



Peasants, Political Police, and the Early Soviet State

Hugh D. Hudson Jr.

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This book combines social and institutional histories of post-revolutionary Russia, focusing on the secret police and their evolving relationship with the peasantry in the period leading up to collectivization. Based on an analysis of Cheka/OGPU reports, the book argues that at first the police did not only respond to peasant resistance with force; rather, they also listened to peasant voices. The police believed that compromise was possible, and that the peasants could be convinced to work within the Bolshevik construct of state and society. As time went on, however, local police agents increasingly saw themselves engaged in a war with the peasantry over control of grain and domination of local organs of power. As the focus shifted from objective economic factors to the putative influence of the kulaks, the only solution became to break the peasantry.

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