

Such shortcomings do not prevent these books from being valuable compendia of past Masonic studies. The question is only whether this massive body of research can serve as a basis for further study of the subject. There is much to suggest that it cannot. After a century of intensive study we still do not have an accurate picture of the membership of the lodges. Bakounine's attempt to analyze the social composition of the movement is quite inadequate. Sokolovskaia conducted pioneering explorations into this area, but never completed her fascinating research for lack of data. Today, no simple breakdown of the members will suffice. Toward which type of lodge did each social, intellectual, professional, and age grouping gravitate and for what reasons? How did this pattern evolve over the fifty years that the secret orders flourished? None of the works gathered by Bouryckhine answer these questions satisfactorily or even provide adequate data for an answer. Nor do they explain how Russian Freemasonry differed from the parent movements in England, Sweden, Germany, and France. Comparative study of lodges in these countries and Russia is needed to determine what peculiarly Russian influences acted on the transplanted societies.

On another level, no substantial attempts have been made to assess the Masonic contribution to specific fields of Russian culture. Precisely what impact did the movement have on Russian language, philosophy and theology, literature, music, and art? Once more, the vast prerevolutionary literature hardly gets below the surface of these issues. Promising research in several of these areas is now under way in Germany and, to a lesser extent, in the Soviet Union. It is worth noting, though, that the current flurry of interest has been nourished more by direct exposure to the rich Masonic collections in Soviet and Western archives than by the past studies listed in these books. Thus the excellent works of Bouryckhine and Bakounine may well mark the end of a long and fruitful tradition of general study and may facilitate the transition to more detailed, problem-oriented archival research on Russian Freemasonry.

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LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

In the interests of achieving a more balanced view, may I offer a different opinion of Dr. Hugh Seton-Watson's book, *The Russian Empire: 1801-1917*, from the one expressed in your December 1968 issue by Professor Clarkson?

Within the limitations he has set for himself, I believe Dr. Seton-Watson has achieved a notable degree of success. His overall balance between internal and foreign policy is well maintained, and his treatment of individual topics is marked by unusual thoroughness. True, there is a certain dryness to his style, but once the reader recognizes that this reflects a dogged honesty and a refusal to overdramatize an inherently dramatic subject, the style becomes one of the merits of the book.

Since Professor Clarkson is himself the author of a distinguished text in modern Russian history, it might be well to add that I have used both his book and that of Dr. Seton-Watson, at different times, as required reading in my course in the history of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russia at the Johns Hopkins University. Differing widely as they do in approach and treatment, both have been well liked by the students, and have stood up to the detailed scrutiny provided by

this use. It seems safe to say that no one professionally concerned with the study and teaching of modern Russian history can afford to neglect either of them.

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Dr. Bertram D. Wolfe, whose translation of the poem "God" appeared in the December 1968 issue, has since learned from knowledgeable correspondents that the poem was finally published in *Literaturnaia gazeta* under the name of the author, Boris Slutsky, and in a censored form in his book of poems entitled *Rabota* (Moscow, 1964). The translation was made from *Sovetskaia potaennaia muza* (Munich, 1961). The publication occurred during a thaw in 1964, and Dr. Wolfe is of the opinion that if it had not been published then, it could not be published legally in Russia now under the new freeze.

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