make this clear. He merely seeks to reveal that Reagan's

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8. Caroline Tracey, “Why ‘canceling’ the Russian language isn’t the way to support Ukraine,” *Los Angeles Times*, 15 January 2023. Available at <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2023-01-15/russia-ukraine-foreign-language-study>

9. *Survey of Enrollment in Russian Language Classes, 2022*. Available at <https://sras.org/educators/survey/2022-college-survey-of-enrollments-in-russian-language-classes/>

rhetoric changed, at times speculating on why, but without exploring the impact on or significance for world events.

For the most part, that effort is clear and convincing. And, if one can escape the reasonable “why is this important?” question, it presents a fair chronicle of changing rhetoric from President Reagan. There can be no doubt that with the rise of the last Soviet general secretary, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, to power, Reagan’s rhetoric changed in line with the new opportunity to shift the superpower relationship.

Chapter Two details Reagan’s red-baiting period, the virulent anti-communism of the early Cold War period. Reagan portrayed the Soviets as “evil” as early as the mid-1950s (pg. 24), and communism was an “existential threat” to America and to democracy. Of course, Reagan was hardly the originator of such ideas and was far from alone in articulating them. There is no mention of President Kennedy’s anti-communism, or Goldwater’s, or Nixon’s. Because of this, the book might, for some, grossly exaggerate Reagan’s importance in the Cold War superpower relationship in the 1960s and 1970s, when one might reasonably argue that he was a minor player at best.

The lack of context might also lead a reader to miss the critical fact for understanding the Cold War - the Soviet rhetoric mirrored that of American anti-communists. Democracy was a sham, capitalism exploitative, and the people living in capitalist systems suffered untold inequality and oppression. While the US saw the Soviets as “a threat to peace and freedom,” (pg. 62), the Soviets saw us in the same way. The clash of two universalistic, incompatible systems defined the world, and Reagan’s rhetoric was hardly remarkable or unique, except in its consistent virulence.

Most troubling is when the author accepts the rhetoric as fact and, perhaps unconsciously, renders untenable political judgements. This does not happen consistently, but is frequent enough to raise eyebrows. Quoting Reagan in 1979 blasting what he called a massive Soviet military buildup and acquiring overwhelming military superiority, LaVoie comments, “in the face of such Soviet danger...” (pg. 42.) He seems to lose sight of the difference between campaign rhetoric of a politician and facts on the ground. John Kennedy campaigned on a “missile gap” in 1960, arguing that President Eisenhower had allowed the US to become weak. There was indeed a gap, a wide one in the favor of the United States, as Kennedy well knew.

Similarly, “Reagan made it clear that the Soviets were untrustworthy,” LaVoie writes (pg. 43). In fact, the USSR was a remarkably trustworthy negotiating partner and adhered to its treaty commitments. Perhaps he grew tired of the qualifier, “Reagan’s oratory,” and the like, in front of such statements. But the frequency with which he omits such qualifiers renders quite untenable assertions, particularly when not backed by any evidence whatsoever. They appear on and off throughout the last several chapters.

Chapter 4 details changes in Reagan’s rhetoric with the ascendance of Gorbachev. While LaVoie acknowledges that the emergence of a new, young

leader with vibrance and energy “offered a new opportunity,” (74), much of the remainder of the chapter seems to lose sight of this as the reason for Reagan’s shift. While reading how Gorbachev and the Soviet Union became “popular” in America and the West, I could not help but reflect on how susceptible we in democracies are to propaganda - no less so than are citizens living under dictatorship. After all, within a single ten-year span Stalin went from brutal dictator, to “Uncle Joe”, to brutal dictator. The perusal of Reagan’s rhetorical shift and of public opinion with it, with no exploration of where those directional arrows lie, leave this chapter rather flat.

But I return to my first point. This review is by a political scientist. The book on its own terms certainly chronicles well what was, in fact, a rapid and dramatic change in how Ronald Reagan spoke about the Soviet Union. That change did happen, and the sharpness and dramatic nature of that change is worth noting, and the critique here should be taken in that light.

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Lee A. Farrow, *The Catacazy Affair and the Uneasy Path of Russian-American Relations*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, ix. 202pp. Index. \$115.00, Hardcover.

In her latest book, Dr. Lee Farrow continues to explore key moments in the history of Russian-American relations in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Here, Farrow turns to Constantin Gavrilovich Catacazy’s brief, yet significant, tenure as Russian Ambassador to the United States. Simply put, Catacazy was a disaster who managed in only a few months to alienate both President Ulysses Grant and Secretary of State Hamilton Fish; to break with existing conventions concerning the behavior of diplomats in their host countries; and to usher in a chill in diplomatic relations between the US and Russia. In other words, as this well-written book reveals, the Catacazy Affair was far from a minor episode in American history.

The book opens with an overview of Russian-American relations prior to 1869. Farrow notes that the relationship between the two countries was often influenced by how each felt at particular moments about Britain, meaning there was always a wider context to their interactions. The two countries had increasing contacts as the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed with the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1809 and the signing of an official commercial treaty in 1832. A notable closeness developed in the 1860s as Russia emancipated its serfs and the US freed its slaves, and a particular sign of that friendship came in the form of an official visit by ships from the Russian Baltic fleet in 1863. Four years later, the sale of Alaska was negotiated, and the Russian-American relationship seemed



to be on firm footing. The only fly in the ointment, so to speak, was the pesky lingering issue of the Perkins claim – a subject that Catacazy soon found himself embroiled in, much to the detriment of his career.

In chapter two, Farrow informs readers about the early life and career of Catacazy, as well what kinds of duties he was expected to perform while serving as a foreign ambassador. What stands out from this wealth of information is Catacazy's marriage to Olga Fitz-James since that relationship was partly to blame for his social difficulties when he was posted to Washington. An outstanding beauty, Olga Catacazy had a questionable marital past which meant that she was unable to help him smooth over his many faux-pas.

Catacazy arrived in Washington in September 1869 and, as Chapter three reveals, immediately began to ruffle feathers as he delved into the Perkins claim, the question of whether the US would support Russia in its desire to overturn parts of the treaty that ended the Crimean War (the so-called Black Sea Question), and the lingering issue of whether Britain owed the US any compensation for damage done by vessels it had sold to the Confederacy during the Civil War. As these episodes progressed one after another, "Catacazy's reputation as meddlesome became well known in public, as well as in private circles." (p. 49) Part of the problem was the that he had no qualms about leaking information to the newspapers – something that diplomats were most definitely not supposed to do – and then lying about it to both irate US government officials and his superiors back in Russia. This question about Catacazy's use of the press was, in fact, so serious that Farrow devotes a whole chapter to it. She notes that the Secretary of State was sufficiently angered that he had the Secret Service investigate the matter and, once Fish had information about Catacazy's connections with journalists as well as damning details about his private life, he felt he could no longer trust anything that the Russian Ambassador said. Meanwhile, rather than acknowledge or change his behavior, Catacazy instead shifted blame to people associated with the Perkins claim, whom he said were trying to discredit him. The tension between the two men escalated to the point that Fish became determined to have his nemesis recalled.

In chapter five, Farrow demonstrates how these events in the political realm were compounded by the social difficulties Catacazy and his wife had in Washington. Owing to rumors about her past, Olga Catacazy was ostracized by the wives of important American officials including Julia Kean Fish, the wife of the Secretary of State. These women clearly understood the power of their actions, as Farrow explains with reference to an earlier incident involving Margaret Eaton (the wife of Andrew Jackson's secretary of war) which led to the resignation of almost the entire US cabinet. The chapter overall is an intriguing analysis of how women wielded sufficient power to affect American political life at a time when they could not yet vote, and the refusal to socialize with Catacazy's wife almost certainly contributed to the decision to ask for his recall.

As the next chapters show, in this era it was surprisingly difficult to recall an ambassador, despite the existence of a number of precedents. The situation with Catacazy was complicated by the fact that planning for an official visit by

the Russian Emperor's son, Grand Duke Alexis, was going on at the same time as US leaders were trying to get rid of Catacazy. Ultimately, American officials were forced to accept that the disgraced Russian could not be replaced prior to Alexis' arrival, so they had to make the best of a bad situation for a few more months. On the other hand, Catacazy did nothing to improve matters. His attempts to influence the Grand Duke's itinerary were resented and his speeches at several events during the tour were clumsy or inappropriate. Once he left US soil in January 1872, he continued to make a nuisance of himself by ignoring the demands of his superiors that he stay quiet about the affair. Instead, he almost immediately published a lengthy defense of his actions and continued to press for an inquiry for more than a decade.

In the end, this fascinating short work shows how important personal relationships are to the conduct of diplomacy, particularly between the United States and Russia.

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James Lloydovich Patterson, *Chronicle of the Left Hand: An American Black Family's Story from Slavery to Russia's Hollywood*, Washington, DC: New Academia Publishing, 2022. 178pp.

This is a fascinating book that deserves to be read by a large audience. Its origin, though, is a story all to itself. So, bear with me while I explain the origins of the book. James Lloydovich Patterson is the son of Lloyd Patterson who was one of the members of the Black and White film project that traveled to the Soviet Union in 1932 to make a film about race. The film was not made and most members of the group returned to the US. Lloyd stayed, married a Soviet woman, and had children. Lloyd invited his mother, Margaret, to come to the Soviet Union not long afterward, stayed for a couple of years, but returned to the U.S. This book is her story of her life in Jim Crow America that was published twice in Russian in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and 1960s. James appeared as a child in the movie *Circus* in 1936 and that set him up for a life of celebrity in the Soviet Union. Lloyd died in 1942 from the complication of a concussion during a bombing. Lloyd's widow and sons lived on in the Soviet Union as semi-celebrities. James joined the Soviet Navy and then became a well-known poet and writer. In the 1990s, he and his mother moved to the United States in order to find better income sources for her paintings and his poetry leaving behind the uncertain times of the post-Soviet 1990s.

The book was used by Soviet authorities as a way to further expose the horror of American slavery and Jim Crow America where discrimination and worse continued for decades. It is worth noting that a team of people in the last few years helped bring this book into its first English translation. Amy Ballard

spearheaded the project along with translator Jennifer E. Sunseri and editor Cheryl Ross. This edition is supplemented with insightful essays by Rimgaila Salys about the Patterson family and a Foreword by Allison Blakely. The end of the book provides the reader with a glimpse into the life and times of the Patterson family through photographs from the 1930s to 2020.

The story of African-Americans in the Russian and Soviet world is a fascinating topic with many unexplored areas. The story of the Patterson family is a rich one. The fact that many African-Americans sought more equality and a better life in the Soviet Union exposed the reality in Jim Crow America where they were considered second-class citizens. The book traces the life of James' grandmother as she made her way around many parts of the United States as a young girl and into adulthood. She faced many hardships because of her race and gender and was often in peril. She was often under physical and sexual threat from strangers and employers alike. She was paid less because she was African-American and because she was a woman. She was often not paid at all despite the promise of payment. A few kind people helped her when she needed it, but for the most part she forged ahead alone (and then later with her son, Lloyd) despite having nearly no family or societal support. It should be no surprise that her son, Lloyd, ascribed to radical views as he grew up. The systemic inequality helped him gravitate to socialism, especially as the Great Depression began. His mother, Margaret, also gravitated to this ideology seeking more equality and a brighter future.

In the end, this is a wonderful historical resource produced for the first time in English. Everyone interested in the complicated lives of African-Americans, and the Pattersons in particular, in the Soviet Union should read this new work. It is a great addition to the developing literature on the subject.

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