

offers little excuse for applying the term to *liberalisty* like Rodichev, Miliukov, and Petrunkevich, or even the young Struve.

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OSTATNIE LATA ROSJI CARSKIEJ: RZĄDY STOŁYPINA. By *Ludwik Bazyłow*. Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1972. 507 pp. 80 zł.

Ludwik Bazyłow's many publications have established his reputation as one of Poland's leading experts on nineteenth-century Russian history, and his most recent monographs have assured him this position for the early twentieth century as well. Although there have been many contributions from Western and Soviet sources on the Stolypin period, Bazyłow's new book easily stands out as the most impressive, detailed, erudite, researched, and, in total effect, significant contribution to the subject. The bibliography is impressive and most comprehensive. Archival material dealing heavily with police and provincial reports has been consulted but, perhaps surprisingly, throws little new light on the critical problems of the era. On the other hand, the printed material, primary and secondary, in all major languages, has been used to an extent unequalled until now. The Benedictine research and erudition of the author make this book indispensable to any scholar interested in the Stolypin years. The greatest value of the work is in the painstaking detail and straightforward narrative, mostly devoted to political and administrative affairs, admittedly at the expense of social and economic aspects.

The temptation to compare the contributions of Western and Soviet scholars naturally presents itself. The crudest Soviet simplifications and aprioristic pre-suppositions are avoided in the body of the book. However, this makes both the introductory and concluding sections rather colorless and bland and inhibits the author from making more of the general judgments and speculations that his research efforts should surely elicit.

In a sense, the author follows the current party line. Lenin is quoted, though infrequently, for his supposedly informed observations on the workings of the higher echelons of the imperial government. The author contends that class motivations and assumptions dictated the inevitable failure of both oppositional and governmental policies. The viability of any kind of constitutional solution is not taken into consideration as a serious possibility. Bazyłow writes of the "negative manifestations" of the years following the suppression of the revolution of 1905—manifestations, however, which, though they indirectly strengthened the government, were all "ephemeral," since "tsardom did not have long to live." Specifically, Stolypin had no "social forces" to support him on the Right or the Left, while none of the bourgeois parties had a "tie with the masses." On the other hand, Bazyłow does not follow the Soviet line that all political groups to the Right of the Kadets were flatly reactionary or more than eager to reach a humiliating accommodation with the ruling forces. He asserts that, whatever the political composition of any of the Dumas, any opposition to the existing regime would mean the annihilation of the Duma as such. Still, he explains in detail the varying programs and actions of the different political groupings in the sense of why the political parties were, in his opinion, hopeless. The views of the parties

in the Third Duma are analyzed extensively, including their differing political judgments.

As noted, the archival sources used are selective and throw little light on any of the crucial and debatable issues, particularly developments behind the scenes. The author's analysis of Stolypin's personality is completely conventional. There are surprisingly few data on Stolypin's early life and career, and that information is based on sources familiar to Western scholars. The problem of who played the decisive role in Stolypin's appointment to the Ministry of the Interior is left unanswered. The author examines but leaves unresolved the questions of ministerial discussions between the government and the opposition during the period between the First and Second Dumas, Stolypin's appointment as prime minister, and his desire for a coalition cabinet. Stolypin's relations with the tsar are kept vague, "and perhaps the most important fact under contemporary circumstances, the support of the tsar, was always conditional" (p. 288).

Bazyłow concedes that despite the courts-martial and oppressive governmental severity of 1906, Stolypin never wished to restore the political system preceding October 1905. The author feels that Stolypin's famous "not afraid" speech to the Second Duma was his major program statement and the June 3, 1907, coup d'état constituted the prime minister's recognition that he could not cooperate with the opposition, particularly with regard to his agrarian reform program. Bazyłow admits that the agrarian reform was not immediately effective in its implementation, but he considers the effort inevitable since the commune had to go.

The author emphasizes the government's reliance on center-rightist combinations in the Third Duma but also concludes that, for this reason, Stolypin's programs of domestic reform were consequently lessened and postponed in their extent and prospects. He relates this later development to Stolypin's increasing reliance on the Right after the spring of 1909 in connection with the nationality question. In this sense, the importance of the 1909 crisis lay in the growing alienation between Stolypin and the loose Octobrist grouping.

The connection that Bazyłow draws between official Russification policies and Stolypin's inability to win the support of right or left elements in the Duma remains unclear. The author points out that Stolypin's nationalistic bent was reinforced by his early provincial career, especially in Kovno, but allows that the attitude of the liberal parties to the nationalities, especially the Poles, was not clear, the Kadets' position was "very general and declamatory," and the Octobrists really had no program at all.

Bazyłow concludes, perhaps predictably, that Stolypin was the agent of the counterrevolutionary gentry. The old autocracy could not be restored, but the man who could not win the following of the Right, Left, or the court, was simply unable to convert the discredited autocracy into a "bourgeois monarchy." Nevertheless, Stolypin was the last Russian statesman to attempt to reform the tsarist system, for which his death was a real catastrophe.

Whatever reservations the reader may have about Bazyłow's assumptions, analyses, and conclusions, there can be no doubt that the diligence and thoroughness of the devoted author make this book a valuable contribution and ready source of reliable information on all political aspects of the Stolypin era of Russian history.

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