

The selection complements the American documents and invites a detailed comparison. The documents reveal both the extent and the difficulties of "the co-operation between the three Great Powers in the anti-Nazi coalition during the war". This should not obscure differences of two kinds. The first reflects favourably upon the Soviet collection. The Soviet records of the conference sessions tend to be fuller than the American minutes. This is explained by the greater detail with which some questions are treated, e.g. the discussion of reparations during the second plenary session at Yalta (pp. 72-8 in the Soviet collection). The other category of differences is much less significant than might be feared, this being the minor discrepancies of fact—were adjustments of the Curzon line in favour of Poland to be 5-6 kms. or 5-8 kms.? There are also a few omissions in the Soviet collection, whether "edited" out or not made at the time is not clear, e.g. the debate over the revision of the Straits convention at the seventh plenary session at Yalta. In general, the Soviet documents confirm conclusions based upon other documents and memoirs, that the political decisions of war-time and those affecting the post-war situation were made elsewhere, at other moments and not by three-power diplomacy.

The size of this volume imposes an unfortunate limitation. We cannot here read the Soviet version of the secondary meetings between political and military advisers of the three partners, nor can we see the preparatory documentation from which the Soviet delegations worked. But to include this material would make a more unweildy collection. Perhaps we shall be soon rewarded with more extensive publication in English of war-time documents from the U.S.S.R.

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A History of Russia: by Nicholas V. Riasanovsky.

Second Edition. *Oxford University Press*, 1969. 750 pp. 70s.

Now issued in a second edition which follows the first in all essentials but is expanded on the Soviet period and makes other minor readjustments, Riasanovsky's has already been widely acclaimed in the U.K. and the U.S.A. as among the best general histories of Russia written in English. Among his other achievements, the author makes the reader aware that most of the huge subject with which he deals is still open to discussion, often to controversy. At the same time as making politics and diplomacy the centre of his attention, he does not neglect economic and social change, and largely succeeds in discussing cultural development as an integral part of the whole, rather than taking on an almost meaningless list of names to each section as is the case with many

other textbooks. While he could have been more sympathetic on the Soviet period, his account is far from being the Cold War salvo fired by many of his fellow American academics. Although Sumner's *Survey* is its superior in imaginative insight and Florinsky's *Russia* gives more information on pre-revolutionary Russia as seen by pre-revolutionary historians, Riasanovsky's *History* might be given a higher rating than them and its other competitors because of its comprehensive coverage.

This is no place for petty quibbles about Riasanovsky's interpretation and use of evidence, which are in any case difficult to make because of the thoroughness of his work. But perhaps the opportunity could be taken to compare this author's general approach to that of his Soviet counterparts. For example, they would not talk of the history of Russia, but of the U.S.S.R. This is not just a difference of terminology. It would tend to be so if the reference were to the history of America, rather than to that of the U.S.A., because of the earlier date and lesser seriousness of the American Revolution. Nevertheless, there is a tendency on the part of transatlantic textbooks to consider the colonial period as no more than a prelude to the main theme. Much more marked in the Soviet case is the consideration of the years before 1917 merely as precursors to those after, the fifty or so of which are usually given equal coverage to the whole of previous history. Riasanovsky's ratio is approximately 150 : 500. Moreover, history of the U.S.S.R. rather than of Russia means that all fifteen republics merit separate treatment as well as consideration as part of the Empire or of the Soviet Union. Riasanovsky makes almost no reference to their history before their incorporation and very little to it after. More than elsewhere, the difference of approach to the Soviet period is noteworthy. Riasanovsky's remarks on Marxism and Leninism, their intolerance and their appeal, while far from the crudities that are still often proffered, are nevertheless dismissive of "pseudo science". On the other hand, when Soviet historians cannot themselves achieve a satisfactory account of events from October 1917 onwards, a convincing explanation of Stalin and Stalinism, their Western colleagues cannot be criticised very much on these scores. And in his closing remarks, Riasanovsky is liberal enough to assert that "totalitarianism as such cannot explain the dynamism and development of the U.S.S.R.", although he uses emotive language here too when talking of "the deadly grip on the country" of the C.P.S.U. In other words, Riasanovsky does not always meet the high standards set by E. H. Carr for Western historians of the U.S.S.R., standards which it needs to be said Carr himself has not always observed.

On the whole, Riasanovsky's book is worthwhile reading for all those interested in Russian and Soviet history, both for beginners

and for experts. It contains useful maps and appropriate photographs, and is attractively presented by the Oxford University Press at a price not exorbitant as prices go today.

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The Roots of Russian Communism by David Lane.

Van Gorcum, Holland 1968. 4 gns.

The sub-title of this book, a social and historical study of Russian Social Democracy, 1898-1907, suggests at first sight that it covers much of the ground already thoroughly examined in a number of standard works. Nevertheless, as one progresses through it, one is driven to concur with the closing words of a long and laudatory review in *The Times Literary Supplement* that "The research which has gone into this book is meticulous; the many broad issues raised make it significant and worth while".

Dr. Lane's central interest is the social composition of the Russian Social Democratic Party during its early development, both in its national and local composition. This involves an analysis of the social bases of the Bolshevik and Menshevik wings of the party, which separated out more or less clearly after the split of 1903. The evidence produced from the detailed study of the seven main local political centres in the Soviet Union shows that they far from uniformly reflected this split. Dr. Lane shows how the relationship between the intellectuals, the gentry, middle class professional, working class and peasant membership of the party varied within the two wings and within the local party organisations. Other significant facts emerge during the analysis; data on the age structure of the membership and the relations between the leadership and the rank and file provide a basis for explaining the strength and weakness of the two wings both within the period analysed and in later developments.

This is a work of great scholarship and, although it is heavily loaded with the academic apparatus of a doctoral dissertation, it is attractively readable throughout. Soviet and British scholars have contributed much to the understanding of the history of the other's country and Dr. Lane's book is an important item on the British side of the balance sheet that still has far to go to achieve a true balance. It is only in very recent years that Soviet historians have begun to tackle in a systematic way the local resources of their history and to subject them to a kind of sociological analysis used by Dr. Lane. Doubtless the time will soon come when his account will have to be supplemented by new information and new assessment. But it will remain meanwhile as a standard work and set a high standard for future writing in this field.