

**Viktor Kozlov. 1988. The Peoples of the Soviet Union. A translation of Natsional 'nostri SSSR. Translated by Pauline M. Tiffen. Hutchinson Press: London and Indiana University Press: Bloomington. ISBN 0-253-34356-9. 262 pages. \$37-50.**

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The Peoples of the Soviet Union (PSU) uses the six Russian/Soviet censuses conducted since 1897 to describe basic demographic trends in the Soviet Union from its inception in late 1910's to its present day configuration as represented in the 1979 census. Published in Russian as Natsional'nostri SSSR in 1982, PSU represents the fourth work to appear in the Second World Series--a series which provides English translations for progressive contemporary Soviet works on Soviet society and politics. In this essay, I will discuss PSU's value as a work on Soviet demography, comment on its place in the Second World Series, and critique the technical quality of PSU in terms of its readability, graphic design, and attention given to editorial details.

Kozlov begins with a laborious twenty page chapter introducing the 200+ ethnic communities mentioned in the six Russian/Soviet censuses. Both here and throughout the book, most ethnic groups receive rather short shrift; only certain Slavic communities are explored in depth. His tendency to list non-Slavic ethnic communities rather than describing them in detail makes the introductory chapter and various other parts of the book difficult if not impossible to read. For example, in the course of only nine pages (pp. 18-26) Kozlov describes the religious, linguistic, and physical characteristics and geographic distribution of over eighty ethnic groups. In chapter two, Kozlov continues with a systematic and highly readable discussion of Soviet geography and its effects on demographic processes. Here, he also describes the rise in ethnic heterogeneity that characterizes all Soviet provinces. In particular, he notes the ethnic diversification of cities, as Slavic groups and others began to emigrate to urban centers outside their native republics. In most republics today sizeable non-native populations (mostly Russian) live in the cities, while native populations continue to reside in rural areas. Perhaps because PSU

was written before the new openness, Kozlov discusses neither the policies that have created these present demographics nor their important political implications.

Kozlov devotes chapter three to a detailed discussion of changes in birth, death, marriage, and divorce rates in the Soviet Union. Not surprisingly, he devotes a good share of the chapter to the effects of the First and Second World Wars on conditions reflected in Soviet vital statistics. Equally predictably, he presents the reader with a barrage of tables, statistics and percentages, mostly drawn uncritically from the various Soviet censuses. Although Kozlov briefly discusses the role that contraception and child care practices play in shaping Soviet birth and infant mortality rates, he surprisingly devotes very little attention to cultural factors as explanations for demographic differences between ethnic groups. In the fourth and final chapter, Kozlov describes what he calls the "transformational ethnic process" (p. 153). Here he discusses the consolidation of smaller ethnic enclaves with larger ethnic communities, and the gradual assimilation of peoples throughout the Soviet Union into a general Soviet (read: Russian) culture. He discusses the rise in interethnic marriages, particularly in the European republics, and the spread of Russian as the primary or secondary language of most peoples throughout the Soviet Union. In a pre-openness environment, Kozlov finds himself in a difficult position, because he must simultaneously defend the assimilation process as natural and peaceful, ignore large-scale interethnic conflicts, and maintain that steps have been taken to assure the ethnic vitality of communities that do not want to (or perhaps are not asked to) assimilate, e.g., Gypsies and Mongolians. He does none of these convincingly.

Although I found sections of this book interesting and I believe this text could stimulate a lively discussion in an advanced seminar on Eastern Europe, I was surprised to find it included in the Second World Series. Teodor Shanin, the editor of the series, states that the series will "prefer authors who have shown originality and courage of style and form. (P. x)." Kozlov shows none of these. Instead he presents a broad-based demographic treatment that uses sources uncritically and carries a heavy ideological message that supports Soviet ethnic policies. Since I do not read Russian well enough to compare PSU to the original *Natsional 'nostri SSSR* I cannot comment on the accuracy of the translation. I can, however, note the PSU reads well (perhaps, the sign of a good rendering), but is in serious need of a good copy editor. Mistakes abound and include the transposition of words [decreased had for had decreased (p. 50)], typographic errors [gineteenth for nineteenth (p.44)], inconsistent American and British spellings

(even on the same page) [urbanisation and urbanization (p.62)], inconsistent transliteration of Russian words [Dnieper (p.40) and Dnepre (p. 18)], general inaccuracies [the implication that Georgian is a Germanic language (p.247)], and unconventional use of italics [Christianity and Islam (p. 21)]. Furthermore, the graphs (pp. 85 and 134) appear to have been generated on a poor- quality dot matrix printer and are amateurish and difficult to read.

Perhaps most disturbing is the marketing of the book itself. With its title *Peoples of the Soviet Union* and a front and back jacket that lists Kozlov as the "Key Ethnographer of the Soviet Union", one expects an in-depth ethnography of the Soviet people. Instead one is presented with a survey of demographic changes in the Soviet Union since the revolution, which contains little ethnographic data and even less critical analysis of population policies.