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## REVIEWS

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BYZANTINE MISSIONS AMONG THE SLAVS: SS. CONSTANTINE-CYRIL AND METHODIUS. By *Francis Dvornik*. Rutgers Byzantine Series. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970. xviii, 485 pp. \$17.50. BYZANTSKÉ MISIE U SLOVANŮ. Translated, with a biographical introduction on the author, by *V. Vavřínek*. Prague: Vyšehrad, 1970. 394 pp.

THE ENTRY OF THE SLAVS INTO CHRISTENDOM: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MEDIEVAL HISTORY OF THE SLAVS. By *A. P. Vlasto*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970. xii, 435 pp. \$19.50.

Dvornik's latest contribution to the literature on Byzantium and Slavdom, published simultaneously in Czech translation, is basically a critical evaluation of the current status of Cyril and Methodian studies. Father Dvornik takes advantage not only of his own ground-breaking research on ninth-century Byzantium and the Slavs but also of the spate of Cyrillo-Methodiana published in connection with the eleven hundredth anniversary of the Moravian mission of the "Apostles of the Slavs" as well as the recent archaeological work in East Central Europe and the Balkans. In a sense a summary of previous work in this field, *Byzantine Missions* also expands and revises our knowledge of the subject and integrates the specialized scholarship on various aspects of the Cyril-Methodian tradition into the larger framework of a developing Slavic civilization. The book reads lucidly and well, in spite of some disconcerting editorial lapses, and will remain for some time the single best book to recommend to students interested in the Byzantine mission to Moravia and the wide-ranging impact that this ecclesiastical coup had on the history of medieval Eastern Europe.

Dvornik's study begins with the slow but steady Christianization (and acculturation) of the Slavs settled in the territory of modern Greece, and ranges through the flowering of Cyril-Methodian influence in pre-Mongol Russia. Within these bounds the author presents a continuous narrative of Byzantine-inspired missionary activities among the Slavs. In the present volume Dvornik is much more speculative than in his previous specialized works in this field, for he attempts to pull together the numerous loose threads of scholarship on the results of Byzantine missionary work among these newcomers to Eastern Europe. His well-argued hypotheses provide a necessary continuity in the work.

Some of Dvornik's new interpretations bear singling out. Largely on the basis of archaeological discoveries, he sees the Christianization of the Western Balkans as the result of Christian influences radiating from the preserved Christian enclaves on the Dalmatian coast and islands well before the Franks came to control northern Italy and co-opt the Patriarchate of Aquileia into their *Drang nach Osten*. Dvornik also finds Adriatic ecclesiastical influence in Moravia, a region that archaeological findings indicate had a rather highly developed culture, which points to some continuity with Roman culture in Pannonia, as well as to Adriatic missionary contacts. The excavations at Mikulčice in Czechoslovakia, probably Rastislav's capital, typify the cultural foundations on which Cyril and Methodius were able to build after their arrival in Moravia. The ecclesiastical architecture which supplants in part the

“Adriatic style” in Moravia at approximately the time of the first preaching of Cyril and Methodius is connected by Dvornik with a widespread “Byzantine missionary style” of the period. Both of these architectural styles became, in turn, part of the syncretic Byzantino-Slavic culture developed in Moravia by the Apostles of the Slavs and carried into Bohemia, Pannonia, and southern Poland. In sum, Dvornik’s book is not only useful reading but also a work that will stimulate thoughtful discussion and further research. Its chief shortcomings are a paucity of maps, the lack of references in the text to the fascinating illustrations, and the relegation of the very useful footnotes to the back of the book. Given the importance of this volume, such problems are minor indeed.

Vlasto’s book surveys a considerably wider scene than Dvornik’s study, for it focuses on each of the Slavic groups at the moment of its integration one way or another into what we are pleased to call “Western civilization.” Its best sections are those that deal with Slavic peoples, such as the Wends and the future Slovenes, who remained beyond even the secondary influence of Byzantine missionary activities. Other sections of the book are of decidedly uneven quality, which is a shame, for the author displays an enviable ability to handle material in many languages, both ancient and modern. Many of the hypotheses put forth by the author are intriguing, but they are rarely cogently argued or well documented. Solutions to problems generally accepted by scholars, on the other hand, are often reconstructed in minute detail. Such deficiencies raise a larger question about this work: to whom is it addressed? One might assume that a book subtitled “An Introduction to the Medieval History of the Slavs” would be designed for the neophyte in this field; but the uninitiated student will find this work more frustrating than illuminating. The book contains simple factual errors and non sequiturs, is unnecessarily laced with untranslated Latin quotations and pedantic Latinisms, occasionally assumes scraps of comparatively arcane background, and is written in an awkward prose style, which makes it difficult to read, and on occasion misleads. Prose style aside, then, the book must be intended for scholars in the field; but they of course already have a survey knowledge of the subject and are interested in seeing new interpretations defended. They too will be frustrated by this book.

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ORIGINS OF THE GREEK NATION: THE BYZANTINE PERIOD, 1204–1461. By *Apostolos E. Vacalopoulos*. Translated by *Ian Moles*. Foreword by *Peter Charanis*. Rutgers Byzantine Series. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970. xxviii, 413 pp. \$20.00.

This book is a translation and revision of the first volume of A. E. Vacalopoulos’s three-volume *Historia tou Neou Hellēnismou*, a work that addresses itself to a thorny, controversial problem—the emergence of modern Hellenism. The problem is particularly difficult because this process took place within the framework of two multinational, synthetic states: the Byzantine and the Ottoman empires. It is further complicated by the fact that “Hellenism” is an elusive term. As Vacalopoulos indicates, the term does not necessarily include ethnic origin, because many of the inhabitants of the Byzantine Empire and of modern Greece were Greek-speaking, Hellenized people of diverse ethnic stock. The particular problem that has caused so much trouble—the question of the importance of the Slavic invasions in Greece—is,