

MOSCOW AND THE WEST. By *S. F. Platonov*. Translated and edited by *Joseph L. Wiczyński*. Introduction by *Serge A. Zenkovsky*. Russian Series, vol. 9. Hattiesburg, Miss.: Academic International, 1972. xx, 171 pp.

Platonov's *Moskva i zapad* (Leningrad, 1925) is a minor classic, with equal emphasis on both words. It is limited in aim, being an essay rather than a monograph, a summary rather than an exploration. At the same time it is the definitive statement of the traditional "Westernizer" view of the relationship between Old Russia and Europe. Muscovy had to borrow from the West in order to compete with it. Therefore the initial objectives were highly pragmatic: in the sixteenth century commerce, in the seventeenth century military skills. But with increased contact came the attraction of Western ideas and customs, which in the long run were equally necessary if Muscovy was to overcome its "stagnation" and "darkness." Despite strong resistance to change, by the latter part of the seventeenth century "progressive Russians" welcomed the new culture. Thus the groundwork was laid for the "final triumph" of Western influence under the leadership of Peter the Great.

Platonov's approach leaves out a good deal of the complexity and cost of Westernization. It focuses on a few outstanding individuals and presents their problem in simple terms: to borrow what was good for Russia without losing their identity as Russians. Ordin-Nashchokin succeeded; Kotoshikhin failed. Platonov does not wholly ignore the role of the state, yet he gives insufficient indication either of the dimensions of its response to the Western challenge or of the impact of this response on Russian society as a whole. It can, after all, be argued that both serfdom and the Old Belief were, each in its own way, the products of Muscovy's collision with the West.

Granted the difficulties of Platonov's text, the translation is often unidiomatic and sometimes incorrect, particularly in the many quotations from contemporary sources. Zenkovsky's introduction sketches pre-sixteenth-century relations with the West and summarizes Platonov's career. The editor's contributions include a map, notes to the text supplementing the author's own, a glossary, and an index.

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EXPLORATIONS OF KAMCHATKA: NORTH PACIFIC SCIMITAR. By *Stepan Petrovich Krasheninnikov*. Translated with introduction and notes by *E. A. P. Crownhart-Vaughan*. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1972. xxxiii, 375 pp. \$13.75.

Geographical remoteness, climatic severity, and (most recently) politically contrived inaccessibility have fostered an undeserved neglect of the Pacific littoral stretching from northern Japan to the Bering Strait. Consequently the first definitive translation of S. P. Krasheninnikov's almost forgotten classic, *Opisanie zemli Kamchatki* (1755), comes as a welcome contribution to the limited literature in English on this area. Krasheninnikov (1711–55) filled his short but eventful life with an insatiable quest for knowledge under appallingly adverse circumstances. A cadet member of Vitus Bering's ambitious second expedition (1733–41) that ranged over Eastern Siberia and the North Pacific, Krasheninnikov was entrusted with the awesome task of exploring and studying Kamchatka, a forbidding peninsula equal in size to England and in length to California. Undeterred by a per-