

THE EUROPECENTRIC HISTORIOGRAPHY OF RUSSIA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONTRIBUTION BY RUSSIAN EMIGRE HISTORIANS IN THE USA, 1925–1955, CONCERNING 19TH CENTURY RUSSIAN HISTORY. By *Elizabeth Beyerly*. Studies in European History, 11. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1973. 385 pp.

This is an unusual book. Its purpose is to analyze and assess the views of leading Russian émigré historians in the United States on nineteenth-century Russian history and to do so in the context of different interpretations of that history in the Soviet Union and other countries. Its methods include a heavy and inflexible methodological framework which leaves insufficient room for narration and development, a crushing reliance on footnotes (situated at the end of each chapter) which contain perhaps three times as much material as the text, and a kind of *explication de texte* of the favored authors. (The last practice confirmed my suspicion that *explication de texte* should be reserved for Corneille and Racine.) The author apparently knows all leading European languages and a number of less common ones, including Hungarian. Yet, unfortunately, her English is difficult and unidiomatic, abounding in usage such as “inofficial” and “belonging into.”

The seven selected émigré historians are Professors Michael Florinsky, Michael Karpovich, Andrei Lobanov-Rostovsky, Anatole Mazour, Leonid Strakhovsky, George Vernadsky, and myself. Thoroughly flattered, I must nevertheless protest. “Russian émigré” would seem to imply one who emigrated from Russia, which act I cannot claim. Again, I am twenty-three years younger than the next youngest man of the otherwise reasonably homogeneous group. This is not at all to deny my Russian background, but why should a study specifically devoted to historians of Russia confuse their generations, countries of origin, training, and the like? Conversely, Alexander Gerschenkron and Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams are listed under “American Historiography of Russian History” (pp. 126–29).

Classifications aside, a historiographical study should be precise and reliable as to its facts. This one is not. On page 133 alone I am issued two doctorates (one of them almost correct), while the phrase “since 1960 with Berkeley Univ.” contains two errors. But I do not claim discrimination. Professor Karpovich, for example, has bibliographical difficulties: his Berkshire Series study is listed as one of the ten volumes in the celebrated Vernadsky-Karpovich project (p. 130), and his contribution as one of the three authors of *Economic History of Europe Since 1750* is given under “Forewords, Editing, Historiographical Comments” (p. 131). Nor was Professor Richard Pierce, a fine historian to be sure, his student (p. 329, n. 134).

On the whole, the author reads her historians with sympathy, intelligence, and understanding. Yet occasionally her devotion to her texts makes her try to gather from them much more than had been put into them in the first place—as in the following staggering instance: “Considering Riasanovsky’s overall positive appraisal of the Slavophiles, especially of the views of the historian Pogodin, it may be deduced that Riasanovsky at least to some extent accepts Pogodin’s geographical argument of the cold Russian climate forcing the inhabitants of Russia to live mostly at home and to abdicate interest in public affairs, thereby indirectly encouraging autocracy (*Nicholas I*, p. 136)” (p. 186, n. 12).

How does one sum up? If this were the first draft of a dissertation, I would have considered it original, interesting, and promising. But, although published, it is not nearly ready for publication, and in fact is almost unreadable. Still, for

those who are willing to plow through it, it has something to offer. And I, for one, shall look forward to Dr. Beyerly's next, and I trust more felicitous, work.

Does the Mouton press have no editorial policy and no editors?

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RUSKAIA ARMIIA I FLOT V XIX VEKE: VOENNO-EKONOMI-
 CHESKII POTENTIAL ROSSII. By *L. G. Beskrovnyi*. Moscow:
 "Nauka," 1973. 616 pp. 2.79 rubles.

This book is encyclopedic. It covers virtually every aspect of military and naval affairs in Russia during the nineteenth century, including organization, composition, administration, strategy and tactics, logistics, the development and manufacture of weapons, transportation, communications, and military engineering. The book has over 160 tables in addition to various schematics detailing the structure of organizations associated with the armed forces. The work itself is systematically organized by topic, with each topic treated in a tightly chronological way. It is this encyclopedic format that is without a doubt the most useful aspect of the work. If one is interested, for example, in the problem of conscription in the nineteenth century, one can find on a year-to-year basis the precise number of those conscripted, the ratio of conscripts to the male population in a particular instance, and the occurrence and purposes of any special levies. The volume also contains very precise data on the weaponry of the period.

The prodigious and detailed presentation of specific information is not reflected, however, in any far-reaching analysis. The analysis that does appear is often couched in clichés and serves only to fit a particular set of facts within the standard Soviet view of history. This is to be regretted, because much of modern Russian history, particularly since the time Russia emerged as part of the European state system, must be understood in light of the problem that faced the empire in competing militarily with Western states possessing more highly developed resources and technical expertise. This competition cost Russia much and denied her the use of many of her resources for the development of her own land and people.

The national history of Russia has always been guns before butter, even to the point of excluding butter. The economically stagnant empire strained its limited resources to provide itself with the best defense force available. The Russian army, in particular, had the never-ending task of maintaining a force sufficient to defend the empire and maintain domestic order. In the nineteenth century this stress between national security and insufficient resources led to a century-long effort to provide an armed force that could be reduced to the smallest numbers possible in time of peace and rapidly mobilized into a large and effective field force in the event of war. A qualified success was achieved in this area by the Statute of 1874, but other problems remained largely unsolved.

The economic backwardness of the empire served as both cause and effect in the character of the Russian army. For example, the quality of leadership and troops was greatly reduced by inadequate education. A large part of the potentially productive labor force was siphoned off into the nonproductive armed forces, which consumed a quarter or more of the state's fiscal resources. And despite the best efforts of the underdeveloped Russian industry, weapons were always too few and often