

of the councils, staff, and finance. The insufficiency of footnotes and the absence of a bibliography also detract from the worth of this study.

Notwithstanding this criticism, this study would indeed be a truly invaluable one, if Dr. Jackson had only substantiated his general facts with pertinent specific data as to all the aspects of English local government about which he writes.

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EASTERN EUROPE

MELVIN C. WREN. *The Course of Russian History*. Pp. xiii, 725. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958. \$6.95.

Professor Wren has produced an excellent textbook on Russian history, from its earliest beginnings to our days. He has woven the factual texture of his book extremely skillfully. His conception of Russian history is based on the best original sources, especially the work of Kliuchevsky which is in many respects still unsurpassed by Russian historians; and he has also taken into account the most significant Western contributions to an understanding of his subject. This book is far better written than are most textbooks: the style is clear and attractive. Of the 700 pages about 200 are devoted to the events of this century: that is to the emergence, the growth, and the complex fortunes of the Russian revolution. This is as it should be.

The author holds that "Many Westerners . . . cling to the view that the Soviet Union is something entirely new and that it can be understood by examining its present character and its development since 1917. This view is extremely unrealistic. . . . Modern Russia can no more wash away the imprint of her past than can any other nation. The reasons 'why they behave like Russians' are not to be found only in the last chapter of their long history." This is true enough, and Professor Wren's book is sure to give students a solid grounding in the earlier epochs—especially those of Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, and Catherine—and in the story of

the Tsarist Empire in the fourteenth century. It is one of the many merits of this work that it gives a lucid view of Russia's economic development over the ages—in the interpretation of which the author tries to strike a balance between the often conflicting theories of Kliuchevsky, Vipper, Pokrovsky, and others—and that it indicates the close connection between the economic background and the political processes by which Russia's outlook was shaped.

In a work on this scale one is, of course, bound to find omissions and debatable points. The author himself indicates that he has perhaps not paid enough attention to Russian literature. It is also possible to hold that he has overemphasized the element of continuity in Russia's history. Although modern Russia has no more than any other nation been able to "wash away the imprint of her past," her recent industrial and educational progress, achieved within the framework of a planned and collectivist economy, has all the same introduced qualitatively new elements into the problem, and the spread of the Soviet form of government far beyond Russian boundaries has opened qualitatively new historical perspectives. Professor Wren has, however, managed to keep his exposition of facts and trends on a high level of academic objectivity, and has throughout been on guard against the pitfalls of bias which so many writers on this subject are unable to avoid. I warmly recommend this book for a "must" for student beginners and a useful reference book for others.

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HERBERT MARCUSE. *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis*. Pp. 271. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958. \$4.50.

This is the first systematic treatment of contemporary Soviet ideology to be written in this country, and it is a valuable addition to the small but distinguished list of works in this field by Bochenski, Chambre, and Wetter. The particular value of Marcuse's approach is that he does not regard Soviet Marxism either as mere propaganda or as abstract philosophy. Many writers have been led astray by dismissing Soviet

ideology as a deliberate attempt to mislead the West, or by treating it as a formal body of learning to be taken literally. Marcuse regards Soviet Marxism rather as a language which expresses the understanding on the part of the Soviet leaders of the world around them, and defines the policies which they propose to pursue. To understand this language one must have a knowledge both of the Marxist theory which the Bolsheviks inherited, and of the development of Bolshevik thought in the course of the past half century.

Marcuse develops his analysis in two parts, the first devoted to the objective political aspects of Soviet Marxism, and the second to its subjective ethical tenets. Perhaps the most valuable feature of this interpretation is its account of the general Soviet view of political trends since 1917. Marcuse demonstrates effectively the consistency of the Soviet outlook throughout this period, its realistic acceptance of the stability of Western society, and its recognition of the inherent instability of the non-Western world. While maintaining that in the long run Western "capitalism" will inevitably "ripen" into "socialism," Soviet doctrine nevertheless recognizes that an aggressive Soviet policy would tend to consolidate the West and delay the "ripening" process. Hence the assiduous cultivation, during the relatively brief recent period of Soviet strength, of a policy of "peaceful co-existence" designed to lull "capitalism" back to its normal state of decay. With this general setting, Marcuse discusses briefly and lucidly such fundamental propositions as socialism in one country, the role of dialectic, the relation of base and superstructure, and the transition from socialism to communism.

In dealing with Soviet ethical tenets, Marcuse helps to clarify the issue by comparing the Soviet and the Western views in terms of both ideology and social background. He sees as the essential difference between the two the fact that in the West a substantial area of privacy still remains to the individual, while in the U.S.S.R. the effort is made to mobilize all aspects of the individual for the needs of the state. While Marcuse touches on the main issues of Soviet Marxism in the political and ethical

spheres, there are a number of areas about which one would like to know more. Significant among these are the Soviet attitude towards the development of a world state, and its approach to the natural sciences. Within the limits which he has chosen, however, Marcuse has produced an outstanding study.

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Yugoslavia. (East-Central Europe Under the Communists: Mid-European Studies Center Series.) Pp. xiii, 488. New York: Frederick A. Praeger for the Mid-European Studies Center of the Free Europe Committee, 1957. \$8.50.

This volume is, so to speak, out of step with its six companions in the Mid-European Studies Center Series, "East-Central Europe Under the Communists." This is principally because Yugoslavia under Communist rule forms, unlike Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Albania, no part of the Soviet satellite empire. Also, the Mid-European Studies Center gave Yugoslavia—as the general editor of the series, Robert F. Byrnes, points out—"low priority" in maintaining an adequate research staff. The volume, says Professor Byrnes, "suffered heavily" from this low priority. Its original outline failed to take into account some of the most significant aspects of Communist rule as practiced and interpreted by Tito's Yugoslavia. Also, the Center's staff was unable to prepare chapters on three important topics: religion, literature and the arts, and labor (Pp. 6-7).

In spite of these handicaps and shortcomings, the authors succeeded in producing a volume which can be compared favorably with the others of the series. Its weaknesses, not unlike those of the other volumes, stem mainly from the rigid application of a uniform outline which fails to stress problems and developments of specific importance in each of the individual countries. As a result, materials pertaining to the same topic are often scattered, instead of presented as a unit. In the volume under review, this is particularly true about such basic topics as