

tions in general in the histories of the peoples involved, an obstacle which the author readily acknowledges, although he believes that the recent coming of socialism to the area has finally provided the integrative element. The eclectic nature of the presentation is illustrated by such titles as that of Book Two: "The Balkans in Turkish Hands. Russia: A Continental Empire (16th and 17th Centuries)."

Even when they lack thesis and synthesis, general works such as *The Slavs* can be useful because of their specific interpretations, comparisons, and analyses, or simply because of the great amount of disparate material well presented. But on these grounds, too, the study proves disappointing. There is generally insufficient space for any sustained explanation or argument, and Portal's views on certain Russian historical developments can be best obtained from his earlier well-known works. In *The Slavs* the most striking single evaluation is the generally rhapsodic view of the Soviet system, which in places exceeds in its affirmation and optimism the declarations of the present Soviet leadership. One illustration must suffice: "The present-day cohesion of the Slav peoples depends primarily on their all having the same type of government and similar forms of social organization. Except in the case of Yugoslavia it depends also on a common external policy, which at present is highly flexible, much debated, and not so much imposed as suggested by the leading Slav power" (p. 20).

In terms of clear presentation of reliable information the book is a disaster, and Portal has every reason to complain about the manner in which his study was rendered to the English-reading public. To be sure, the French original had some mistakes and confusions, such as repeated references to the order of St. Gregory instead of St. George (pp. 181, 275 of the original; pp. 182, 275 of the English version), and the ascription of Martin Malia's book on Herzen to "Cambridge University (Mass.);" (p. 440 of the original, p. 456 of the English version). But it is in the English volume that Tsar Alexander Mikhailovitch appears (p. 121) and that Blok dies in 1932 and is grouped with a poet named Volonin (p. 398) (*demony glukhonemye* indeed!). These examples could be easily multiplied. Translation produces such remarkable results as the *Lay of the Massacre at Mamai* (p. 65; the French is *Dit du massacre de Mamai*, p. 64) and the reference to Theophanes the Greek as "her" (p. 64). Presumably because of typographical errors and deficient proofreading, repeatedly words are missing and impossible English forms and constructions appear. In general, typographical errors of every kind abound. Transliteration, difficult at best, runs riot. Some Russian proper nouns are transliterated into French forms, others into different English forms, still others into combinations of the French and the English, while the remainder defy easy explanation.

*The Slavs: A Cultural and Historical Survey of the Slavonic Peoples* cannot be recommended to anyone for any purpose.

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PREHISTORIC RUSSIA: AN OUTLINE. By *Tadeusz Sulimirski*. New York: Humanities Press, 1970. xxiii, 449 pp. \$22.50.

On a previous occasion in these pages the reviewer commented that for all too many American and West European historians the history of Russia begins with Kiev, with the implication either that Russia was uninhabited before that time or that the previous activities and cultural development of the population had no

bearing whatever on later Russian history. Fortunately, there is now a growing interest in the prehistoric background of the area, and a consequent desire for a convenient, up-to-date, and dependable summary, especially one aimed at the nonspecialist. A volume entitled *Prehistoric Russia: An Outline* might be expected to fill such a need, and will doubtless enjoy a considerable sale for that reason. Unfortunately the book is a great disappointment for whatever audience the author had in mind. The nonspecialist will find it indigestible; the archaeologist may find it a convenient abstract of innumerable Russian reports, but it is not always easy to identify the sources and he should beware of some of the author's interpretations.

*Prehistoric Russia* is the outgrowth of lectures delivered at Cambridge University and the University of London by the author, an émigré senior Polish archaeologist, and is based ultimately on the Russian literature in the field, study of museum collections, and contacts with Soviet scholars—along with the author's prewar field excavations in what was then eastern Poland. Given the normal time lag involved in publication, it is up to date. The area covered is the European portion of the USSR, and (when relevant) West Siberia and Soviet Central Asia—in other words, the total domain in this part of the world of peoples of European racial type and, later, of Indo-European language. The period covered is from the first trace of human occupation to the end of the seventh century B.C., when the Scythian conquest and Greek colonization of the North Pontic area effected a major reorientation. Each chapter covers a major prehistoric period or stage, within which the local regional archaeological cultures are separately described. There are chapter summaries and adequate illustrations; and no less than twenty-three chronological and cultural tables and thirty-two maps attempt to orient the floundering reader. In addition to a limited number of references in the text there is a short, very selective general bibliography of major works with an emphasis on those in Western languages.

The author is to be admired for attempting to summarize the incredible amount of data now available on the subject, but the result is more a reference handbook than a narrative or interpretation. Neither the author nor the reader is able to see the forest for the trees. The major trends and developments, such as the origin and spread of the Indo-European peoples, are obscured. The specialist can find many points for specific criticism, but they would be inappropriate for a review in this journal. Those seeking to form a picture of prehistoric Russia would be better advised to consult the relevant sections of Stuart Piggott's *Ancient Europe* (Chicago, 1965) and the writings of Marija Gimbutas, especially "The Indo-Europeans: Archaeological Problems" (*American Anthropologist*, vol. 65, no. 4, 1963) and *Bronze Age Cultures in Central and Eastern Europe* (The Hague, 1965).

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TRACING SHAMANS IN SIBERIA: THE STORY OF AN ETHNOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH EXPEDITION. By Vilmos Diószegi. Translated from the Hungarian by Anita Rajkay Babó. Oosterhout: Anthropological Publications. New York: Humanities Press, 1968. 328 pp. 24 plates. \$7.75.

This is essentially a travel diary recording Vilmos Diószegi's trip through Siberia in 1957 and 1958. Written in an informal narrative manner, the book is readable