
REVIEWS

A HISTORY OF RUSSIA. By *Basil Dmytryshyn*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977. xviii, 645 pp. Illus.

A HISTORY OF RUSSIA AND THE SOVIET UNION. By *David MacKenzie* and *Michael W. Curran*. The Dorsey Series in European History. Homewood, Ill. and Georgetown, Ontario: The Dorsey Press and Irwin-Dorsey Limited, 1977. xvi, 689 pp. Maps. Illus.

Both of these texts are comprehensive: they cover the entire field of Russian history from pre-Kievan Rus' to the Soviet Union in the 1970s. To attempt this in six-hundred-odd pages necessarily means that the treatment is general and the discussions are limited, as the authors themselves acknowledge. If the style of textbooks at times seems somewhat tedious and obvious, one must keep in mind that the point of view of the professional historian and that of the undergraduate student or general reader are quite different.

Dmytryshyn's book is well organized, concise, and straightforward. It is divided into five parts (Kievan Rus', Divided Rus', Muscovy, Imperial Russia, and Soviet Russia) and contains twenty chapters with numerous headings and subheadings. (The section dealing with the Soviet Union is based on the author's earlier work, *The USSR: A Concise History*). Although there is no general bibliography, lists of suggested readings (books in English) are provided in the conclusion of segments of the text. In addition to photographs and illustrations, there are a number of maps, tables, and charts (a list of which in the table of contents would have been helpful). Several charts which illustrate the administrative organization of the Russian government at different stages of development are particularly helpful, for example, as an aid in understanding the reorganization made by Catherine the Great in 1775. Although references are made throughout to historical controversies, the author includes little discussion of differing interpretations. The text seems to be designed more for the general reader or lower-level student than is the MacKenzie and Curran volume. If Dmytryshyn's text were to be used effectively in a college course, extensive supplementary readings, discussions, and lectures would be required for more detail and depth.

The MacKenzie-Curran text is divided into three parts (Early Russia to 1689; Early Imperial Russia, 1689–1855; and Modern Russia, 1855 to the Present). There are forty chapters, a general bibliography, four appendixes, and a generous number of maps (thirty-eight). The text offers a feature that many students will find both useful and stimulating: not only do the authors introduce conflicting opinions and interpretations, they also include examples at several points in the text. Ten "problems" are presented on such topics as "The Mongol Impact," "Historians and the Petrine Reforms," "The Expansion of Russia into Central Asia," "Collectivization: Why and How," and so forth. For each of the "problems," the authors provide a brief introduction, quotations from books or articles that represent the conflict of opinion, and a concluding or summarizing statement. In addition to the general bibliography, there are lists of suggested readings, which include both books and journal articles. These lists and some of the footnotes contain numerous references to works in Russian by both prerevolutionary and Soviet writers. In general, the text, which would seem to be aimed at the upper-level college student, is carefully and thoughtfully written.

MARGARET H. PERTZOFF
Randolph-Macon Woman's College