

RUSSIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT: AN INTRODUCTION. By *Thornton Anderson*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967. xiii, 444 pp. \$9.75.

This review was to have been written two years ago, but some advantage can be derived from the reviewer's tardiness when dealing with a textbook, for now one can look at it in the light of classroom experience.

To take up the last point first: many of my students find Professor Anderson's book more suitable than my own for someone seeking an initial acquaintance with the subject, on the grounds that (1) fewer trends are considered, (2) the arrangement is simpler, (3) accounts of foreign sources of Russian thought are more fully presented, and (4) the whole is a more coherent picture in which the distinct "Greek-Mongol-Russian" tradition stands out more clearly. These are valuable features in an introductory textbook, but they may make possible some imbalances, which, I feel, a student ought to be aware of.

By concentrating on a small number of main trends, one is likely to produce a tidier, more streamlined, stylized, and, in the end, poorer picture than by trying to approximate more closely the patchiness, the casualness, the ad hoc and special pleading nature of much of political thought, in Russia as elsewhere. And the "distinct Greek-Mongol-Russian tradition" may be not much more than an artificial construct, useful perhaps as a crude tool in a course on "Western civilization," but not very helpful beyond that level.

The effort, in itself perhaps commendable, to provide enough information on foreign sources of Russian thought to make it unnecessary for the student to consult other works, may lead, if one is not careful, to such extravagances as Professor Anderson's chapter 4, in which he says: "the presentation here of Mongol ideas available for absorption by the Russes [*sic*] does not necessarily imply that the reappearance of some of these ideas in Muscovy was due to such absorption" (p. 42).

Professor Anderson deplors the influence on Russian studies in the West since 1917 of "antagonistic émigrés." This is biting the hand that fed you: where would we all be now without Vernadsky, Karpovich, Nicolaevsky, Leontovitch, Valentinov, Jasny? Could Professor Anderson's book have been written? But it seems that Professor Anderson does not confine his misgivings to the influence of émigré scholars and teachers. This is even less excusable. "Antagonistic émigrés" are, for a political scientist and a historian of political thought, one of the main sources of information and the source of some of the most illuminating insights and ideas. Could Professor Anderson do without Kurbsky, Herzen, Kropotkin, Plekhanov, Lenin, Trotsky, Berdiaev, Vlasov, Allilueva, or, for that matter, without Machiavelli and Marx?

Professor Anderson praises, by way of contrast, "the objectivity" and "the understanding" of Masaryk's *The Spirit of Russia*. Masaryk's status as a classic of our discipline is not in doubt, but his objectivity and understanding are another matter. Was he much less antagonistic and much more objective in his treatment of what he considered objectionable in the official and quasi-official pre-1917 Russian thought than Ustrialov, Kazem-Bek, or Dan were vis-à-vis the official or quasi-official thought of the following decades? And why should a scheme of Russian political thought that reduces it to the struggle between the principles of theocracy and democracy, for all its philosophical tidiness, be considered a model of understanding?

I would like to direct my final word of criticism at the publishers rather than

the author: the book is not available in paperback form, and this is a pity. I, for one, would like every student of mine to possess his own copy.

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THE USSR ARMS THE THIRD WORLD: CASE STUDIES IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY. By *Uri Ra'anan*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: The M.I.T. Press, 1969. x, 256 pp. \$10.00.

Two case studies from the middle 1950s make up this book. One is the famous arms deal involving the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Egypt, the catalyst of a sea change in the military balance and the political climate of the Middle East. The other is the Soviet decision to arm Indonesia, a move which had certain parallels with the Egyptian case but no such durable results.

This is no routine exercise drawing on the many accounts which have been written on these events. The author has deliberately set out to test the generally accepted interpretations of diplomats, journalists, and scholars against all the old and new evidence he can find, some of it previously overlooked. Particularly in the first study, where he writes with the double credentials of a thorough Sovietologist and a scholar-diplomat with a close knowledge of the Middle East (having been in the diplomatic service of Israel), he has done a careful and convincing job. Fortunately he has had the good sense to link the Egyptian arms deal with Soviet policy elsewhere, with the internal struggle for power in the Soviet Union, and with Egypt's position amid the shifting sands of Arab politics and in its relations with the West as well as in the conflict with Israel.

The main line of argument has to do with some vital points of chronology: When did the Soviets decide to arm Egypt? When did Nasser decide to turn in their direction, and when was the real agreement reached? The conclusion is that these decisions were taken in late January and early February of 1955. Thus they preceded the Gaza raid of February 28, generally given as the cause of Nasser's decision to get arms wherever he could. They preceded also his request for U.S. arms and the fruitless negotiations with the Pentagon, which in this light were but an exercise in deception. Thus the charge that American diplomacy drove Nasser to turn to Russia by the inept and negative response to his request is beside the point. The crucial bit of evidence has to do with a Czech "trade mission" to Cairo in February 1955, and with a statement in a Soviet publication ten years later (*International Affairs*, no. 5, 1965) that a Czech-Egyptian agreement on arms was concluded in that month. The author develops the story with added points from many sources including Khrushchev's later interviews with Heykal in *Al Ahram* and Molotov's speech of February 8, 1955, which he subjects to intense scrutiny with fascinating results.

A reader may be granted at least the privilege of harboring a shadow of doubt about some of the author's deductions and conclusions, particularly since there is a liberal amount of speculation on his part. What he has done is to put the burden of proof on those who have taken the hitherto generally accepted view, and that is no mean achievement.

The decision of the Soviet Union to arm Sukarno's Indonesia is also closely examined and placed in 1956, about two years earlier than the public acknowledgment-