

tro's Cuba, under Soviet hegemony, as one in which the impact of government in daily life has increased enormously: mass organizations are primarily tools that the regime uses to implement policy. The battle for control of the revolution and its future course is waged within the Partido Comunista Cubano. "The new citizen ideology" (egalitarian, with emphasis on cooperative values and behavior, selflessness, and discipline) is less effective than it might be, due to its "incoherence." Those of us who disagree with this important book's approach to political theory—after all, it seems odd to describe an avowed Marxist-Leninist Revolution without a single reference to Marx or Lenin—are challenged to better its author's ambitious analysis.

—*Lourdes Casal*

**AMERICAN REALISM:  
A Pictorial Survey from  
the Early Eighteenth  
Century to the 1970s**  
by Francois Mathey  
Skira/Rizzoli, 1978  
192 pp. \$50  
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Flax beaters, eel spearers, lacrosse players, rum runners, space travelers, fat tourists—in such subjects American artists for more than two centuries have struggled to identify the national spirit. Francois Mathey, curator of Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, here presents an extended essay on the response of these artists to their fellow Americans and their environment, with a chronological sequence of paintings and photographs (70 in color, 100 black and white). Brief commentaries supply unusual information on particular works (the halos around the heads of the children in "Maryland Family," painted in 1820 by an anonymous artist, showed that they had died). Frank about his likes and dislikes, Mathey sees George Catlin as a meticulous investigator of Indian life, relating art to ethnography with sensitivity and skill, Thomas Hart Benton as a naive, bombastic populist. Encompassing individuals as diverse as Thomas Eakins, Albert Ryder, and Robert Rauschenberg under the rubric of realism poses some problems in definition: Is the realistic painter merely a pictorial reporter, a mechanical peeping Tom? Or is he also a shaper of a new reality, no matter how abstract his style, how clouded his vision?

—*Archie Green*