Fish builds upon this framework in subsequent chapters. In chapter 4 he demonstrates the influence of each of these factors in the formation of six national political parties, and in chapter 5 he reviews the development of political movements in four localities within the context of these factors. Among the points made are that the Soviet socioeconomic structure denied a mass base of support to opposition parties and movements at both the national and local level. Further, the pervasive state security apparatus dictated that parties be highly decentralized.

However, in neither chapter does Fish wholly confine himself to a consideration of the general factors outlined in chapter 3. Indeed, some of the more interesting of the book's arguments are to be found in the places at which he diverges from the analytical framework. For instance, much of the chapter on national parties concerns itself with a discussion of the effect of the search for a common identity on the structure and internal dynamics of the respective parties.

Fish concludes by briefly considering the impact of the Gorbachev-era party system on Russia since the attempted coup. His essential argument is that Russian democracy continues to suffer from the Soviet legacy. The poorly defined party system has given impetus to a strong executive, "mafias," and continued bureaucratic control over the life of the country. Not all of this, however, necessarily resulted from structural and institutional causes. In a departure from the central argument of the rest of the book, Fish admits that many of the current hurdles to democracy faced by Russia may well have followed from elite choices, particularly those of Boris El'tsin. The most problematic of these was the decision not to remove the former Soviet nomenklatura from its positions of power in either the bureaucracy or the soviets.

Terry D. Clark
Creighton University


In this impressive recapitulation of the intellectual history of Marxist theory and its impact on Bolshevik theory and practice, Walicki has several explicit aims in mind. First, he wishes to restore a sharp, clear image of the original dogmatic and utopian elements of Marx's thought that have been allowed to fade, or have been brushed away, by successive generations of interpreters wishing to emphasize the contemporary relevance of its more sophisticated critical insights. He focuses particularly upon Marx's doctrine of freedom, pointing out that it is axial for Marx's entire theory of history and humanity and yet often ignored or misinterpreted because it cannot be stated in political/legal terms. It can be articulated only in the context of a gnostic philosophy of the meaning of history in terms of which an original humanity "empties itself out," submitting to an alienated existence of dependence upon things, natural forces, fate (ultimately, commodity production under market conditions), unwittingly forging new capacities, a new human nature all the while. This lengthy process of dialectical development culminates in the freedom of authentically human existence under Communism. It is not freedom for the individual, but rather freedom for units of the ideal soci-
ety conceived as identical with its conscious collective will expressing the species-being of humanity. Currently existing generations are viewed as instruments of history having no absolute value, serving merely as means to the realization of freedom in the future. Walicki traces these and other elements of Marx’s doctrine of freedom through all his major works, youthful and mature.

Second, he wishes to trace the fate of this utopian vision of Communism through the subsequent intellectual history of the movement, including Engels, Kautsky, and other leaders of the Second International, culminating with Lenin. At each stage he is concerned to show that despite varying contributions and perspectives of thinkers in the tradition after Marx, one can trace the continuing influence of his dogmatic utopian vision in any of those who remain genuinely Communist, as opposed to merely Social Democratic, theorists.

Finally, he wishes to establish that, contrary to a well-established exegetical tradition, most of the familiar outlines of Lenin’s Marxism can be properly derived from Marx’s own thought when various accretions of interpretive varnish have been stripped from it, that Marxism-Leninism constitutes a “legitimate outgrowth” (p. 6) of the original impulses of Marx’s thought.

All of this serves as foundation for a further stage in the argument. Walicki wishes to challenge the very familiar claim that the fate of the Bolshevik experiment in Russia had little or nothing to do with the content of Marx’s theory, and everything to do with the peculiar history and political culture of that nation. On the contrary, he argues that the totalitarian outcome of Bolshevism was intimately connected with its Marxist theoretical grounding. In contrast to the German case, the Russian Bolsheviks “showed a remarkably stubborn and long-lasting commitment to Marxist communism” and “should be regarded as the only Marxist party that dared to embark on the practical realization of Marxist communist ideals” (p. 7). Hence, contrary to the usual view, he argues that the outcome of the Bolshevik experiment should properly be regarded as a significant historical test of Marx’s ideas. This claim obviously commits Walicki to a defense of the “continuity” thesis (that Stalinist totalitarianism was a logical extension of Lenin’s policies), and he supplies such a defense in substantial detail.

Finally, he also wishes to argue that the post-Stalinist history of the Soviet regime must be understood as a gradual dissolution of the totalitarian system owing to loss of commitment to the Communist utopianism of its founders. For those who would reject such an assertion on the ground that totalitarian regimes are incapable of internal change or evolution, he reviews the history of totalitarianism as a theoretical construct and demonstrates that a careful reading of the theory in its original terms amply supports his own generalization. Gorbachev is described as a “communist” leader who knowingly or unknowingly abandoned Marx’s utopian Communist vision of human freedom in its entirety, reverting to a liberal democratic definition of individual freedom, thus bringing the historical experiment to its ideological close.

The largest part of Walicki’s book is devoted to analyses of the relevant texts from the history of the Marxist movement, these falling into successive lengthy chapters on Marx, Engels, Marxists of the Second International (Kautsky, Plekhanov, Luxemburg), and Lenin. The remaining two chapters deal with Stalinist totalitarianism and the history of its dissolution up through Gorbachev.