

conditions in Novgorod is in a way comparable to that of the neolithic Swiss lake-shore dwellings of the fourth millennium B.C., such as at Burgäschli, between Bern and Zürich. In this way the streets and pine log cabin type houses at Novgorod have been preserved, allowing the reconstruction of the atmosphere of life in the medieval town. Through the method of dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) it was possible to date many layers very precisely: there are twenty-eight layers, which are dated from 953 to 1462.

Among the most exciting finds are birchbark documents found through most of the deposit except the bottom five and the two top street levels. Dating from the mid-eleventh to the early fifteenth centuries, the over four hundred examples from the excavation site are engraved or scratched on the soft surface of the bark. If they had been written in ink, certainly there would be no legible documents. Rolled into a small cylindrical shape, each is engraved in Cyrillic script, which looks like modern printed Russian script. These documents functioned as a sort of message, sometimes of telegraphic brevity. Because they are not signed and there are no addresses on them, it is presumed that they were probably carried by a servant or someone familiar to both sender and recipient. Most of them were evidently sent to require a certain action of the recipient. For instance, "From Nikita to Ulyanitsa. Marry me. I want you and you me. And as a witness will be Ignato. . . ."

In addition to birchbark documents, there are many other things of great value, such as workshops filled with wooden utensils, and fragments of leather, shoes, and cloth. Some of the objects were so well preserved that they would be quite suitable for use today. Thousands of cereal seeds and plowing tools (*sokhy*) give information on agriculture. Analysis of the seeds shows that a form of permanent field agriculture existed by the eleventh century, and by the next century a regular fallow-field rotation based on winter sowing of rye and spring sowing of barley had been established. Many finds speak for existing trade with the south and west. Glass fragments prove ties with the south, coins and textiles indicate trade with the west. The three thousand fragments of cloth from Novgorod are among the largest collections of medieval cloth known. Among these there are English worsted, dating from before 1250, and Flemish cloth made of Spanish wool.

If it were not for the favorable conditions which have preserved the perishable material and for the systematic excavations on a large scale, with the application of all modern methods, including statistics, the atmosphere of medieval Novgorod would not be known to us. The excavations in Novgorod have proved the origins of the city and the way in which the people lived.

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KNIAZ' DMYTRO VYSHNEVETS'KYI [Prince Dmytro Vyshnevetsky: Historical Study]. By *Liubomyr R. Vynar* [*Lubomyr R. Wynar*]. Munich: Ukrainische Freie Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1964. 94 pp.

Re-examining the lives of leaders of the Ukraine of three centuries ago poses special problems of documentation and objectivity for the historian that are not easily resolved. The difficulties multiply when the deeds of such men are legendary. This monograph deals with Prince Dmytro Vyshnevetsky, a sixteenth-century Cossack leader, whom many regard as the founder of the Zaporozhian Sich and as "the first Ukrainian hetman." The author has sought to remove the mystery that

surrounds certain episodes in Vyshnevetsky's life and to draw conclusions about his relationship to the Cossack movement. The research has been handicapped by very limited sources. Despite this obstacle, Vynar has uncovered much useful data about Vyshnevetsky and removed some of the perplexities.

Among the interesting topics discussed are Vyshnevetsky's participation in the fortification of the Cossack base on Khortytsia Island, his ties with Moscow, and his sudden downfall and death. Unlike Soviet historians, who see the initiative in organizing the Cossack movement as coming from the "lower" strata of society, Vynar finds that the aristocracy exercised "great influence" upon the evolution of Cossackdom. Vyshnevetsky is depicted as the chief promoter of the Cossack movement in the mid-sixteenth century. The central motive behind his activities was opposition to the Tatars. Plausible as such arguments appear, they are not clearly supported by the documentary evidence submitted. Many doubts remain about Vyshnevetsky's role in Cossack history that the author's arguments have not dispelled. For example, if aristocrats like Vyshnevetsky were so influential in the genesis of the Cossack movement, how did their ideas gain support and why were these men chosen as leaders instead of others? The author has suggested possible answers, but his conclusions are often unconvincing. The book, nonetheless, contributes helpful insights into the life of "Baida" Vyshnevetsky and his time and shows how he became a living symbol of the Cossack movement.

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BERING'S VOYAGES: AN ACCOUNT OF THE EFFORTS OF THE RUSSIANS TO DETERMINE THE RELATION OF ASIA AND AMERICA. 2 vols. By *F. A. Golder*. American Geographical Society, Research Series, no. 1. New York: Octagon Books, 1968. x, 371 pp. xi, 290 pp. \$17.50.

Since the 1930s Soviet scholars have carried on research on Russian geographical exploration and discovery, and the voyages of Vitus Bering into the North Pacific have received their share of attention. Outside the Soviet Union in the same period, however, very little attention or research has been devoted to either of these subjects. It is consequently a sad commentary on the status of Western research and interest that the reprint of Golder's two volumes on Bering's voyages is the only English-language publication of any importance on the subject since they were first published by the American Geographical Society in the 1920s.

These volumes are facsimile reproductions of the original two volumes, identical in nearly every respect. The major change is the reduction of the large fold-in "Chart of the Voyage of Bering and Chirikov in the *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*" in volume 1 to half the size of the original. It is easier to open out, but most of the place names have become so small that it requires a magnifying glass to read them. Also, the chart has been moved from a position after page 345 in the original to one after page 348 in the reprint, without a corresponding change in page designation in the table of contents. Otherwise the two volumes are a quite satisfactory job of reprinting.

The limits of the contents of these two volumes are indicated in the title: most, though not all, of the material presented concerns the voyages themselves, made in 1728 and 1741 respectively. Rather little is said about their purpose and the preparation for them, in themselves topics of much interest. Of the other voyages, those to