The intellectual odyssey of the Fonvizin group is said to begin in the nobles' boarding school at Moscow University and to continue later in the halls of the university proper; this phase ended when they assumed positions in state service in 1762 at age seventeen or eighteen. What made this generation different from all its predecessors was the emphasis on German natural law doctrines at the university; this was the key element planted in the intellects of the Fonvizin group, out of which evolved the rest of their thought later in life.

What kind of proof is adduced to demonstrate the truth of this key concept? First we are given the names of six professors invited from Germany to teach at the university and told that "a majority of the new professors . . . had been schooled within the general framework of the ideas of the German Enlightenment," including of course the natural law doctrines of Wolff and Pufendorf. We have reason to believe the young men were "disposed" to accepting these ideas. Next we get a brief and informal gloss on the German enlightenment with a discussion of how moral issues would have been presented to the students within that framework. This influence is then said to be reinforced by neo-Stoicism, which is, in its turn, explained. The rest of the chapter is devoted to a close examination of the early literary productions of Moscow University students, however without more than a line or two about the Fonvizin group itself.

Is this it? Is this all we know about the six years of school? Does nobody know what courses were offered in the boarding school and in the university? Who taught them? Did the Fonvizin group actually take them? Were there other people teaching other possibly contradicting or competing courses? And what about those student writings? Is it that the Fonvizin group wrote virtually nothing at all? Or is it that what they did write regretfully has no relationship to German natural law theories? How can the reader possibly judge the merits of the offered theory unless these questions are answered?

Probing a little only makes matters worse. It turns out that in the early years of Moscow University, there was only one Professor teaching the courses of the juridical faculty: Philipp Heinrich (not Heinrich Philipp, as the text would have it) Dilthey, who was not trained at "Leipzig, Halle or Tübingen" as the text misleadingly suggests, but at Strassbourg, Innsbruck and Vienna, and was hence almost certainly a Roman Catholic and a canon lawyer. Most certainly he could not have been "one of Pufendorf's students," which in its most natural construction makes temporal nonsense. Yes he did teach natural law at Moscow University, but it was along with three other varieties of law. These facts, then, launch a whole new series of questions about Gleason's text. This portion of the book, like all the rest of it, rests on quicksand. I am not asserting that Gleason could not smooth away and explain these difficulties. I am asserting that he in fact does not. Historians are supposed to clear the way, not clutter it with a thousand unanswered questions.

W. R. Augustine
Glendon College, York University


The question of when or whether a Russian bourgeoisie came into existence has haunted publicists and historians since the Marxist-Populist quarrels in the 1890s. Its spiritual origins go back at least to Herzen's impassioned cry: "God save us from a bourgeoisie." In this debate Owen's conclusions—if not his methodology—place him close to some Mensheviks who maintained that a Russian bourgeoisie was slow to mature and only emerged with a genuine class consciousness in the Revolution of 1905. His own
variation on this theme offers a "tripartite terminology" of a "traditional merchantry" dominant into the early nineteenth century, a "capitalist merchantry" (in the Weberian sense) from the 1840s to 1905, and a genuine bourgeoisie consciousness emerging in 1905 without, however, entirely replacing "the merchant ideology of the past."

Owen's failure to define and apply his concepts clearly and consistently creates a good deal of terminological confusion throughout the narrative. In some places he emphasizes liberal political values as the true measure of a bourgeoisie. In other places he argues that "it was in the field of culture and local government, not economics, that elements of a truly bourgeois consciousness would first become manifest." (p. 144) Yet neither in culture nor in the Moscow Duma did liberal political values play any role at all until 1904-05. Elsewhere he maintains that a vital part of merchant ideology (but not presumably of bourgeois ideology) was its defense of economic self-interest. Nor is clarity gained by characterizing the "leading Moscow merchants" by 1905 as both a bourgeoisie in fact" (the equivalent of Marx's bourgeoisie in itself) and "a class in the full meaning of the word" (Marx's class for itself—cf. pp. 174 and fn. 2, p. 267). It is either one or the other; it cannot be both. But Owen states that what really emerged in 1905 was not one bourgeoisie in Moscow but two: "Together with a newly emergent liberal bourgeoisie, therefore, there formed in Moscow a conservative bourgeoisie as well. . . ." (p. 174)

Owen begins his historical narrative with a description of changes taking place in the Moscow merchant estate before 1855. At one point he calls them "the transition from traditional to modern ways" though earlier he rejects this terminology. What he shows is a curious mix of one and the other. He attributes the changes on the part of "the leading Moscow merchantry" to wealth and education although the Tret'iakovs, for example, were not among the wealthiest despite their patronage, and Kokorev, the Morozovs, and Khludovs were not well-educated. He accepts the established view that the merchants committed to innovation formed an alliance with Slavophile intellectuals based upon economic nationalism and political loyalty to the autocracy. However, while it is true that government finally accepted many of the economic measures recommended by this alliance, it is difficult to agree with the author that during the two decades between 1855 and 1877 "an unprecedented spirit of mutual trust developed between highly places government officials and the capitalist merchants of Moscow." (p. 53) In fact, bureaucrats and merchants harbored a deep suspicion of and contempt for one another which surfaced most clearly in the tariff and labor legislation debates and broke into the open in 1904-05 in mutual recriminations over the real causes of the revolution.

In his description of an emerging bourgeois consciousness, Owen gives numerous illustrations of the merchants' apparently contradictory behavior: its attachment to patriarchal factory management but importation of modern machinery, its more active participation in local government but its indifference to political organization, and its cultivation of the arts but aversion to mass education. Despite this spotty record, Owen concludes that a full-blown political consciousness had emerged by 1904 in the form of a "new commitment to fundamental political reform." (p. 172) But it turned out not to be fundamental and not much of a commitment after all. The author ends up, then, by endorsing the traditional explanation that the fear of the strike movement combined with innate political conservatism prevented the Russian bourgeoisie from carrying out its putative historical role.

Because the author gives such prominence to politics in his class definition, he leaves very little space to the economic activities of the Moscow merchants, except for brief treatments of railroads and tariffs. There is virtually nothing on banking and currency, commerce, manufacturing, and foreign merchants. Aside from the rivalry with Łódź, there is no discussion of the relations between Moscow merchants and other merchants throughout the empire.