
REVIEWS

DIE BALTISCHE STEINKISTENGRÄBERKULTUR. By *Jakob Ozols*. Vor-geschichtliche Forschungen, vol. 16. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1969. 135 pp. 84 illustrations. 3 maps. DM 96.

This monograph, written by a Lett, now in Bonn, as a habilitation thesis, is a well-prepared and neatly published treatment of prehistoric monuments of the northern Balts in Latvia and Estonia, falling within the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age periods. For the first time data describing stone cist graves and contemporary settlements—collected from published sources, microfilms, and finds in the Finnish and Swedish museums—have been collected and conveniently published, yielding a comprehensive catalogue of finds so far known. The book is well illustrated, mostly by drawings, and there is an extensive bibliography.

The northern Baltic barrows contain stone enclosures around burials in wooden coffins or around cremation graves; for many years their chronology has remained elusive and unknown. The author's exacting study of these materials permits them to be placed in the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, ca. 1000–400/300 B.C. This culture is considered by the author to be a development from the Boat-axe group of the Early Bronze Age. It was technologically conservative, few metal artifacts appearing in the graves although metallurgy was practiced; bone and stone tools and ornaments predominated.

Regional differentiation, possibly implying tribal distinctions, was discerned through analysis of grave types. Mr. Ozols isolated three groups. One has its distribution in Livland, where it is characterized by an earthen tumulus encircled with a stone ring, enclosing a construction of field stones. The settlements associated with these graves are all hill-forts. A second group, further south, is the Semigallian, distinguished by graves sunk beneath the ground surface. The settlements of this area were unfortified and located near the cemeteries; only some of them were hill-forts. The third and youngest group is distributed on the coast of Estonia and adjacent islands. Hill-forts also occur in this area, and chalk was characteristically utilized in grave construction.

This book will serve as a very useful reference work for future archaeological and ethnohistorical research of the Baltic countries.

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MANUEL II PALAEOLOGUS (1391–1425): A STUDY IN LATE BYZANTINE STATESMANSHIP. By *John W. Barker*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1969. liii, 614 pp. \$25.00.

Manuel II Palaeologus was certainly a "person of many talents and interests, excelling in all," a "man of extraordinary interest whenever he might have lived," as John Barker puts it in his monumental book (p. xxxviii). This volume, however, is far more than just the biography of the emperor. It is a detailed and lengthy study

of the whole epoch in which he lived and worked, although the author clearly intended it to be a study of the political aspects of the times (p. L), largely excluding the economic and social life. Nevertheless, since this epoch is one of the most crucial and complicated in late Byzantine history, Barker has led us a long way toward a better comprehension of its many and complex intricacies. His thorough knowledge of sources and of modern works, including obscure medieval texts and little-known modern studies in various languages, has enabled him to solve many problems that abound in Manuel's period. The long footnotes at times seem to be burdensome, but there is no doubt that it is in those footnotes that Barker has given a great and lasting contribution to our knowledge of European history at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century.

This is not to say, of course, that no remarks or additions could be made even to this outstanding work. In addition to Nicolae Iorga's *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XV^e siècle*, volume 1, the second volume of the same series, if used (in spite of the numerous mistakes, shortcomings, and omissions in Iorga's hasty work) would have adduced a number of other sources, particularly those from Dubrovnik (called consistently "Ragusa" by Barker). The author has used József Gelcich and Lajos Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium ragusanum (Ragusa és Magyarország Oklevéltára, Budapest, 1887)*, but, curiously enough, not as much as he could have. A more thorough use of those sources, together with B. Krekić's *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au moyen âge* (Paris and The Hague, 1961)—which did not appear in the bibliography—could have, perhaps, given some additional information and helped strengthen some of the author's points or solve some problems.

Let us give a few examples. In discussing the preparations for King Sigismund's anti-Ottoman expedition of 1396 (p. 21, n. 13) Barker correctly points out the Byzantine diplomatic involvement and also quotes hints that the Hungarians sent an embassy to Manuel "only after the expedition was well under way." There are, however, two Ragusan documents of November 10 and 15, 1395, mentioning the trip of Hungarian ambassadors via Dubrovnik to Mitylene, Chios, Rhodes, and beyond (Krekić, reg. nos. 460, 461). It seems possible that these ambassadors could have been going to Constantinople, this being the most logical aim of such a trip at the time. Thus we would have an indication of a Hungarian diplomatic contact with the Byzantine emperor before, not after, the expedition started.

Speaking of Manuel's return trip from Western Europe in 1403, Barker (p. 231, n. 58) uses a Ragusan document of April 14, 1403 (as quoted by M. A. Andreeva, "Zur Reise Manuels II. Palaiologos nach Westeuropa," in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, vol. 34, 1934, pp. 37–47) as a sure indication that the emperor by that time had by-passed Dubrovnik on his way east, and concludes that therefore Manuel must have left Venice after April 9 rather than on April 5 (as Vasiliev, "Puteshestvie vizantiiskago imperatora Manuila Paleologa po zapadnoi Evrope, 1399–1403," *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnago prosveshcheniia*, N.S., no. 39, 1912, p. 300, and Andreeva, p. 47, assume). Now, Manuel had been expected in Dubrovnik since March 13, 1403 (cf. Jorjo Tadić, *Promet putnika u starom Dubrovniku*, Dubrovnik, were not certain the emperor would be in Constantinople even when their envoy 1939, pp. 167–68; Krekić, p. 44), but the Ragusan document of April 14, upon close examination, does not warrant any of the aforementioned conclusions. In this act the government of Dubrovnik sends a man to Constantinople and Pera to seek Bosnian noblemen, Turkish prisoners, and it orders the envoy to bring back letters from the Byzantine emperor or "eius locum tenentis." This means that the Ragusans

arrived there, and consequently it indicates that they were not aware of his passage near Dubrovnik at the time.

Dealing with the epoch from 1405 to 1410, Barker rightly points out the lack of ability and interest of Western powers in exploiting the confusion in the Ottoman state after the battle of Ancyra and quotes Sigismund of Hungary as being too pre-occupied with other "adventures, especially his election to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire" to do anything against the Ottomans (p. 271). It would seem, however, from Ragusan documents, that there was Hungarian activity against the Turks at this time. Thus in a letter of March 2, 1408, the Ragusan government mentions the possibility that the Hungarian king might be "going toward Serbia to go into Romania" (i.e., Byzantium) (Gelcich-Thallóczy, *Diplomatarium*, p. 178), and in another letter, of February 10, 1410, the Ragusans say that the "Turkish sultan is rejoicing at having obtained peace and harmony" with Sigismund (Krekić, reg. no. 582; Barker could not use this document, because in *Diplomatarium*, p. 190, instead of "dominus Theucrorum" it is written "dominus Hervoi," which is incorrect and distorts the meaning).

The author is quite justified in showing how mistaken is the old opinion that after 1413 there was stability and peace between Byzantium and the Ottomans. His view that "the Turks continued a hostile policy in Greece proper, if on a minor scale" (p. 318) is corroborated by a Ragusan act of June 1418, in which a man desists from a trip by sea to Romania, because the route is unsafe owing to daily attacks made there by the Turks (Krekić, reg. no. 641).

On the other hand, Barker says that "we have little specific information on Byzantine affairs during the early months of 1423" (p. 370). However, there is a very interesting document from Dubrovnik, of April 13, 1423, showing Manuel engaged diplomatically in a new direction. "Nobilis vir dominus Asan, ambasiator serenissimi domini imperatoris constantinopolitani," with his "familiares," was in Dubrovnik at that time, leaving the next day for the hinterland town of Pljevlja, with the aim of meeting there, or elsewhere, the mightiest of the Bosnian noblemen, Duke Sandalj Hranić (Krekić, p. 46 and reg. no. 681). It may well be that Manuel, disappointed by the lack of Western assistance and hard pressed by the Ottomans, attempted to obtain some help from the powerful Bosnian lord. In this hope he was certainly badly misguided, for Sandalj Hranić not only was not in a position to help the Byzantines, but he himself used Ottoman help to foster his interests in Bosnia. Nevertheless, this Ragusan act shows an important new aspect of Manuel's diplomatic efforts.

Finally—to omit some additional points—it is a little surprising that Barker (p. 378), so alert when using sources, did not exploit a Ragusan document of August 31, 1424, concerning John VIII's stay in Hungary (*Diplomatarium*, pp. 298–300; Krekić, reg. no. 701). In this document there is mention of "domini Johannis, Grecorum imperatoris" participation, together with King Sigismund, the Danish King "Ericus," and the Polish army in the struggle to annihilate "heresim perfidorum Hussitarum" (the mention in *Diplomatarium*, p. 299, of an "orator Theucrorum" should be disregarded, being a misreading).

There are also some minor mistakes and points of interpretation which could be disputed. Let us make very clear, however, that these additions and remarks are made only in an attempt to improve an already first-rate book, in which Manuel is shown not only as an emperor and statesman but also as a man of letters and a philosopher. Many of his letters, translated by Barker, are fascinating, and the author has been able to show the emperor as a human being—a particularly difficult

task. Barker's thorough research and vast knowledge of his subject, his sound judgments and his very fine—at times even humorous—writing, make this book not only extremely valuable but also very pleasant to read. The choice of illustrations is excellent and the appendixes bring an additional wealth of information and solutions of many controversial problems.

There is no doubt whatsoever that, with John Barker's book—in spite of his modesty in stating that his book is not “intended to be an all-embracing and definitive study” (p. ix)—we have obtained a work which becomes a basic tool for any future discussion of Byzantine, Balkanic, Ottoman, and even West European history at the time of Manuel II Palaeologus.

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THE TSARDOM OF MOSCOW, 1547–1682, in 2 vols. By *George Vernadsky*. A History of Russia, vol. 5. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969. xiii, 873 pp. \$20.00.

The appearance of this volume is the final step in Professor Vernadsky's contribution to the ten-volume History of Russia started in 1943 jointly by him and the late Professor Michael Karpovich. Professor Vernadsky's plan at the time was to cover the period from the beginning of Russian history to the end of the eighteenth century. It is greatly to be regretted that the author's advanced age (he was born in 1887) imposes severe physical limits on his undertaking and carrying to completion yet another volume; for few scholars have known the Russian eighteenth century as well as Professor Vernadsky. However, as it stands, his performance has been of staggering dimensions, displaying sterling knowledge, and one is bound to hail the last link in this remarkable chain with sincere admiration and gratitude.

Since the epoch treated by Professor Vernadsky was of crucial importance for Russian historical development, it is not surprising that it required so much space and attention, for the problems to be treated within those 135 years are both numerous and intricate: Ivan the Terrible's tumultuous reign and within it the arduous case of the Oprichnina, the Time of Troubles and the reconstruction of Muscovy, the evolution and the consolidation of serfdom, the Ukrainian wars and the union of the Ukraine with Moscow, the drama around Nikon and the church schism, the great territorial expansion into the “Eurasian space,” and the gradual penetration of Western culture. All this has been dealt with by Professor Vernadsky with a master's hand and very thoroughly. The exposition does not neglect any information provided by the sources and the pertinent scholarly literature. This use of Russian prerevolutionary and Soviet materials, as well as Ukrainian and Polish sources and monographs, has given the author's story a great degree of objectivity. And this work of Professor Vernadsky's is primarily a story, for his treatment of history is narrative, above all. It has been refreshing to plunge into this fascinating narrative and to be carried along with it, sometimes irresistibly. One must repeat that there is no more meaningful way of bringing the past to life than to give it the shape of a coherent and pertinent story.

Professor Vernadsky's book has been divided into seven chapters. Part 1 embraces four chapters, while part 2 contains the remaining three chapters and (as is usual in Professor Vernadsky's writings) an extensive bibliography, a glossary of Russian terms, and an index to the whole volume. There are five care-