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REVIEW

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This book was originally published in 1978 in Russian. This second and revised edition coincides to a very large extent with the 1978 one. The quarter of century that has passed since the first publication of this book drastically changed the style and even the nature of the history of science (history of mathematics and logic included) in Russia today. These conceptual shifts were already evident in the mid to late 1980s. Until the mid 1980s, the history of science studies in the USSR dealt only with the history of scientific ideas, putting aside both the social and political milieu, as well as the personal features of the scholar who generated these ideas. When the 'perestroika' period started in the mid 1980s, the picture of the development of ideas essentially expanded: the social and political milieu proved to be an important factor for the growth of ideas, as well as personal features of scholars. Briefly, external aspects—despite the fact that in the USSR Marxist-Leninist ideology which insisted upon the socio-political determination of science, an approach toward science founded by B.M. Gessen, a well known Soviet historian of physics,—were intentionally avoided by Soviet historians of science for it was not safe enough in the USSR to be concerned with something different than 'pure' ideas. The Soviet history of science restricted itself to an internal approach.

The book under review is written precisely in this spirit. Mathematicians in the book exist as though in airless space; their ideas have been hatching and developing within themselves. That's why, from the standpoint of the modern style of the history of science, this book is outdated. Nevertheless, it provides a skillful (but concise) description