

merely repeat the half-truths presented more than a decade ago in the memoirs of a former Finnish Communist.

Attention should also be called to several major errors. As a university student Kuusinen *did* belong to—and was influenced by—a bourgeois society called Suomalainen Nuija. And, the editor notwithstanding, it was not until 1905 that Kuusinen joined the Finnish Social Democratic Party. Furthermore, the statement that Kuusinen was chairman of the Finnish Social Democratic Party from late 1913 until the summer of 1917 is patently incorrect. Kuusinen was not even a member of the party's executive committee during those years.

These weaknesses do not, however, prevent one from concluding that the authors have succeeded in writing a book which helps to unravel the life of a Finn who was destined to become in his later years, 1957–64, a member of both the Presidium and Secretariat of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

JOHN H. HODGSON
Syracuse University

PICTORIAL LIBRARY OF EASTERN CHURCH ART, Volumes 6–16. Translated from the German. Recklinghausen: Aurel Bongers. New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1967. \$2.50 each.

On the face of it there would seem to be few more worthy publishing ventures in the field of eastern European cultural history than a series of small, illustrated, and inexpensive works on aspects of Orthodox iconography. Unless he has access to a large library, the American lay reader will be unlikely to discover Kondakov's great four-volume work, *Russkaia Ikona* (Prague, 1928–33); and he may well be daunted by the size and price of Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (Boston, 1952), or Konrad Onasch, *Icons* (New York, 1963). In the last decade a host of publications in English have disseminated further and generally reliable information about the icons of the Eastern Church and whetted the appetites of both connoisseurs and students to possess these portable and often powerful testimonies to the Orthodox faith.

It is to be doubted that the present series will achieve either of these ends, although these little books will surely be bought by librarians as well as by Christmas-stocking stuffers. This review will attempt to set out why such acquisitions must be discouraged and why their publication should be considered an act of abject intellectual irresponsibility.

Each volume is part of a series put out first in the 1950s by Aurel Bongers of Recklinghausen, the location of one of Europe's postwar "instant museums." Most of the panels reproduced are—in the translator's characteristic idiom—"domiciled in the Icon Museum of Recklinghausen, Germany." And the volume presumably intended as a prolegomenon to the series (H. Skrobucha, *Introduction to Icons*) is by the museum's director. All but one of the others are by authors unknown to this reviewer, and seven of the eleven translations in the series are the work of Hans Hermann Rosenwald.

The plan of each book is essentially identical. Each attempts a study of the feast or cult that occasioned these panels from its origin in legend or ecclesiastical history. This is followed by a rapid survey of applications of the iconography, usually indicated by line drawings, before it became the object of the panel painters in the high and late Middle Ages. The panels themselves are represented by a dozen

or so color plates usually gathered at the end of each volume. Each theme is briefly explicated in the light of biblical, apocryphal, and patristic texts, and all subsequent artistic modifications and adaptations are accounted for by this parody of iconological "method." Most of the texts end with a lament for the seventeenth century, when "the tradition of the Eastern Church is swallowed up by a new era, one characterized by the spirit and the artistic demands of the West" (G. Ristow, *The Nativity*, p. 68).

Few of the authors attempt more than this, which is perhaps just as well, since their opinions could hardly be substantiated by the crude line drawings sometimes no larger than two square inches. Many of the color plates were made from Ektachrome film and faithfully reproduce all the vagaries of hue and tone inherent in this process. Both monochrome and color pictures are frequently cropped by the binding or the edge of the page. Neither the introductory volume nor any of the subsequent titles includes a map, a bibliography, or a glossary.

It might be argued that such apparatus would be unnecessary if the texts themselves were accurate or at least lucidly translated. In fact they are treated consistently in a manner that is not only inelegant but often positively misleading. Phrases such as "Christological disputes concerning deity and personality" both subvert the meaning of the original and, worse, demonstrate an almost total inability to handle the technical vocabulary of the relevant theology. Miscarriages of this sort will be obvious in all their absurdity to the scholar; to the student such passages will remain utterly obscure. There is not even any consistency in the errors scattered among the several volumes. In one the Dormition of the Virgin as painted by "Feofan Grek" is called "The Mother of God Sleeping"; in another a sixteenth-century Moscow icon is labeled, in Western fashion, "The Assumption of the Mother of God"; in a third the same image, at Gračanića, becomes "The Deceasing Mother of God."

By some perverse logic, personal and place names are left in the original ("Gregory of Nazianz," "St. Kallist," etc.) where English has its own forms, while names which are similar in both English and German assume a form that is neither: thus the Arians become "Aryans," and we are invited to compare "Byzantinian" mosaics with their Slavic descendants. The Gospels are almost invariably the "Evangels," and the Patriarchate of Peć is called "the Arch Episcopacy." The surname of George R. Hann, whose collection of icons is one of the richest in the United States, is frequently misspelled, and the titles of even standard works in German—such as Goldschmidt's and Weitzmann's great corpus of Byzantine ivories—are aborted. We are reduced to wishing that the translator knew *either* English *or* his subject.

In the last analysis, however, it is by the value of the texts rather than by the quality of their plates or the accuracy of their translations that these books must be judged. Here it is their fundamental conception that is at fault rather than any number of errors in individual works considered *hors série*. In plan and in execution the series excludes any possibility that a particular icon might have worth, either aesthetic or religious, beyond that of its role in an evolutionary sequence. This not only diminishes the work of art as such but negates the function of the icon, which this series pretends to illuminate. A concentration on iconography rather than stylistic elements reduces all the works discussed to the same level, and all questions of value are subsumed under sweeping, pietistic generalizations. It is true that the first important investigations of Russian panels (by Pokrovsky, Kondakov, et al.) were largely and necessarily devoted to an elucidation of content.

But there is more to icon-painting than iconography, as Chatzidakis, Soteriou, and Weitzmann have shown for Greece, Gerasimov and Miatev for Bulgarian icons, and Djurić and Radojčić for those of Serbia and Macedonia. These contributions seem to be unknown to all the authors with the honorable exception of Klaus Wessel, whose *The Resurrection* is a most useful survey and a model for what this series might have been. It is apparent that these writers are no more familiar with Russian scholarship than with that of the Greeks and southern Slavs. The great achievement of Soviet historians has been to refine and define both the periodization and the stylistic history of Russian painting. There is no evidence here of the merest acquaintance with the research of Lazarev, Alpatov, or their students.

If they choose to ignore the work of others, perhaps the least one might ask of these authors is a sensibility toward the panels that they discuss. One example of default in this respect must suffice. Plate 10 of Martin Winkler's *Festtage* (here significantly rendered not as "Feast Days," not even as "Holy Days," but as "Holidays of the Church") represents a seventeenth-century Crucifixion identified in the list of plates as formerly in the author's collection. Despite the prolonged familiarity that such a statement implies, Winkler's analysis of the work is limited to one sentence: "Its style is somewhat crude and rustic but it shows the customary scene."

What we have in this *Pictorial Library* is a series of encyclopedia entries entirely lacking in that apparatus of source citation and bibliography that would make such articles useful. The layman will be infuriated by the discussion of works not illustrated and the scholar by the absence of specific references (e.g., to folio numbers of manuscripts) for those that are presented. Without these we are left with a highly selective mélange of intellectual history and art appreciation that teases but never satisfies. Some may choose to read this criticism as the caviling of a professional scholar, but when the student reader is taken into account, the faults of this series take on the dimensions of gross irresponsibility. Unfortunately, it constitutes at the moment the most easily accessible source of information available to undergraduates.

ANTHONY CUTLER
Pennsylvania State University

SAILING TO BYZANTIUM: AN ARCHITECTURAL COMPANION. By Osbert Lancaster. Illustrated by the Author. Boston: Gambit Press, 1969. xi, 184 pp. \$11.95.

Less than a scholarly study of Byzantine architecture, much more than an average guidebook, Osbert Lancaster's work is a useful companion to the energetic sight-seer. A charmingly written book, it takes the reader from Ravenna across the Adriatic, along the Via Egnatia to Thessaloniki and Constantinople, south to Greece, the Peloponnesus, and the Aegean Islands, and to a few spots in Sicily and France, in pursuit of magnificent, interesting, or appealing Byzantine churches. Mr. Lancaster's style is, as usual, easy and humorous, and his drawings, mostly in black and white, some in color, are helpful.

The expert who looks for a detailed discussion of Byzantine architecture will not find it here; the admirer of the great churches, Hagia Sophia, the Kahriye Djami, Daphni, Hosios Loukas, Nea Moni, may be disappointed at the brief treatment of these monuments. But the book does give sympathetic descriptions of small