
NEWS OF THE PROFESSION

CARLILE AYLNER MACARTNEY, 1895-1978

Carlile Aylmer Macartney, foremost authority in the Western world on the history of the Danubian region, died on June 18, 1978, at the age of eighty-three. A committed fighter for political causes, Dr. Macartney was primarily a scholar who, in the course of his long industrious life, produced one excellent book after another. His magnum opus was written years after he had passed "the Psalmists' statutory limit of life," a phrase he himself used about Francis Joseph.

His interest in the Danubian region, an area beset by problems of nationality, may have been partially attributable to his family background. He was born on January 24, 1895, into an Anglo-Irish family that had emigrated to Scotland in the fourteenth century, and then back to Ulster in the seventeenth century where they became landowners. Not unexpectedly, Macartney described his nationality as legally and politically British and "personally" Irish.

He was a scholar at Winchester and in 1914 also won a scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge, which he did not take up, volunteering for the army instead. After the years in the trenches he went to Cambridge and subsequently to Vienna as acting vice-consul, and then to Geneva for the League of Nations. In June 1936, he was elected Research Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, a post he held until his retirement twenty-nine years later. He worked in the Research Department of the British Foreign Office during the Second World War, and from 1951 to 1957 he was Montagu Burton Professor of International Relations at Edinburgh University.

His work achieved academic recognition. He was Foreign Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Fellow of the British Academy, and Correspondent Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. An honorary degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred on him by Oxford University, and he became Fellow Emeritus of All Souls in 1976. He was also the founder and president of the British-Hungarian Fellowship.

Macartney's first book, *The Social Revolution in Austria* (1926), is an erudite, carefully drawn account of the conditions in post-1918 Austria. Before taking up early Hungarian historical sources, a complex subject requiring formidable linguistic skills which Macartney soon mastered, he had written (with others) *Survey of International Affairs* in 1925. *The Magyars in the Ninth Century* (1930) is a comparative examination of Arabic and Greek sources on the thorny problem of the Magyars' migration during a critical period in their social transformation. *Studies in the Earliest Hungarian Historical Sources* came out in seven parts (parts 1 and 2: Budapest, 1938; part 3: Budapest, 1940; parts 4 and 5: Budapest, 1940 [actually published in 1942, but the date was falsified because Great Britain and Hungary were at war at the time]; parts 6 and 7: Oxford, 1951). The subject of the last two parts was regarded as so esoteric and impenetrable that the editor of the *Oxford University Gazette* had to approach the author to review his own work, and Macartney obliged. *Mediaeval Hungarian Historians* (1953) is a critical and analytical guide that sets forth the conclusions of his seven-part work.

Macartney maintained a strong interest in modern politics. *National States and National Minorities* reveals an understanding of the national minorities problem that few have rivaled. He also took sides. *Hungary and her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and Its Consequences 1919-1937* (1937, reprinted in 1965) is a comprehensive study of the national question in the region. Just as R. W. Seton-Watson had spoken up for the Slavs and the Rumanians, the historical underdogs in Hungary

before the First World War, Macartney stood up for the losers of the post-1918 peace settlements. He regarded the Treaty of Trianon, which had handed over nearly one-third of the Hungarians to the Successor States, as particularly unjust, and he championed Hungary's aspirations to border revision in her favor. But he did not lose sight of the overriding interest of European security—the focal point of his *Problems of the Danube Basin* (1942)—even though the political solutions he offered were not realistic. Nor did his Hungarophile attitude cause him to lose his critical stance. *Hungary* (1934, Modern World Series, edited by H. R. L. Fisher) is a brilliant survey of Hungarian society and its "oligarchic" political system which received praise from Social Democrats and Populists rather than the establishment. *October Fifteenth* (2 vols., 1957; 2nd ed., 1961) is a piece of meticulous scholarship: a one thousand-page account of Hungarian politics and of German-Hungarian relations between 1929 and 1944 which culminated in the regents' foiled attempt to break the alliance with Hitler (hence the title). The portraits of personalities in the book are outstanding. *Hungary* (1962) is by far the best short history of Hungary that has ever been written. *The Habsburg Empire 1790–1918* (1968), Macartney's magnum opus (an abridged version of which was published in 1978 and entitled *The House of Austria*), is a general and comprehensive narrative of the empire's domestic history into which the diverse components of the Danubian Lands were properly welded. As such the book is a unique achievement in any language, even though the Slavs (in contrast to the Germans and Hungarians) receive insufficient attention.

Macartney wrote history in a somewhat old-fashioned erudite narrative form into which a wealth of detail on social and political institutions was compressed, and he presented it with great clarity and in beautiful prose. He was a kind, unassuming man with strong sympathies for the underdog and with insight into men and situations. He held deep convictions. Even the errors of some of his judgments underline his intellectual integrity and independence. Ever since his Winchester days Macartney had believed, with humility, that a scholar had an obligation not only to find out the truth but to tell all that he held to be important, withholding nothing. During his life, the recognition his work was accorded may not have been commensurate with what it merited. His friends, and there are many, will miss his company. Posterity will remember Dr. Macartney as a scholar who found out much about the Danubian Lands and, by his skillful presentation, illuminated an area of Europe that might otherwise have remained obscure.

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ALEKSANDR ALEKSANDROVICH ZIMIN, 1920–1980

Alexander Zimin died in Moscow in February just three days after his sixtieth birthday. His last years, plagued by ill health, forced him to spend long winter sojourns in the Crimea, yet he continued to write almost to the very end. The two volumes being prepared in his honor, of which he was aware—one in the Soviet Union by his students and friends, and the other by his Western colleagues—will now be offered in tribute to his memory.

In a publishing career that spanned more than three decades (1946–78), he established himself as his generation's most important historian of medieval Muscovy, and he undoubtedly belongs among the four or five greatest Russian specialists in this century who concerned themselves with that period. His productivity was enormous: six books, over one hundred and seventy articles, chapters, or parts of books, and at least sixteen editions of texts with commentaries (either alone or in collaboration with