times of repression and produced different statistics at different times for different reasons. The documentary evidence is, in other words, confused and often contradictory. This means that it is especially incumbent upon scholars seeking to re-write history that they exercise utmost care in their use of such sources. A good case in point is the source Reese cites for his conclusion that the purge "only" cost the combined Soviet military forces 22,705 personnel (the conventionally accepted figure, first reported by K. Voroshilov himself to Stalin, is somewhere between 40,000-50,000 in the Red Army alone); it is dated 1937, a full year before the purge of the Red Army reached its climax (p. 86, n. 37). It should come as no surprise then that the author also fails to consider the impact of the purge on Red Army performance in the Winter War and the opening stages of the Great Patriotic War. Instead, Reese blames the poor showing of the Soviet military on its too-rapid expansion.

One suspects that the work would be considerably stronger if the author had stuck with what may well have been his original intent: to use the PUR as a prism through which to view the Red Army’s attempt over the decades to create the “new Socialist soldier.” Such a restricted focus might have allowed the author to exploit more fully his expertise by further examining important issues like the nature and extent of Red Army involvement in the armed resistance to collectivization, especially in Ukraine, the kinds of institutions and resources provided for retired and disabled veterans, and the role of demographics in reshaping Soviet recruitment and deployment policies from the mid-1970s on.

On balance, although as a social history of the Red Army Reese’s work is arguably a success, as a general history of the subject it leaves something to be desired. To be fair, however, it is also true that this may not be entirely the fault of the author, since a single 200-page volume treatment of such a vast and complex subject is bound to disappoint somebody.

Raymond Leonard


The mention of “Soviet intelligence” usually evokes thoughts of the infamous KGB, its predecessors the OGPU and Cheka, and the hulking edifice of the Lubianka. If nothing else, this work reminds us that the Kremlin’s espionage establishment was a house of many rooms and that one of the most important of these, in some respects the most important, was its military intelligence apparatus, best known as the GRU (Glavnoe Razvedyvatelnoe Upravlenie – Main Intelligence Directorate). Leonard’s book examines the operational and doctrinal evolution of this agency from its inception in the Russian Civil War to the consolidation of Stalin’s power in the early 1930s. Throughout this period, he emphasizes, while the Cheka/GPU/OGPU were preoccupied with the struggle against counter-revolution and attendant political matters, basic intelligence gathering was the province of the GRU, or RU as it first was known.
Raymond Leonard obtained his Ph.D. in History from the University of Kansas in 1997 and now teaches at Central Missouri State University. This volume is a revised version of his similarly-titled doctoral dissertation. He also is the author of two articles for the Journal of Military History, one of which also deals with Soviet military intelligence.

Leonard does not present the current work as a complete study of the topic. "What I have attempted here," he writes, "should . . . be regarded as a beginning, and is in no way definitive." (p. xvi) This is a fair assessment, for the book is, overall, a general synthesis of the information available in a broad array of secondary works and memoirs. There is heavy reliance on such "classics" as David Dallin's Soviet Espionage, Walter Krivitsky's I Was Stalin's Agent and Elizabeth Poretsky's Our Own People. Archival materials are limited mostly to a selection of documents from the Soviet Military Archives (TsGASA), none GRU documents per se which is, of course, indicative of the major obstacle in intelligence history. The agencies involved are quite obsessive about keeping their secrets, well, secret, except for what they chose to make available.

The study begins with a chapter on the birth of Soviet military intelligence during the chaos of revolution and civil war. Just as the Cheka had deep roots in the Tsarist Okhrana, so the GRU's antecedents lay in the espionage and counter-espionage departments of the Imperial Army. Leonard might have investigated this connection a little further. The chapter also looks at what could be termed the nascent GRU's first great intelligence failure, the disastrous Russo-Polish War of 1920.

The succeeding chapters outline a long learning curve in which the GRU found itself charged with the theoretical and practical aspects of waging revolutionary warfare, including subversion and insurrection, and the more mundane, if ultimately more rewarding, task of intelligence gathering and analysis. The next chapter outlines a succession of failures in Germany, the Balkans and Asia during 1921-27 in which the GRU basically learned how not to conduct "popular warfare." This is followed by a look at the agency's espionage operations in the same period in which there was a steady trend towards greater professionalism and centralization. While major successes were few, Leonard does note that it was the GRU, not the OGPU, that first established agents at Cambridge University pre-1926 and also took initial notice of the atomic research conducted there.

Chapters 4 and 5 look at the GRU's expanding and ever-more effective espionage campaign ca. 1928-33. A notable achievement was the ability to maintain operative networks in Britain and France for several years despite the formidable counterintelligence efforts of those governments. An especially interesting case is that of Capt. John King, a Foreign Office clerk who worked undetected for the Soviets for almost nine years. Expanded operations in the United States are described, including a bold counterfeiting scheme. Also covered is the rather familiar ground of the Richard Sorge network in Japan.

The next chapter focuses on what Leonard terms "the strange relationship between Soviet Russia and the Weimar Republic," in which the GRU was at once responsible for handling direct military cooperation with Berlin and conducting a "massive espionage effort" against it (p. 135). The collaboration involved would play an important