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SHORTER NOTICES

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Deutsche und Deutschland aus russischer Sicht, 11.-17. Jahrhundert, ed. Dagmar Herrmann (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1988; pp. 366. DM58), on Russian views of 'Germans' and 'Germany' from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries, is perhaps the most problematic part of the multi-volume project, *West-Östliche Spiegelungen*, edited by Lew Kopelew, a re-examination of the historical evolution of Russian and German views of each other. As an exercise in academic *Ostpolitik*, the volume contains salutary generalizations concerning the anachronism of reading back into Russo-German relations the antagonisms engendered by modern nationalism and explicit warnings about the dangers of trying to discover a coherent Russian view of 'Germans' during the period prior to the Enlightenment. One of the most serious problems that all the authors seem to recognize is that Russians prior to the eighteenth century generally had no explicit designation for Germans in the modern ethnic and linguistic sense. As a result, the essays to a considerable degree treat Russian relations with an ill-defined group of central and northern European foreigners, rather than what the volume's title promises. Unfortunately, the authors are not consistent in discarding cliché and anachronism - witness Kopelew's ambiguity about the Mongols in his textbookish opening survey, or Hartmut Rüss's characterization of 'dissidents', 'technocrats,' and 'repentant nobles' in his essay on late Muscovy. With the exception of the nuanced essay by Ludolf Müller on the Kievan period and Samuel Baron's contribution on the history of Moscow's foreign suburb (written two decades ago and translated for this volume), the essays present a disappointing mixture of superficial, oft-told tales and only occasional nuggets of original observation.

Most of this does not add up to anything very coherent. The paucity of Russian source material often forces the authors to rely on foreign sources for information on Russian attitudes. While in some instances that seems justified, one has to wonder how the oddball Croat Juraj Križanić deserves a prominent place in the volume. In fact, much more could have been done with the Russian sources, which are not always treated critically or thoroughly explored. The uninformed reader would never know from the book that there are questions concerning the attribution of certain writings to Prince Andrei Kurbskii (pp. 182ff.) or that there is much more to be learned from (and available about) the seventeenth century *kuranty* (new-sheets) (p. 195). Several citations of Russian texts from a German translation of the unsatisfactory English anthology compiled by Zenkovsky reinforce questions about some authors' knowledge of the primary sources. The unfortunate shortcomings of the volume include inaccuracy of detail: *vesti-kuranty* existed before 1621 (p. 44), Johann van Sweeden probably was not a German (p. 196), and the Scot Patrick Gordon was definitely not English (p. 214). The illustrations are not always synchronized with the text, the table listing their sources has wrong page-numbers, and some are mislabeled (p. 212 - probably the death of Afanasii Naryshkin, not Artamon Marveev; p. 235 - the attribution to Loputskii is unfounded). While the volume contains a helpful if curiously selective bibliography and a chronological table aligning events in Russian and

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German history, the index is a disaster, with omissions too numerous to list here.

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