

Ultimately, the two sides could not overcome their mutual fears, suspicions, and hostility. The “. . . Kremlin,” Sergeev writes, “presumed that Whitehall was forming a new anti-Soviet military alliance, the [British] Cabinet charged the Bolshevik government with sponsoring the Communist groups in the countries from London to Peking” (169). Sergeev has provided a valuable addition to the literature on Anglo-Soviet relations that historians of interwar international affairs will find useful.

Paul Josephson. *Nuclear Russia: The Atom in Russian Politics and Culture.*

Russian Shorts. London: Bloomsbury, 2022. vii, 134 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Tables. \$16.15, paper.

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Paul Josephson is probably the most prominent historian of Soviet nuclear power. He began his career as a historian of Soviet physics and, since the late 1980s, covered the Chernobyl disaster and developed a wider critical agenda to interrogate the negative impacts of large scale technologies in the Global North and South. His *Red Atom: Russia's Nuclear Power Program from Stalin to Today*, published in 2000, together with the articles on cultural and symbolic meanings of the nuclear industry, inspired generations of young scholars. Back in the 1990s, Josephson criticized western scholars and aid agencies for focusing excessively on post-Soviet Russia and forgetting Ukraine. He wrote about Ukrainian science seeking to make clear and visible the contribution of Ukrainian scholars to what was presented as “Soviet” scientific achievements.

The newly published *Nuclear Russia: The Atom in Russian Politics and Culture* is not, however, merely an updated version of *Red Atom*, but rather an entirely new attempt to rethink the established narratives that have shaped the historiography of Soviet nuclear power. *Nuclear Russia*, at the same time, presents the highly complex development of the Soviet nuclearity in a readable and accessible way, which Josephson excels at. But *Nuclear Russia* came out on March 9, 2022, two weeks after Russia invaded Ukraine. The tragic war shocked the global community of historians of Soviet science, many of whom began to scrutinize the persistent habit of conflating the contributions of scientists from different republics into the monolith of “Soviet science,” where the label of “Sovietness” masked the colonial Russification through science and technology and rendered the contributions of non-Russian scholars invisible.

Josephson’s history of “Nuclear Russia” is, in effect, a transnational history of Russian and Ukrainian nuclear power. Reading Josephson’s *Nuclear Russia* I could see the merits of a transnational take on Soviet science, although still there is a risk of falling into a trap of methodological nationalism. This said, there is much sense to consider the contribution of Soviet Ukrainian scientists as a transnational input into Soviet science. After all, Ukraine ranked second in terms of scientific output in the Soviet Union. In his *Nuclear Russia*, Josephson does not mince his words criticizing the Kremlin’s exploitation of Ukraine. He details clearly just how central Ukrainian scientific institutions were for the Soviet nuclear program; the first chapter, “Nuclear Bolshevism,” outlines the destruction of the Kharkiv physicist community

under the Nazis, while the following chapter, “Nuclear Defense,” details the development of the Soviet atomic problem, emphasizing the role of Ukrainian scientists and contesting the narrative that the first Soviet Atomic bomb was merely a copy of the American device.

The book is organized into thematic chapters that mainly follow a chronological order. *Nuclear Russia* starts with Bolshevik nuclear physics and ends with a commentary on the globally- oriented Rosatom State Nuclear Energy Corporation. *Nuclear Russia* tracks the intertwining trajectories of the military and civic applications of the atom from Stalin to Putin. Josephson inserts the history of nuclear technoscience in political, economic, and institutional contexts, demonstrating the many ways the Soviet system failed absurdly, catastrophically, and stubbornly. Readers will easily notice that Josephson is hardly pro-nuclear. However, at the same time he is highly sensitive to the social and cultural significance of nuclear power in Ukrainian and Russian societies and is sympathetic to the progressive reformers of the nuclear and defense industries. Josephson’s *Nuclear Russia* is an excellent short and engaging introduction into the politics of the nuclear technology. Its focus combines an analysis of the technological development of nuclear power and nuclear weapons and the arms control movement to reduce nuclear weapons. Inevitably, selections had to be made: for instance, readers will not find much about Soviet nuclear strategic thinking or about nuclear medicine and radioactive isotope applications. Josephson’s argument is at its strongest where he shows the environmental cost of Soviet nuclearization and details the many social and economic costs that tend to be unaccounted for by the promoters of nuclear power. The last two chapters, “Nuclear Disintegration” and “Nuclear Renaissance” are particularly interesting as they show how the history of Soviet nuclear power shapes the nuclear complex of twenty-first century Russia. As Josephson put it, reflecting on the Kursk submarine disaster of 2000, “Putin will not make this mistake of being distant from the atom—or accidents—again” (140). Josephson shows us that both the Russian environment and its political imagination are profoundly nuclearized, the result of about 100 years of “unwavering political, economic and ideological support of the atom and neutron” (148). The key difference between Soviet nuclear Russia and Putin’s nuclear Russia, according to Josephson, is that Putin has transformed Russia into an outwardly aggressive nuclear power. *Nuclear Russia* narrates this path of transformation in an engaging way, indicating the relevance of the nuclear technology for different spheres of societal life, culture, and politics. *Nuclear Russia* will be essential reading for undergraduate and postgraduate courses as well as for all those interested in the region. Hopefully, we will see Josephson’s “Nuclear Ukraine” coming out soon too.

Rotem Kowner. *Great Battles: Tsushima.*

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. xxviii, 297. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Figures. Tables. Maps \$27.95, hard bound.

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This meticulously researched and amply illustrated book demonstrates that the Russo-Japanese War’s Tsushima was one of history’s great battles. It relies on Russian, Japanese,