Von Binzer wrote both as a superficial racist chronicler and as a perceptive scholar. Despite and even because of this, she "recorded the rare gaze of a woman" and brought fresh insights into relatively underexplored private aspects of women's lives (p. xxiv). Lewin's deep, multidimensional research makes this book indispensable not only to those who study imperial Brazil. The book's accessible language, style, and interdisciplinarity will engage undergraduate and graduate students studying world history, the history of slavery, Latin American and Brazilian history, gender studies, and literature.

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Twentieth–Twenty-First Centuries

Cinco días en Moscú: Mario Vargas Llosa y el socialismo soviético (1968). By CARLOS AGUIRRE and KRISTINA BUYNOVA. Lima: Reino de Almagro, 2024. Photographs. Figures. Tables. Appendixes. Notes. 185 pp. Paper, S/59.00.

This book reveals a little-known aspect of the life of Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa: his visit to Moscow in May 1968, where he stayed for only five days. By then, he was already a well-known writer, part of the boom in Latin American literature along with Gabriel García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, and Julio Cortázar; like these writers, he had expressed defense of socialism and declared his support for the Cuban Revolution (1959). Therefore, his visit to Moscow carried a very significant symbolic charge.

The reasons for the writer's trip to Moscow were contradictory. On the one hand, the translation into Russian of his novel *La ciudad y los perros* (1963) was a recognition of its literary quality, but on the other hand, this translation, which appeared in 1965, had been mutilated because of the censorship imposed by the Soviet state. Vargas Llosa traveled riddled with feelings of pride and dismay. Historians Carlos Aguirre and Kristina Buynova have conducted a thorough investigation based on unpublished official documents, letters, published texts, and interviews, applying a methodology and use of sources that are essential for understanding intellectuals.

The book describes meticulously the background and details of the novelist's visit to Moscow across four main chapters, titled "Vargas Llosa and Socialism in Cuba and the Soviet Union," "The Translation and Censorship of *La ciudad y los perros* in the Soviet Union," "Vargas Llosa in Moscow," and "From the Visit to Moscow to 'the Affairs of Czechoslovakia.'" The reader learns about the writer's experiences and their context at the same time. The Cuban Revolution left its mark on Latin America and aroused the enthusiasm of young writers identified with socialism. The enthusiasm would fade with the Soviet Union's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the so-called Padilla affair in 1971, which Aguirre and Buynova describe as a "divisive act," a sensitive event for writers who defended the unrestricted freedom of writing (p. 11n1).

The Soviet Union deployed a strong "cultural diplomacy" that sought to attract the intelligentsia of Latin America with trips, publications, invitations to forums, and other strategies. The Cuban government did the same with Latin American intellectuals. Vargas Llosa initially maintained that there was no "ideological dirigisme" in the Cuban government and that it did not have an "official aesthetic" (p. 17). Although he rejected the shootings and the abuses against homosexuals, he affirmed that the conquest of social justice implied the sacrifice of certain freedoms.

Aguirre and Buynova reveal a significant aspect of how the Soviet state handled the publication of works by writers from different countries. Vargas Llosa learned, thanks to the Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska, that his book had already been translated without his authorization and printed with cuts and modifications. Once again, the Peruvian writer had to fight against censorship of his first novel; as Aguirre has studied elsewhere, in Francisco Franco's Spain the book was censored for its antireligious and antimilitarist aspects.

Since 1922, the official Soviet body in charge of censorship was the Central Committee for Literary and Press Affairs (Glavlit). Its mission was to find errors or ideological deviations in order to "protect citizens from reactionary ideas" (p. 34). The author's opinion did not count. *La ciudad y los perros* saw 12 to 13 pages of mutilations, in addition to suffering substitutions for terms alluding to sex and sexuality. Vargas Llosa considered sending a letter to demand that the edition be withdrawn from circulation, although it is not known for certain whether he ever did so.

During his stay in Moscow, Vargas Llosa had neither time nor freedom to walk around the city. In general, the guest of Soviet cultural diplomacy was given a packed agenda of visits to museums, theaters, and interviews so that he or she could not see beyond what they wanted him or her to know, which was something useful for the propaganda purposes of the Soviet Union. In the article "Moscú: Notas a vuelo de pájaro" (1968), Vargas Llosa still defended the Soviet regime, but he was already at his limit.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia had a catalytic character. Vargas Llosa protested it and defended the self-determination of peoples. In passing, he also criticized Fidel Castro for supporting what he described as an "unjust act" (p. 113). In the invasion's aftermath, the socialist camp would be divided and disenchanted. Twenty years later, in 1988, the novelist would provide an assessment of his trip to Moscow very different from his initial one. He now said that he was disappointed with socialism, and that he understood that the great values promised by this political philosophy had been betrayed. The socialist Vargas Llosa had given way to the liberal writer.

The book touches on the conversion of socialist intellectuals. Although it is not the central concern of Aguirre and Buynova, they provide material to investigate, comparatively, the ideological processes undergone by the subjects of ideas.

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