Despite the relevance of the topic, Goldman's book reads like a reworked doctoral thesis. It is bursting with statistics and quotations but the trees obscure the proverbial forest. There is a credulous quality to the work. For example, Goldman seems almost not to notice that the initial debate about family values and women's rights was waged during a civil war of unparalleled barbarity. She approves heartily of the "socialist ideal" of free love, communal living, easy divorce, and children raised by the state and declares the 1918 decree to be "nothing less than the most progressive family legislation the world had ever seen" (p. 51).

The deprivations of War Communism were due largely to the Bolsheviks' determination to destroy traditional relationships of trade and commerce. Goldman notes, for example, that in lieu of wages some workers received food from communal dispensaries. She exults in this "first step in the construction of a truly socialist economy and the emancipation of women from petty household labour ... a successful example of communism in action ... a social advance" (p. 129). She attributes the massive famine of 1921–1922 to a drought even though it has been shown to be the result of Bolshevik economic policies. The massive terror famine of 1932–1933, incited to coerce peasants into collective farms, is hardly noticed. She mentions but does not comment upon the intriguing fact that the Children's Commission was headed by Felix Dzerzhinsky, ruthless head of the CHEKA, nor upon the fact that the NKVD was involved in drafting the Family Code of 1926.

In spite of the book's title, Goldman deals with little but Russia aside from the odd reference to "the [*sic*] Ukraine". The policies she discusses must have had cataclysmic consequences for the USSR's Islamic people, for example, but these are not mentioned. Goldman is disappointed that the Communist Party turned its back on "the original socialist vision" and destroyed "the possibility of a new revolutionary social order" (p. 343). In view of the scale of the Soviet disaster in general, it scarcely seems to matter.

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Sabrina P. Ramet — *Social Currents in Eastern Europe: The Sources and Meaning of the Great Transformation.* Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991. Pp. xii, 434.

Comment expliquer l'effondrement soudain et rapide des régimes communistes en Europe de l'Est en 1989? S'il existe différentes interprétations de ce phénomène, Sabrina P. Ramet, pour sa part, estime que l'explication de cette Grande Transformation réside dans une étude de ses racines sociales. L'auteure résume bien la thèse de ce livre lorsqu'elle écrit, en préface, que « changing social currents present political authorities with policy challenges » (p. ix). La crise découle de l'incapacité des institutions politiques en place à suivre ou, mieux encore, à s'adapter aux changements socio-économiques.

Démoralisés, divisés entre eux et conscients que leur crédibilité est en chute libre,

les communistes se voient confrontés à un vaste mouvement de rébellion qui s'articule autour de groupes d'intérêt et de pression fort variés : féministes, écologistes, pacifistes, syndicalistes (en Pologne avec le mouvement Solidarité, par exemple), groupes religieux, intellectuels dissidents, minorités ethniques et jeunes adeptes de la culture alternative (musique rock, nihilisme punk). L'essentiel de ce livre consiste en une description à la fois riche et détaillée des programmes et activités divers de ces protestataires, en quête d'une plus grande liberté et déterminés à construire une société parallèle (en opposition à la société officielle). L'arrivée au pouvoir de Gorbachëv en 1985 et sa décision de leur retirer tout support militaire scellent définitivement le sort de ces régimes communistes.

Ce livre ressemble davantage à une collection d'articles divers (d'où certaines répétitions inutiles), écrits dans un style fort simple mais clair, qu'à une réflexion profonde sur l'évolution des différentes sociétés d'Europe de l'Est dans les années 70 et 80. Plus important encore, il n'établit pas de façon convaincante une relation de cause à effet entre ces divers Courants Sociaux et la chute du communisme dans cette partie de l'Europe. Un cadre théorique plus élaboré aurait étayé davantage une telle hypothèse, intéressante en soi. La nature des sources utilisées par l'auteure — interviews, journaux et rapports du Foreign Broadcast Information Service, du Joint Publications Research Service et de la Radio Free Europe — explique largement un tel résultat.

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David Montgomery — *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market During the Nineteenth Century.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. x, 189.

Thirty some years ago, when I became active in the struggle for social justice, I believed in progress. I saw it happening in Mississippi with the civil rights movement; although I thought it was too little and too ineffectual, I appreciated that the war on poverty was addressing the conditions of the poor in America. The anti-war movement was growing. Native American rights were at least being talked about. Women were demanding more of a voice. The campaign of the Farm Workers and the growing activism of rank-and-filers within the labour movement suggested the possibility of a new regenerated trade unionism. American society seemed to be in the midst of a struggle for greater popular participatory democracy.

Then Richard Nixon took office. The Nixon years were not good — a setback to be sure — but they did not ultimately undermine my sense of progress. The Reagan-Bush years, the growing and incredible suffering of the developing world, the collapse of organized labour, the devastation of the environment and the accompanying attack on environmental protection, the contract on America, the attack on affirmative action, the growing acceptance and popularity of blatantly racist ideologies, and the weakness of the world socialist movement did not alter