

Evidently only historical distance can allow a more complete scholarly evaluation. Unquestionably such a work of synthesis would have, above all, to assess and integrate the evidence, disclosed by these volumes, revealing the imperialist and profoundly reactionary nature of the Soviet regime.

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HISTORIA POMORZA. Vol. 1: DO ROKU 1466. In two parts. Edited by Gerard Labuda. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1969. 819, 501 pp. 220 zł.

The long-awaited publication of this two-part volume initiates what will be, upon completion, a monumental four-volume history of Pomerania from prehistory to the present day. This first volume extends to the Treaty of Toruń in 1466; the second will cover the early modern period to 1815; the third, 1815–1945; and the fourth will deal with contemporary history.

As early as 1953 the Division on the History of Pomerania of the Polish Academy of Sciences' Institute of History decided to undertake the preparation of this work. It was designed to be a comprehensive, collaborative study which would be comparable, on a regional basis, to the already projected *Historia Polski*. But a somewhat overoptimistic view of the state of historical research on Pomerania necessitated a great deal of intervening scholarship, which has now been incorporated in this volume. If the mill of learning grinds exceedingly fine, it also grinds slowly.

Before undertaking a brief description of the contents of this work and an assessment of its value in three particular areas, it would be wise to define the geography involved. Pomerania (Polish *po morze* = by the sea) traditionally includes the area stretching on the Baltic between the lower course of the Vistula and the Oder rivers, and bounded on the south by the Noteć and lower Warta. This region is divided into a western (*Pomorze zachodnie*) and an eastern (*Pomorze gdańskie*) part. But the nature of historical development has been such that principalities or states lying outside these boundaries have often played a vitally important role in this region. Thus the *Historia Pomorza* deals also with part of the area west of the Oder and with the history of Prussia (the German *Ostpreussen*), the seat of the Knights of the Teutonic Order. As a result, telling the history of this region is a task complicated by the mixing of ethnic populations in the past two millennia and the number of foreign powers which have exercised domination here at one time or another.

The volume begins with a chapter on historical geography by Gerard Labuda and Kazimierz Ślaski and a penetrating historiographical essay by the editor that is a model of the art. Józef Kostrzewski then provides a long section (135 pp.) on what, in contemporary Polish terminology, is called Primitive Society (to ca. A.D. 600). The Age of Feudalism is then treated in the remainder of the volume by Kostrzewski, Lech Leciejewicz, Labuda, Marian Biskup, Ślaski, and Benedykt Zientara. Until the early twelfth century, the treatment of the text is pan-Pomeranian; after that, separate treatments of east and west are provided. An eighty-page bibliography by Władysław Chojnacki, seventy pages of indexes by Anna Ślaska, and numerous genealogies, maps, and illustrations further complement this outstanding achievement.

From what was said in the preceding paragraph, it is apparent that in terms

of organization this volume follows a periodization that is essentially Marxist. Thus one leaves primitive society with the decline of the family social community and the rise of feudal conditions. The feudal system itself develops throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, then begins to undergo certain internal stresses and tensions in the fifteenth with the rise of a rental economy and growing "feudal anarchy." In all of this, characteristic social, political, and cultural phenomena of the feudal era are readily apparent. Much of this approach is of course familiar to students of East European historiography; it is perhaps less so to scholars who have concentrated upon West European medieval history, and to whom the word "feudal" connotes something else. Having said this, however, I should also point out that the spirited debates which were connected with the *makieta* edition and ultimate publication of the *Historia Polski* in the 1950s have evidently influenced the formulation of the present volume. The periodization is not rigidly dogmatic, local inconsistencies are allowed to stand without being forced into a preconceived pattern, and although traditional narrative and political history receive less attention in this volume than they would have in an earlier generation, the text is not uncomfortably anonymous. In sum, while many Western scholars would probably not have adopted the same approach to this topic, neither will they find the present effort rendered unusable.

Among the many contributions this volume makes, not the least is Labuda's. In addition to having provided an important 250-page section on east Pomerania in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, he has as editor given a unity and cohesiveness to the volume that is rare in such collaborative efforts. He describes the approach of the volume as "an individualizing process of integration and division in the history of Pomerania in accord with the actual course of events in individual periods." This is, understandably, an approach open to the gravest of abuses without a strong editor. Here, partly because of the essentially chronological framework, it appears that the worst pitfalls have been avoided.

Kostrzewski's contribution on the prehistory of the region is more difficult to assess, for this chapter is based almost exclusively on archaeological evidence. This discipline in Pomerania dates back to the early eighteenth century, and in the past hundred years has provided great quantities of published reports of excavations establishing massively the general outlines of the prehistoric past. Unfortunately much of the interpretation of these data has been colored by national allegiances: German scholars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries drew certain conclusions about the ethnic history of this region, which Polish scholars in the past five decades have generally revised. To the nonspecialist, Kostrzewski's judgments seem moderate and his narrative straightforward. More than fifty illustrations greatly enrich this section.

Marian Biskup's nearly two-hundred-page treatment of the Teutonic Order is an impressive achievement. He provides the first postwar synthesis on a topic that has been of central concern in recent Polish historiography. The question of why a state whose power reached its zenith in the fourteenth century should undergo the marked decline that the Knights suffered in the first half of the fifteenth century is answered fundamentally in terms of economic deterioration and social tensions. His conclusions rest firmly upon numerous monographic studies of the past two decades (many of which he has himself contributed to or supervised), and should remain standard for some time, at least until a different methodology is systematically applied to the problem.

In a legal suit conducted by papal judges in Warsaw in 1339, witness after

witness affirmed “quod ducatus et terra Pomoranie . . . ad ipsum regnum [Poloniam] pertinent. . .” With the twentieth-century fulfillment of this claim, Polish scholars have provided in this volume the beginning of both an authoritative treatment of the region itself and a major contribution to the provincial history of Poland.

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**RIGHTEOUS AMONG NATIONS: HOW POLES HELPED THE JEWS, 1939–1945.** Edited by *Władysław Bartoszewski* and *Zofia Lewin*. London: Earls Court Publications Ltd., 1969. lxxxvii, 834 pp.

It is ironic that *Righteous Among Nations* appeared at a time when Poland was in the throes of one of its worst anti-Semitic episodes, the result of which was to leave its cultural and political life *Judenrein*. (The original Polish edition with a different title and with less documentary material had been published in 1967 by the “Znak” Social Publishing Institute of Cracow, which is affiliated with the liberal Catholic weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny*.) For the volume is a compilation of documents describing, often in poignant terms, the assistance rendered by Poles from various walks of life and under the most difficult circumstances of the Nazi occupation to a doomed Jewish community. Those Jews who survived the holocaust—estimates range from 50,000 to 100,000 of a total of 3,500,000—were indebted to Poles for whom a quotation from the Talmud is appropriately dedicated on the flyleaf: “Whoever saves one life is as though he has preserved the existence of the entire world.”

The documents, mostly narratives written by the rescued, are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, their purpose is to be representational—that is, to illustrate the various types of assistance, motivations, and circumstances. The assistance varied from the organized effort of the Polish resistance movement, particularly the Council for Aid to Jews (which operated under the cryptonym “Zegota”), to initiatives undertaken by individuals from various strata of society. Of special interest is the description of the aid given by segments of the Polish underground to the heroic uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto in September 1942. An introductory essay by Bartoszewski gives this subject a considerable, if distorted, focus.

Some of the narratives have been published earlier, in books by Philip Friedman and Kurt Grossman and in the posthumous diary of Emanuel Ringelblum. But many others are new—accumulated, in a somewhat haphazard manner, by Bartoszewski. A certain amount of fresh documentation that was made available to the editors concerning the aid given by the clergy and religious orders is also included.

Neither in the documents nor in the introductory essay is there any meaningful discussion of Polish anti-Semitism, a factor bearing upon the indifference or even the collaboration of various segments of the population with the Nazi persecutors. Bartoszewski either offers the rather lame argument that, given the harsh conditions prevailing in Poland, “the overwhelming number of Poles had no possibility whatever of giving material assistance to refugees from the ghettos,” or advances the dubious proposition that Polish collaborators were really “outside their own society.” Such tendentiousness can in no way minimize the heroism and humanism of those Polish rescuers whose exploits fill the pages of this book.

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*B'nai B'rith*