

Social dimensions of Soviet industrialization. Edited by William G. Rosenberg and Lewis H. Siegelbaum. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993. Pp. xix, 296. \$39.95 cloth; \$14.95 paper.

The papers in this book are collected from a conference held in 1988 at the University of Michigan. The dozen contributors range widely over the struggle to manage the process of rapid Soviet industrialization from above, the struggle to survive it from below, the associated processes of migration and mobility, and the reformation of social classes and cultural identities.

For economic historians the book is threaded through by a theme of surprising continuity. The editors suggest that "The planners themselves, ..., including the Great Planner, directly commanded the heights, but the 'administrative command system' we now trace to their efforts may have been as much a product of their failure at control as it was of their attempts to invoke it." This is exemplified by the huge difficulty of controlling the flow of workers into the new cities and industrial complexes as bureaucrats struggled to build a "new" civilization with "old" people (Sheila Fitzpatrick, Stephan Merl, Stephen Kotkin).

The planning system was forced through a bewildering cycle of unanticipated, rapidly changing needs and priorities (R.W. Davies); Soviet administration saw prerevolutionary precedents reasserting themselves just when modernizing officialdom was most concentrated upon achieving something new (Don Rowney). How could a new system of managerial authority be established in the dirty and dangerous work of mining coal (Hiroaki Kuromiya), with a huge influx of raw recruits grappling with new machine technologies, under intense labor shortage and rapid turnover, when the old model of management no longer worked yet nothing took its place? The role of the Soviet foreman (Lewis Siegelbaum) highlights the intrinsic problem of a multi-level hierarchy: the links transmitted pressure unpredictably upward or downward, and were weakened or destroyed by the pressure. Resource allocation for forced industrialization was centralized, yet production associations and establishments became functionally disintegrated (David Shearer). "Planning" itself was really no more than a wasteful administration of the recalcitrant human material perceived as a "cheap and formless rabsila" (Moshe Lewin).

These were "old" people, with their own interests and values, which were socially and historically determined; new ones could not be simply superimposed by a new state which was often just the old one in disguise. Symptoms of industrial indiscipline could be repressed by the police and courts (Peter Solomon), which also gave rise to the lesson that the defects at work were an individual, not systemic responsibility, but judges and lawyers could have their own views of individual justice which might not be those of the chief procurator. Novelists of industrialization (Katerina Clark) might follow the twists and turns of official policy in a superficial way (and many were certainly superficial), but still developed autonomous literary values.

If such findings tilt the balance of Soviet social history in the direction of the role of "society", the specific feature of Soviet industrialization (Geoff Eley) lay, nonetheless, in its national, state-directed character.

This collection suggests different dimensions of correlation between processes at work in Russian and American historiography. On the conceptual axis, there is a growing divide between this kind of social history and the language of totalitarianism now widely adopted by Russians to analyse their past. But on the normative axis there is convergence, with few kind words to be said for Stalinist industrialization on either

side. Here Davies's remark that "Soviet writers nowadays are ... most unlikely to present scrupulously evidence showing that Stalin had a sensible policy about anything" could have a wider application.

In summary this is a fine book, impressive in both quantity and quality, with many more facets than can be easily summarized in a brief review, likely be to be of great value to specialists, graduate students, and advanced undergraduates.

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