

the choice of historical sites and events to commemorate. While some sites of memory were associated with Sevastopol's struggles in the Great Patriotic War and many fewer with the Bolshevik Revolution, Sevastopol's role in the Crimean War and its place in the Russian Empire were highly privileged. In Qualls's estimation, the myth thus shows that part of the city's identity "has been and remains with Moscow" while part draws power from its history as "a naval power and hero-city defending the Motherland" (p. 8).

Qualls argues persuasively that local authorities succeeded in fulfilling "their plans rather than those drawn up exclusively by Moscow statistical bureaus and urban planning workshops" (p. 194). But he does not see the evolution of Sevastopol's identity in oppositional, center-versus-periphery terms. Instead, Qualls argues for "the inclusivity of national vis-à-vis local identity" (p. 7). Local authorities and mythmakers asserted the primacy of the local without denying the importance of Russia in the city's history, thus strengthening their identification with Moscow. In the post-Soviet era, however, the tendency to imagine Sevastopol as a Russian city created tensions with the government in Kiev that continue to the present day.

Throughout the study, Qualls makes excellent use of municipal records that relate to housing, provisioning, health, education, culture, trade, city planning, and architecture. He also read extensively in Russian central state archives to uncover the visions of Moscow-based planners and architects as well as to establish precisely what was forthcoming from the center in terms of tangible resources for recovery and rebuilding. But Qualls moves beyond government archives, incorporating cogent analysis of literary sources and newspaper accounts, Soviet newsreels and feature films, and other forms of propaganda. He also conducted interviews, examined monuments and memorials, and studied Soviet and post-Soviet guidebooks. The thoughtful discussion in chapter four of "the ways by which sites of memory and loci for identification were embedded in the built space of the city" is especially rich (p. 10). Another fascinating interpretive line discusses the ways in which ethnic minorities in Sevastopol were erased during and immediately after the war—with the disappearance or forced removal of Jews and Tatars—and then restored in the post-Soviet period.

Qualls's book is rich in factual depth, meticulous detail, and insightful analysis. As such, it stands as an important contribution to urban history, city planning, and the built environment. Unfortunately, the human experience of what it was like to live in the destroyed city rarely emerges with sustained power in Qualls's narrative. Likewise, there is little evocation of mood or moment to compel the reader's interest. Qualls's study is primarily about elites: architects, planners, politicians, and bureaucrats. Thus the book is especially useful as a case study of how local authorities in the Soviet Union negotiated with central ones in the postwar era, and how the decisions they made during reconstruction

impacted how future residents of Sevastopol understood their city.

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ASIF A. SIDDIQI. *The Red Rockets' Glare: Spaceflight and the Soviet Imagination, 1857–1957*. (Cambridge Centennial of Flight.) New York: Cambridge University Press. 2010. Pp. xiii, 402. \$85.00.

The Soviet space effort used to be the subject of much propagandistic hype over an array of spectacular achievements, deep secrecy surrounding the work that made those achievements possible, and persistent conspiratorial speculations. During the last two decades, historians gained access to many archives and primary sources, journalists investigated intriguing clues, and actual participants came forward with memoirs and recollections. As a result, a qualitatively new and more informed understanding of the Soviet road to space is developing, of which the reviewed book is, in my view, the best representation.

Asif A. Siddiqi analyzes a series of developments that eventually led to the 1957 launch of Sputnik. He particularly emphasizes the crucial role of grass-roots initiatives and space aficionados rather than that of the state apparatus and official scientific establishment. One key section describes the informal network of popular science writers and amateur enthusiasts who in the mid-1920s orchestrated the early Soviet space craze. They established the first voluntary society devoted to the goal of interplanetary travel and widely publicized the ideas of Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, an idiosyncratic visionary and inventor who had been mostly ignored by the academic elite. Among his newly acquired mass following was a group of engineering students who started tinkering with liquid-fuel rockets in a garage-style laboratory.

By the mid-1930s, these engineers had moved on to a military research institute. The Red Army decided to give rocketry some serious attention and gathered specialists with different motivations and backgrounds, who championed conflicting technological strategies. In the atmosphere of general paranoia over the impending war, their professional conflicts escalated into mutual political accusations and contributed to the arrests of several key designers. This rather typical case illustrates the socially entangled nature of the Stalinist purges. It also explains the motivations behind the prewar decision to abandon liquid-propelled rockets in favor of simpler, short-range gunpowder projectiles. What may appear as a setback from the perspective of the later space race proved justified from the point of view of immediate wartime survival, as it permitted Soviet rocketry engineers to develop a weapon that worked effectively in the actual conditions of World War II, in contrast to the then practically useless, although technologically much more sophisticated and famous, German V-2 rocket. Its successes on the battlefield ensured

the Soviet military's continuing support for rocketry after the war.

The postwar situation, Siddiqi argues, did not immediately make missiles a matter of the highest urgency for Joseph Stalin. Still, a network of engineers and artillery officers stationed in occupied Germany took up the task of replicating the trophy V-2 and advancing beyond it. Around 1954, during the general reconsideration of strategic priorities following the acquisition of the atomic bomb and Stalin's death, the Soviet political leadership came to see the next generation intercontinental missile as the only effective deterrent against the American nuclear threat and ordered its speedy development. Space, however, was not a priority for politicians, and it took many additional efforts, including backroom lobbying by missile designers, mass media publishing by popularizers, and persuading influential members of the Academy of Sciences, to gain the permission to use one of the first strategic missile tests for a sputnik launch. Only in October 1957 did Sputnik's spectacular propagandistic success suddenly turn the space race into a major political imperative for the Cold War superpowers.

Readers may be confused by Siddiqi's awkward assertion in the conclusion that "Sputnik was not a triumph of Soviet science," partially disavowed later by "at least as the notion is typically understood" (pp. 363–365). He is merely trying to express disagreement with the old perception of Soviet science as a completely statist, top-down, "monolithic social reality that disallowed local initiative" (pp. 369–370). But twenty years after the end of the Cold War, such dusty ideological stereotypes do not have to be invoked seriously as a "received understanding," even with the goal of critiquing them.

Describing the important agency of amateur scientists and popularizers does not, of course, make the Sputnik story any less Soviet, but only roots it more firmly in that society and culture. Consider one of the key actors of Siddiqi's story, Yakov Perelman, who embraced the cause of future space travel not merely as a dream in itself, but also as an aid to sell his popular science books in millions of copies. His success where today's educators fail—namely, in convincing several generations of teenage readers that mathematics and physics are entertaining—owed as much to the author as to the cultural values of his Soviet audiences. The state played a role, too, for it fully supported the popularization of science and promoted and funded those efforts on an unprecedented scale.

Ideological critics typically accused the Soviet regime of granting amateur scientists too much leeway versus established professionals. Siddiqi, by contrast, complains that the amateurs' utopian vision of interplanetary travel received only partial and reluctant support from the state. If for a moment we restrain our reflex of always blaming the authorities one way or the other, it would be fair to conclude that popular science was, in fact, valued more highly and played a much more influential role in Soviet society than elsewhere. This

fact certainly contributed to the Soviet pioneering breakthrough into space.

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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTHERN AFRICA

MARC DAVID BAER. *The Dönme: Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries, and Secular Turks*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press. 2010. Pp. xxiii, 332. Cloth \$70.00, paper \$24.95.

In 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne sealed the fate of as many as 1.2 million Greek Orthodox and half a million Muslim residents of Turkey and Greece, respectively. A decisive moment in the long and violent "unmixing" of the peoples of the former Ottoman Empire, the population transfer that followed included a group of some 10,000 to 15,000 individuals who were forced to leave Greek Salonica for Turkey as Muslims. These were the *Dönme* (pl., *Dönmeler*, Turkish for converts) or *Ma'aminim* (Hebrew for believers), as they called themselves—descendants of a group of some 200 to 300 Jewish families who converted to Islam in the decades following the conversion of their messiah Shabbetai Sevi in 1666. By 1924, no more than one hundred Dönme remained in their native city. The remarkable history of this community's existence in Ottoman and later Greek Salonica as well as their new life in the Republic of Turkey is the subject of Marc David Baer's latest book.

While previous work has explored the early centuries of Dönme history in some depth, Baer's is the first book to follow this group from the early modern period into the modern period, an era that dislodged Dönme from their established place in Ottoman society, eventually transforming them from an elite and hegemonic group into outsiders. For most of their existence under Ottoman rule, the Dönme had lived unmolested by the Ottoman state, which accepted their outward appearance as Muslims without prying into their private practices or personal beliefs. Even when the Ottoman state remained content with categorizing the Dönme as Muslims, however, others—whether missionaries in search of potential converts or Jewish scholars in search of lost coreligionists—claimed they were crypto-Jews. Yet, the suggestion that the secretive rituals of the Dönme, combined with their Jewish roots, made them Jews is misleading. As Baer reminds his readers, the original followers of Shabbetai Sevi who followed him into Islam did so willingly.

Many Dönme behaved as Muslims in public even as they observed additional, or alternative, practices in the privacy of their own homes and communal spaces. Commanded by Shabbetai Sevi, their messiah, to undertake such acts of dissimulation, the Dönme practiced secrecy not so much out of a fear for their lives as out of religious imperative. Beyond the radar of the Sublime Porte—at least until well into the nineteenth century—they maintained their own institutions, including separate (if secret) courts, cemeteries, and