
REVIEWS

A SOURCE BOOK FOR RUSSIAN HISTORY FROM EARLY TIMES TO 1917. Vol. 1: EARLY TIMES TO THE LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. Vol. 2: PETER THE GREAT TO NICHOLAS I. Vol. 3: ALEXANDER II TO THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION. Edited and compiled by *George Vernadsky, Ralph T. Fisher Jr., Alan D. Ferguson, Andrew Lossky, and Sergei Pushkarev*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972. xlv, 306 pp. xliii, 307-584. xliii, 585-884. \$35.00 for 3 vols. \$12.50 each.

VOLUME 1: By far the most comprehensive collection of translated primary sources for use in Russian history courses, this anthology is a fitting monument to its senior editor, the late Professor George Vernadsky, who contributed so much to the growth of Russian studies in the United States. One might assess the results of sixteen years' collective labor on the project in two broad areas: the scope and limitations of the selection, and the quality of the editorial apparatus and translations.

The editors' aim was "to include representative samples of the sources that are important enough to be alluded to in the standard textbooks" (p. vii), with emphasis on "political and social history in the broad sense" (p. viii). The selection that has been made, after consultation with many other members of the profession, is perhaps a bit too traditionally legal in approach (this may be unavoidable for the early period) and unfortunately slights culture. Nevertheless, few, if any, of the important sources have been missed; of particular use are sections on Novgorod, the Lithuanian-Russian State, and the Muscovite Time of Troubles, for which we have a representative collection of translated sources for the first time now. Perhaps the least successful selection covers the Mongol and early Muscovite period, where the influence of traditional historiography is all too evident. The importance of the Asian trade might have been stressed much more, instead of emphasizing primarily negative aspects of Mongol rule and reaction to it. It seems rather strange that Giovanni de Piano Carpini, William of Rubruck, and Marco Polo have been used only for what they say specifically about the lands of Rus'; one regrets the absence of appropriate selections from, say, Ibn Batuta, Pegalotti, or Afanasii Nikitin. The correspondence of the Muscovite grand princes with the Tatar remnants of Ulus Jöchi could have taken the student much farther than something like the account of the events of 1480.

In most cases, extracts had to be taken from long sources. Although one generally wishes for longer pieces, the selections for the most part have been wisely chosen. One omission that strikes me as rather unfortunate is the very important article 15 of Iaroslav's *Pravda*, which is all too relevant for an examination of the "social and economic changes in the Kievan state" (p. 36).

On the whole, the editorial work is of high quality. Translations seem to be quite accurate and readable. Where some of the material already exists in English translation, the editors have revised and often translated anew—a case in point is the Cross translation of the Primary Chronicle. Most unfortunate, however, was the decision to translate the word *Rus'* and its derivatives as "Russia" and "Russian," which, despite disclaimers (p. 19), is hardly neutral and can only confuse important issues in the pre-Kievan and Kievan period.

The introductions to the selections and editorial explanations have been kept to a minimum and the reader referred to Professor Pushkarev's excellent *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms* for further explanation. However, a few criticisms are in order. Some commentary is probably not necessary (such as the locations of certain manuscripts), and some is not entirely to the point (for example, the raids by Novgorod *ushkuiniki* were not merely a "favorite pastime," p. 73; the "mix" of the "50 mixed Slavic and Scandinavian names" in Igor's treaty with Byzantium is of considerable importance). The criteria for the inclusion of bibliographical references are ill-defined (in one case, on p. 9, reference to a "useful collection" of sources is to a work dealing with Africa, not Russia), and references that might well go at the beginning of a section fall at the end.

Unfortunately the IBM Roman type of the volume apparently cannot handle Polish orthography, and one fears that the type may be too small for the anthology to be reduced in size photographically for a cheap paperback edition. Such an edition should be produced to make this valuable collection more readily available for classroom use.

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[Note: Vols. 2 and 3 of the *Sourcebook* were reviewed here, respectively, by John T. Alexander and John M. Thompson.]