



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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BOOK REVIEWS

Archaeology in the U. S. S. R. by Alexander Mongait, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1959. N.Z. price £1.5.0

A very considerable amount of important archaeological work has been done by Soviet archaeologists in the great territory of the Soviet Union during the last 40 years, but to those of us, like myself, who do not read Russian, much of it has been inaccessible. I have met with some references to it in books by such writers as Gordon Childe, and some articles have been translated in the United States and elsewhere, but I have long felt the need for a comprehensive survey of the whole corpus of Russian archaeology. This book supplies that need, and does it well.

Originally published in Russian in 1955, this edition has been revised, to incorporate recent advances, and translated by David Skvirsky. It is a large book of some 430 pages, and a book of corresponding size produced in Great Britain or the U. S. A. would cost several times as much. The first chapter deals with archaeological method, and the succeeding ones with pre-history from the Palaeolithic onwards, into early historic times (Ancient Russian Towns). The book is, of course, written from a Marxist standpoint, and there are, with some justification, occasional polemics against certain other archaeologists.

The Pacific Coast areas of Russia have a particular interest for N. Z. archaeologists, and material from them is described here.

The bibliographies and indices are very full. Owing to the nature of the paper used, some of the photographs in the text have not reproduced very well, and I feel it would, in a subsequent edition, be wise to use better quality paper, even if it meant a higher price. This, however, is my only complaint about an otherwise excellent and very useful book.

Penguin Books have announced that it is to appear as a Pelican.

R. J. S.

Archaeology in the Holy Land. by Kathleen Kenyon. Ernest Benn Ltd, London, 1960. N. Z. price £2.5.0

Written in Miss Kenyon's usual lucid style, this book supercedes W. F. Albright's Pelican, *The Archaeology of Palestine*, although the latter is still very useful. The new book gives a summary of the knowledge so far gained of the prehistory of Palestine, and continues to the fall of the Hebrew Kingdoms and the post-exilic period. Writing both for the general reader and the specialist, Kathleen Kenyon pays particular attention to pottery, and many pages of illustrations of the various pottery styles are included. I have had occasion in the past to complain of the poor quality of the photographic reproductions in Miss Kenyon's books. In this book they are much better.- it is strikingly evident in comparing the plastered Neolithic skull, in *Digging up Jericho*, and in *Archaeology in the Holy Land*. The book is printed on a very superior white paper. Jericho itself, of course, receives considerable attention in this book, and rightly so, as work there has revealed what is so far the earliest known transition from nomadic to village, and then to town life. A C.14 date of B.C. 7800 - 210 for a Mesolithic settlement at Jericho is very early. Dates of B.C. 7080 to B.C. 5990, and of B.C. 4750 have also been obtained for Jarmo. A useful appendix gives a summary, with bibliography, for the excavated sites at Palestine. The book leaves an impression of the great amount of work that must still be done before we really have a full knowledge of the earliest periods in Palestine.

R. J. S.