

anyone interested in heresy, as well as in the intellectual and cultural history of Muscovy.

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HISTORY OF RUSSIA, vol. 9: THE AGE OF VASILY III. By *Sergei M. Soloviev*. Edited, translated, and with an introduction by *Hugh F. Graham*. Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1976. 273 pp.

To isolate a single portion of Solov'ev's *History of Russia* for scrutiny unavoidably violates the author's concept of Russian history as an organic continuum and his overriding purpose of demonstrating the gradual evolution of the Russian state. Of the many components of Solov'ev's great work, however, the contents of this volume are of particular value today because the age of Vasiliï III—the more than forty years between 1505 and the assumption of sovereign authority by Ivan IV in 1547—has tended to be dismissed by scholars, before as well as after Solov'ev, as little more than a bridge between the far more colorful and exciting dramas of Russian life and politics under Ivan the Great and Ivan the Terrible.

Dazzled by the marked changes identified with the reigns of Vasiliï's father and son, historians have looked upon Vasiliï III as either the feebler successor of the former or the pallid precursor of the latter, but there is evidence that Vasiliï left a more positive impression on his contemporaries: the boyar Bersen-Beklemeshev found him a much stricter custodian of sovereign authority than his father, and Emperor Maximilian's ambassador, comparing Vasiliï with Ivan III, noted that Ivan began things, while Vasiliï completed them. Solov'ev's own evaluation was terse: "Comparing Vasily with his father in other respects, one can say with certainty only that he was less famous for military glory than his father, as Karamzin justly noted."

On the whole, time and Soviet as well as foreign scholarship have looked kindly upon Solov'ev's historical work. It still occupies a preeminent place among Soviet and foreign surveys of Russian history both for its scale and range and for the author's sometimes uncritical but always meticulous attention to his sources. The late L. V. Cherepnin, the eminent Soviet historian who edited the principal recent Russian edition (on which Mr. Graham's translation is based), described among the enduring virtues of Solov'ev's work his view of the Russian past as an integral process of internal development and his search for the links between events and structures in Russian history.

As Mr. Graham has noted, through extensive quotation from contemporary sources Solov'ev has sought to convey the flavor of the time and the attitudes of those who lived then. For the same purpose, Solov'ev cast his narrative in a form close to paraphrases of the documents he used. The availability and range of such sources—chiefly monastic chronicles, treaties, and other legal documents of the period, together with a handful of descriptions by foreigners who visited Moscow in the course of the early sixteenth century—have somewhat concentrated Solov'ev's account on Muscovite governmental institutions as they grew and responded to the demands of foreign affairs and the requirements of domestic administration. In the nearly 100 years since Solov'ev wrote, a mass of additional material touching on the sixteenth century has been unearthed (sometimes literally) and published. It has become a simple task to identify and lament lacunae in Solov'ev's opus. But while we now see better what he did not succeed in enfolding into his vision of Russian history, that which Solov'ev did include remains an indispensable guide for serious students of Russian history.

Mr. Graham's translation is thoroughly competent, and his introduction and very careful, complete footnotes make of this volume a welcome window into sixteenth-

century Russian life as well as the rough-and-tumble of international politics in eastern Europe in the time of such vivid actors as Selim the Grim and Suleiman the Magnificent, Pope Leo X, and Emperor Maximilian I.

Because it cannot match Solov'ev's success in conveying the spirit of his sources—a sense of the outlook of the writers as distinguished from the events they describe—the translation is not a perfect substitute for Solov'ev's original, but it is a sorely needed and very happy contribution to the literature on Muscovy now available in English.

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ESSAYS ON KARAMZIN: RUSSIAN MAN-OF-LETTERS, POLITICAL THINKER, HISTORIAN, 1766–1826. Edited by J. L. Black. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 309. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1975. 232 pp. 62 Dglds., paper.

Karamzin was born in 1766 and died in 1826. To commemorate his centennial year, a book of essays on him was published in his birthplace, Simbirsk, in 1867. The present collection of essays, edited by J. L. Black of Laurentian University, appears to have been designed much in the nature of a bicentennial homage. The fact of the volume itself points up an added dimension of such commemoration, that is, not only the place of eminence still accorded Karamzin in the history of Russian literature, but the international interest which has accrued to him from the time of his death to the present. Indeed, no Russian writer of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is so well represented in Western and especially English-language scholarship and translation as Karamzin.

Essays on Karamzin exemplifies this handsomely. Of the eight contributors to the volume only two are from non-English-speaking countries. The rest are all reasonably familiar names in American, English, and Canadian scholarship on eighteenth-century Russia and/or Karamzin.

Arranged according to the chronology of Karamzin's career, the essays give fairly even representation to Karamzin's biography, his fiction, and his work as a historian. The two essays devoted to aspects of Karamzin's life and his reputation in Russian literature strike me as the most interesting. In "Karamzin's Spiritual Crisis of 1793 and 1794," Rudolf Neuhäuser painstakingly documents the personal dilemma Karamzin lived through when his earlier utopian Sentimentalist and Rousseauesque concepts of human goodness were unable to stand the test of the terror in revolutionary France. When the crisis was finally resolved, Karamzin had returned to what Professor Neuhäuser characterizes as a moralizing "sentimental aestheticism," which is distinguished from the "abstract aestheticism" with which the writer was never really comfortable. In "Karamzin and His Heritage: History of a Legend," Hans Rothe, of the University of Bonn, traces at some length the career of Karamzin's reputation as artist and thinker in nineteenth-century Russia and concludes with a plea for the publication of Karamzin's complete works "to free him from his own legend"—the legend of an antiquated writer of transitional importance in whom there has been no real interest in over a century. Rothe's account makes engrossing reading, but Western publication alone on Karamzin in the last twenty-five years would seem to refute his thesis about the writer's antiquatedness and neglect.

The essays on Karamzin's *History* and his social and political views are less appealing, on the whole, than those on literary topics: Richard Pipes's well-known "Karamzin's Conception of the Monarchy," for example, appeared originally in *Harvard Slavic Studies*, vol. 4 (1957), and one wonders why it was reprinted, with only