

NICHOLAS I: EMPEROR AND AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE RUSSIAS. By *W. Bruce Lincoln*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1978. 424 pp. \$15.95.

The goal of this study is to review the negative picture of Nicholas I presented in most accounts, not by way of "apology" but to "place [Nicholas] and his policies in a more balanced historical perspective." Lincoln concludes that Nicholas "sought to create the epitome of an eighteenth-century West European police state . . . in the manner of an enlightened despot." Nicholas failed at his task, however, because it was "utterly impossible" to govern "vast and diverse" mid-nineteenth-century Russia with programs designed for the compact, homogeneous states of the mid-eighteenth century. Lincoln's conclusion is not new, of course; indeed, he cites Pogodin, Parrot, and other contemporaries who reached much the same conclusion in Nicholas's time. Lincoln also convincingly demonstrates the erroneousness of Nikitenko's often noted statement that the whole reign was marked by consistency, for "it was all a mistake." Lincoln argues that Nicholas's reign is better understood as progressing through three clearly distinct phases. The crucial difference between the second and third stages was that, for more than a decade after the Polish revolt of 1830, Nicholas and his trusted "comrades-in-arms," who staffed the important posts in his government, worked hard to develop solutions to problems, no matter what one may think of their assumptions or successes. From the late 1840s, however, when many, if not most, of his trusted aides were dead, and Nicholas himself had suddenly aged, his government no longer worked at solutions but merely at repression.

Lincoln's organization contributes to the clarity of the argument; his writing is clear and sometimes approaches eloquence. Lincoln is a master of the archival materials bearing on his subject, and his expert command is evident in this study. Perhaps equally important is his command of the printed literature and his careful avoidance of one of the more unfortunate practices of some recent Soviet and Western scholarship: the tendency to cite an archive document when a perfectly serviceable (and much more readily consulted) version has long since been in print. There are slips, of course: for example, Kukolnik, tutor to the young Nicholas, is discussed but not included in the index; Count Lieven is incorrectly identified as a "former rector" of Dorpat University. None of these slips, however, can affect the merit of the book, let alone call into question its conclusions.

Nonetheless, one might question some of Lincoln's judgments. He asserts, for example (p. 180), that the "fundamental dilemma" facing Russia was the choice between maintaining its "ancien regime" social order and serf-based economy and meeting "the challenge posed by the industrializing nations of the west." One might note that if Nicholas's government meant to play the role of "enlightened despot," it might be expected to attack, not defend, the social order and economic system of an "ancien regime." More important, the "challenge" of the West is posed in terms of economic productivity. Lincoln refers to the dramatic increase in English and French pig iron production in tons per capita, compared with little or no growth in Russia. Yet, his discussion of the Crimean War shows that Russia entered a losing war because of failures in "personal diplomacy" and command by Nicholas himself, and, moreover, that Britain and France could not seriously threaten Nicholas's regime even then. Lincoln concludes (p. 183) that Nicholas misunderstood the nature of the challenge presented by the West, for he saw it in "ideological and military terms" rather than in "economic and technical" terms. Judging from the evidence presented here, it is at least debatable that it was Nicholas who misunderstood the nature of the West's challenge.

Finally, the study provides the best informed short discussion of any book available—whether based on archival work or secondary sources—on numerous topics,

such as the December 6 Committee, the *Petrashkevtsy*, and so forth. In short, Lincoln has provided a richly documented, balanced, clear, and well-argued account of an important subject. It is a first-rate achievement which doubtless will provide the standard for its subject for many years to come.

JAMES T. FLYNN  
*College of the Holy Cross*

RUSSIAN ORTHODOXY UNDER THE OLD REGIME. Edited by *Robert L. Nichols and Theofanis George Stavrou*. Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1978. xiv, 261 pp. + 8 pp. plates. \$16.50, cloth. \$6.95, paper.

Published symposia are necessarily uneven in quality; pioneering investigations of neglected topics are more apt to be so. The present volume consists of papers read at a symposium at the University of Minnesota in April 1976: four on the Russian church, society, and culture, five on church and state (the divisions are quite arbitrary), and two bibliographical aids. The title of the volume is accurate: both Muscovy and the Soviet Union are excluded, as are religious phenomena inside Russia but outside the official church.

Donald Treadgold opens the first half of the book with a chatty and wide-ranging survey of the problems of the Orthodox church in an increasingly secular world. He asks: How well equipped was the church to perform its self-imposed and state-imposed tasks in the areas of education, pastoral care, sacramental ministry, and theology? James Cracraft's essay on Feofan Prokopovich examines Feofan's early academic career, a topic that has been neglected in past studies, and the influence of his Roman education on his subsequent teaching at Kiev. Cracraft's conclusions may need to be altered, however, because of V. M. Nichik's recent discoveries of Feofan's manuscript courses. Robert L. Nichols insists, almost intemperately, that historians, and educational historians in particular, acknowledge the church's contribution to the nation's culture and educational level. His own eclectic appreciation may suggest solid dissertation topics. The best and most substantive essay in the first section is the one by Gregory Freeze, who gives an account of the forgotten Belliustin "affair" of the late 1850s, which was the impetus for church reform in the next decade. One eagerly awaits Freeze's study of the transformation this affair sparked.

The essays in the second half of the book are shorter. In an introductory overview, Marc Szeftel maintains that neither caesaropapism nor a Protestant *summus episcopus* can adequately describe the relationship between church and state from 1721 until the Revolution. Alexander Muller and David Edwards, respectively, examine the legislation of Peter's ecclesiastical inquisitors (whose secular parallels were the fiscals, who were charged with internal surveillance), and of Nicholas I's overprocurators, who attempted to fashion the church's administration into that of a post-Speranskii ministry. Finally, two essays by John Meyendorff and Paul Valliere focus on 1905. Meyendorff examines a collection of remarkable clerical cahiers, and documents how subservient and unimaginative the hierarchy had become after two centuries of subordination. When Russia's fundamental laws and institutions were called into question in 1905, the future organization of the church was hotly debated. Some argued for the restoration of the patriarchate, others for a conciliar (*sobornyi*) church. This topic is examined by Paul Valliere.

Edward Kasinec of the Ukrainian Center at Harvard University has contributed a solid bibliographical essay. Covering printed sources, reference works, and unpublished sources, it is up to his usual high standards. The guide to Western-language literature on Orthodoxy is more eclectic, but useful.