

anxious not to venerate the achievements of the immediate past generation but to vaunt the Hohenzollerns as a dynasty. His desire to build the monarchy on populist foundations was manifest in his decision to forsake his grandfather's carriage for a horse, and to ride into Berlin at the head of his troops.

The opposition of the left to occasions which were covert instruments of national integration and of militant nationalism was surprisingly limited. In neither country did the socialists reject the obligations of universal military service and national self-defence. Vogel draws a distinction between the German emphasis on the »Volk in Waffen« and the French »nation en armes«, but the point in both cases was that through the great military parades civilians as well as soldiers were marked by military values. Symbolic of this permeation was the increasing involvement of youth movements and veterans' organisations in the years immediately preceding 1914. Thus the significance of the parades lay less in national differences and more in the widespread acceptance of military values which underpinned the recognition of military obligations in 1914.

Hew STRACHAN, Glasgow

Anne HOGENHUIS-SELIVERSTOFF, *Une alliance franco-russe. La France, la Russie et l'Europe au tournant du siècle dernier*, Bruxelles (Bruylant) 1997, 216 p. (Histoires).

For some seventy years after the outbreak of the First World War the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1892–94 had a bad press. It became a central plank of the revisionist arguments in the war guilt debate surrounding the origins of the Great War. If Germany could show that she was not solely responsible for the outbreak of the war, as article 231 of the Versailles treaty stipulated, then she could contest the moral basis for the payment of reparations. The Franco-Russian alliance seemed an excellent scapegoat on to whom some of the blame for the war could be shifted. In particular the alliance was presented as intended to secur *revanche* for France over Germany and the return of the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. For the revolutionary Soviet governments, intent on bolstering their own legitimacy by undermining that of their Tsarist predecessors, the alliance was portrayed as an aggressive pact which the autocratic Tsarist regime signed up to in exchange for the French loans. The depiction of the alliance had the added advantage for the Soviets of justifying why they should not reimburse the French after the war for the loans contracted by the defunct Imperial regime. In the eyes of thousands of small French investors the alliance was perceived as the object of their financial losses. All in all these jaundiced portrayals explain the somewhat negative historiography of the Franco-Russian alliance, particularly in the inter-war years. Thus the specialist of Franco-Soviet relations Anne Hogenhuis-Seliverstoff justifies her short but compelling study of the alliance, adding for good measure that Europe at the end of the twentieth century resembles more and more that of the end of the nineteenth century with a powerful reunified Germany able to exercise influence over the Balkans and Eastern Europe now that Moscow's influence has evaporated. Now, though, the author argues, roles are reversed with France being the established power and post communist Russia in search of prestige and a diplomatic presence.

In many ways this is a very traditional diplomatic history of how the alliance came about between the 1880s and 1894 in which we learn of what one diplomat or courtier said or wrote to another. But much of that is already known, as are the main reasons for the *rapprochement* between two politically very different states. Where the work's originality lies is in the descriptions of the Russian community in Paris composed of anarchists, artists and aristocrats and their role in impeding or encouraging a Franco-Russian *entente*. Here the author has used the *Préfecture de Paris* archives to glean what the French police made of the Paris Russians and how this surveillance information and subsequent arrest of Russian

nihilists in 1890 was used to reduce the revolutionary image of the French Republic in the eyes of Tsar Alexander III, whose father had been assassinated. Accounts of the social relations of the European ruling and governing elites are also well described with Russians spending their summers in French spa towns thereby facilitating informal diplomatic contacts. More could perhaps have been made of the fact that the Russians were intercepting French diplomatic traffic between the Saint Petersburg embassy and Paris and the impact which this had on negotiations. But it is interesting to learn of the efforts of certain members of the Imperial family from 1890–1891 to secure an alliance with France by getting the Tsar's son Nicholas to marry the daughter of the Orleanist branch of the French royal family. Though some French Orleanist diplomats connived in this manoeuvre, which could have had far-reaching consequences in restoring respectability to the French royal family, the Republican government saw to it that their careers were blocked. The arranged marriage idea came to nought, but not without first having caused consternation in Berlin where ever since Bismarck there had been fear of a royalist restoration in France which would enhance French prestige and increase the likelihood of another Franco-German war.

There is surprisingly little on the Russomania which swept the French elites in the 1890s as a result of translations of Russian authors and which made the idea of an alliance with Saint Petersburg more appealing to the French public. The author is rather ambivalent about French loans in describing them as being of lesser importance in the sealing of the alliance while seeming to attribute to them an important role in the process. But where the author is more effective is in her conclusions that despite this defensive alliance France and Russia did not always see eye to eye on issues leaving the alliance in need of serious repair by the time of the 1911 Agadir crisis. This is what Poincaré set out to do from 1912, attempting to strike a balance between too great a show of support of Russia, which might drag France into a war in which she had no interest, and too little support which might lead to her forsaking the alliance and thereby undermining French foreign and defence policy.

A final remark concerns the extremely poor copy-editing which allows the most elementary and irritating spelling errors to mar an otherwise useful and informative book.

John KEIGER, Salford

Konrad CANIS, *Von Bismarck zur Weltpolitik. Deutsche Außenpolitik 1890–1902*, Berlin (Akademie-Verlag) 1997, 430 S. (Studien zur internationalen Geschichte, 3).

Durch die Nichterneuerung des Rückversicherungsvertrages mit Rußland begab sich das just in diesen Tagen des Frühlings 1890 seinen überragenden Staatsmann Otto von Bismarck verlierende Deutsche Reich eines wichtigen Druckmittels im »Spiel mit den fünf Bällen« des europäischen Mächtesystems. Voll naiver Gutgläubigkeit kamen die von eigenwilligen Geheimräten unheilvoll angeleiteten Neulinge Caprivi und Marschall dem Wunschpartner England beim Helgoland-Sansibar-Vertrag im Sommer des gleichen Jahres weit entgegen – doch der erhoffte Lohn blieb aus: London erhielt ohne große Konzessionen vom bündnisgeneigten Partner, was es in Ostafrika begehrte, und dachte nicht daran, sich dem Werbenden mehr als nötig zu nähern. Geradezu vorherbestimmt war auch die nächste Ernüchterung für das schwach geführte Deutschland: das französisch-russische Bündnis. Das auf Expansion in Ostasien erpichte Zarenreich brauchte Rückenfreiheit in Europa, und da es sie von Berlin trotz intensiver Bemühungen durch Außenminister Giers 1890 nicht mehr erhielt, wandte es sich letztlich irreversibel seiner »heimlichen Liebe« Frankreich zu.

Das Reich aber nahm Zuflucht zu einer Zickzackpolitik: Seit 1892 gab es eine begrenzte Rückwendung zu Rußland (Handelsvertrag 1894), denn zunehmend wichtiger werdende koloniale Anliegen sowie die Erwägung, das unbotmäßige London Mores zu lehren, ließen die Reichsleitung einen schärferen Kurs gegen England wählen. In den Krisen um Samoa