

year of Spanish language studies who wish to study the period when Latin began (but did not quite finish) evolving into Castilian.

The narration begins with the twilight of Roman Spain and the arrival of the Visigoths from northern Europe. These Germanic warriors created a pastoral, feudal, and clan-ridden society—often credited with developing laws collectively known as the *fueros* (from the Latin word *forum*), a unique blend of local autonomy and aristocratic codes, which regions of northern Spain have fought to maintain in the face of centralism ever since. At the same time, the Christian Church, based in Toledo, managed to become the state religion by the late 600s.

In 712, a second people arrived in Iberia. Islam, the empire of Muhammadism, brought Arabs and many other North African tribesmen to Spain. Christianity retreated to the mountains of the north and northeast, to Asturias, León, Pamplona, Aragón, and (sometimes) Catalonia. The rest of Spain, subject to the Muslims, fell under the Umayyad caliphate. If independence of state and religion was lost, the Spaniards of the large Umayyad territory did benefit from receipt of Middle Eastern technology and the preserved science and philosophy of Greece and Rome that also, somewhat ironically, accompanied the Arabs in their relocation to southwestern Europe. This imperial culture of the Umayyads contrasts vividly with the Christian north; religious purity among the Christians, diversity and sophistication among the Muslims—just the reversal of Europe and the Middle East today.

In the end, ca. 1000 A.D., the spread of Christianity and the rise of fundamentalist tribal interpretations of Muhammadism doomed the Umayyad capital of Córdoba, and two hundred years later the Christians reoccupied the region. Collins tells this fascinating story with the latest scholarship, but also with a broad pen that evokes the reader's imagination to this oriental Mediterranean world. The book enlarges our sense of Spanish diversity and explains how the often contentious regions of Spain originally diverged.

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Stephen J. Lee. *Peter the Great*. London & New York: Routledge, 1993. Pp. X, 78. Paper \$9.95. ISBN 0-415-09279-5.

William Marshall. *Peter the Great*. London & New York: Longman, 1996. Pp. vi, 149. Paper \$12.86. ISBN 0-582-00355-5.

Two very similar books with the exact same title designed to augment the typical textbook survey of one of Russia's most turbulent, complex, and historic periods—that of Peter the Great. Both works are authored or edited by English scholars. S. J. Lee's volume on Peter is part of the "Lancaster Pamphlets" series that includes more than 40 titles on major topics in European history. William Marshall's volume, nearly twice the length of Lee's, is part of the "Seminar Studies in History" series, a series of approximately 75 titles on British and world history and edited by R. Lockyer, Emeritus Reader in History at the University of London. While both books share several basic features and purposes, they also have a few significant differences as well.

First, the similarities. Both volumes are short, condensed outlines of the reign of Peter the Great, with good maps and chronological charts or genealogical tables, and both are readable. Each book is designed to bring into sharper focus all the major events, themes, and historiographical interpretations of Peter's tumultuous reign. In terms of significant differences between the two volumes, the Marshall book contains two helpful glossaries—one is a typical

glossary of relevant historical terms utilized in the text, while the second is an unusual topographical glossary that makes clear the various changes in geographical terminology in the fluid regions of Finland (Karelia), the Baltic region, and present-day Poland, Byelo-Russia, and the western Ukraine.

A second special feature of the Marshall volume is its documentary collection that includes 41 different primary sources dealing with all of the important aspects and issues of Peter's life and reign. More specifically, the documentary section includes sources on Peter's family and personal history (i.e., biographical material), examples of his personal and official correspondence, his military strategies, foreign policy, church-state relations, economic policy, and industrial development. While the documents are comprehensive in their scope and do embrace all the crucial areas of Peter's reign, they do not and cannot stand alone, for each is but a fragment of a large and complex dimension of Peter's reign, whether it be his tragic relationship with his son Alexis, his treatment of the Russian Orthodox Church, or his economic policies. Two or three documents on any one of these topics, while helpful in a classroom setting, are limited in their value; for if the intention is to provide students with the opportunity to arrive at their own overall assessment of Peter, the documents available simply will not permit this. In addition, eight of the 41 are only of paragraph length and further limit their value to a classroom teacher.

A third major difference between the two books is that Lee's volume is significantly shorter than Marshall's and therefore does not possess as much detail and depth as the Marshall text; however, Stephen Lee effectively utilizes organizing questions at the beginning of each major section of his book. Most students, especially those less advanced, should find this very helpful.

Given the fundamental purposes that both volumes share, that is, to delineate more sharply the major dimensions of one of Russia's most revolutionary periods, each should be useful to the high school or undergraduate teacher. If used in conjunction with additional documentary material and secondary works, each is capable of reducing the complexity of one of the most controversial figures in Russian history. I believe, therefore, that each volume would be most suitable for use in introductory courses with students who are making their initial contact with Russia's first revolutionary age.

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T. H. Breen, ed. *The Power of Words: Documents in American History*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996. Vol. 1 - To 1877. Pp. xviii, 334. ISBN 0-06-501112-0. Vol. 2 - From 1865. Pp. xviii, 350. ISBN 0-06-501113-9. Paper; \$20.75 each.

These volumes of readings in United States history to and from 1865 are welcome additions to the genre. T. H. Breen has chosen a large number of short primary sources. There are 117 and 123 documents in the first and second volumes respectively, for an average of 7 or 8 per chapter. Each document has a one-paragraph introduction and each of the 15 chapters in Volume 1 and the 16 chapters in Volume 2 has a longer introduction. The chronological organization is conventional. The last chapter of Volume 1 on Reconstruction becomes the first chapter of Volume 2.

The salient characteristic of these volumes is the large number of short primary selections. Breen includes a wide variety of readings, ranging from famous documents of all kinds to more obscure writings. Included are selections by John Winthrop, Benjamin Franklin, Abraham