

Russian society during the past two centuries" (p. vii). The final product—a brief introduction, twenty-five chapters grouped into six parts (three for the period before 1914 and three since), and a lengthy, partially annotated bibliography—provides many interesting insights. Each chapter contains much useful information (factual, statistical, and interpretative), and is written in a clear style.

It is difficult in a few words to pass judgment on a work of over 650 pages that treats three of the most complex and controversial periods in Russian history—the nineteenth century, the Revolution, and the Soviet era. Most of the book concentrates on domestic issues, such as agriculture, industry, education, science, music, literature, social classes, and bureaucracy. Only four chapters deal with the delicate and intricate problems of foreign policy.

In a work of this scope one is bound to find both strengths and weaknesses—depending on one's knowledge and preference. The book's basic strength is its clarity and impartiality. Professor Thaden has examined each fact, has properly identified each individual, and has scrupulously analyzed each problem. In the opinion of this reviewer, he has given the most diligent attention to the nationality problem—before, during, and since the Revolution. This attention in a scholarly work to one of the most fundamental (and still largely neglected) problems in understanding modern Russian history is most welcome.

It is regrettable, therefore, that this otherwise excellent treatment should have several glaring shortcomings. The greatest of these is an imbalance of detail and emphasis. For reasons not made clear, many nineteenth-century problems are given more attention, space, and emphasis than their twentieth-century counterparts. For instance, the handful of radicals known as the Ishutin Circle is given full coverage, although not a word is said about the massive anti-Stalinist Vlasov movement during World War II; and the activity of Soviet partisans in World War II is noted in only six words. Many such examples are found not only in the analysis of domestic problems but in that of foreign policy as well.

Scattered throughout the work are factual errors and misspelled words, which were not corrected in proofreading. Alexander II is said to have died in 1894 (p. viii). Actually it was Alexander III who died in that year. Buchlau is spelled Buchlan on page 398, Dzerzhinsky is Dzerzhimskii on page 444, and Volgograd is spelled Vologogorod on page 479. Notwithstanding such shortcomings and errors, Thaden has produced an interesting account of modern Russian history that should be of value to all interested students.

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THE WAR AGAINST RUSSIA, 1854–1856. By *A. J. Barker*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971. xvii, 348 pp. \$7.95.

Colonel Barker has written an interesting and lively book about the Crimean War, although not, as the jacket claims, the definitive one. His knowledge of the diplomacy of the war is faulty, for he mistakenly states that the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi had given Russia the right to send its warships through the Straits. Also, it was not Turkish successes that forced the Russians to retire across the Danube in 1854, for they were about to storm Silistria when the threat of an Austrian flank attack from Transylvania caused their hasty retreat. Moreover, the author does not mention how Bismarck's diplomacy had prevented Austria from joining the Western powers against Russia.

It is in his description of the Crimean battles and especially of the “decisive” Alma (to which he devotes four chapters) that the author excels. In an amazing account he tells how the British regiments in their dress uniforms had to perfect their alignment, with rifles at just the right angle, before they could march into Russian artillery fire. Fortunately for them, their line tactics permitted devastating rifle fire, which drove the Russians from the field. The Russian account of the battle, however, gives more credit to the French, who managed to turn the Russian left flank and enfilade their lines with artillery fire, although the British certainly bore the brunt of the battle.

Barker gives an excellent comparison of the British and French armies, in which the former proved inferior in leadership, provisioning and housing the men, and care of the wounded. Hence the great blizzard in November hit the British far worse than it did the French. From then on their strength was much inferior to that of their allies. Because the British soldiers never advanced their trenches as well as the French did, they were mowed down in the two big assaults, while the French penetrated the Russian lines and finally retained the Malakov, the key position. On the other hand, by the end of the campaign the British had rebuilt their army and, with the help of a Sardinian contingent and a foreign legion, had made it stronger than ever. The French deteriorated at the end and wanted no more fighting.

The book also gives brief accounts of the secondary campaigns—in Asia Minor, the Baltic, the White Sea, and the Pacific. Since these campaigns did not affect the outcome of the war, they illustrate the British difficulty in striking effective blows at Russia. In fact, though sea power had made it possible to attack the Crimea, its limitations quickly became apparent, for the French army had to win the victory, and that not a decisive one. The British profited by this lesson, for after the Crimean War their army underwent reforms that eliminated its worst failings. This probably was their sole gain from the war.

The book is provided with a number of excellent maps.

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KATIA: WIFE BEFORE GOD. By *Alexandre Tarsaidzé*. New York and Toronto: Macmillan, 1970. 349 pp. \$8.95.

“On the very night of Friday the thirteenth [*sic*], 1866 . . . , the ‘trembling’ Katia ‘at last’ succumbed to the charms of the aging Czar, himself ‘trembling’ even more than Katia. ‘Today, alas!’ cried Alexander, ‘I am not free; but at the first possibility I will marry Thou, for I consider Thou from now on and for always as my wife before God, à *demain* . . . ’” (p. 98). Such (in Mr. Tarsaidzé’s inimitable translation) are the celebrated words later claimed by the tsar’s new mistress to have been spoken immediately after the event, and which form the subtitle of this work—a retelling of the story (familiar from the book by Maurice Paléologue) of the liaison between Alexander II and Catherine Dolgorukov, who in 1880 became hismorganatic wife.

The main novelty of the book is the appearance for the first time of numerous love letters the tsar addressed (mainly in French) over a period of fourteen years to his “Adorable Imp,” and a few she addressed to him in return. Neither party emerges with credit from the exposure. Katia reveals “her poor upbringing, the short-comings of her education, her lack of culture and imagination” (p. 106).