

story on three levels. Some chapters (or their subdivisions) are devoted to general problems; others deal with the intricacies of public life in Bohemia, or with developments in one area, the domain of Zlín in southeastern Moravia. This organization gives the author ample opportunity to formulate his theses and to illustrate them with materials drawn from a vast amount of contemporary sources. But a good deal of concentration is needed to correlate the general trends with the ups and downs of provincial life.

Polišenský used his best endeavors to identify the moving forces in European politics in the period covered and to present to the modern reader the effects of their interplay. He recast the traditional picture in which the leading capitals, Madrid, Rome, Vienna, Paris, and London, stood out as focal points, and underscored the importance of other less conspicuous centers from which, in many crucial points, the initiative came. As far as Spain is concerned he does not view the royal court as the center of gravity, but assigns the active role to the viceroys in Naples and Milan who worked hand in hand with Archduke Albert and his consort Isabella in Brussels. Similarly, he presents Maximilian of Bavaria as the chief architect of Catholic coalitions in Central Europe. But the most notable correction of the accepted views is the author's emphasis on the Dutch part in diplomacy and military campaigns, especially after the expiration, in 1621, of the twelve-year truce with Spain.

The book is a significant contribution to the knowledge of the struggles for continental hegemony in which most Western and Central European countries became involved. Instead of presenting a portrait gallery of political and military leaders, the author attempts to grasp the sense and import of socioeconomic changes on which documentary sources seldom shed direct light. Although mostly analytical, the book is a fine piece of historical prose and takes a prominent place among the current scholarly production.

The translator, Robert Evans of Brasenose College, Oxford, did not follow mechanically the Czech original. By the elimination of details from the Zlín microcosm he makes the narrative smoother and more cohesive. Some minor errors could mislead the reader not acquainted with peculiarities of Czech life. For example, the Czech *děkan* (*decanus*) should be translated as "dean," not "deacon" (pp. 62, 119). The author's reference to the Collegium Nordicum as a papal institution does not mean to imply that it was located in Rome (p. 64); it was founded at Olomouc, as stated correctly in another connection (p. 163). The translator decided for a selective index and left out personal and place names of local importance.

OTAKAR ODLOŽILÍK  
*University of Pennsylvania*

RISE OF THE HABSBURG EMPIRE, 1526–1815. By *Victor S. Mamatey*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971. x, 182 pp. Paper.

Within the confines of a study for use by undergraduate students, Professor Mamatey has produced an excellent brief work on the Habsburg Empire in the early modern period, all the more welcome because it is the first attempt in English to integrate the histories of all the Habsburg lands in these centuries. Mamatey focuses principally on Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary, but turns to events in other parts of the Monarchy whenever they transcend purely local interests. His method of

sketching the background of such interjections in a brief paragraph largely succeeds in avoiding the utter confusion which could easily attend the description of such varied and disparate materials in so limited a space.

It is difficult to quarrel with the main lines of Mamatey's interpretation of Habsburg history: the major, and for the most part neglected, role of Ferdinand I in forging a viable union between his newly acquired dominions; the transparently self-serving notions of various noble estates in opposing Habsburg centralism; the very considerable, almost anachronistic, prosperity of the agricultural holdings after the Thirty Years' War; the weakness of the "carpetbagging" neoaristocracy, which despite its vast wealth was not sufficiently rooted in its lands to oppose the will of the monarch; the continuing interest of foreign powers, especially France, in Hungarian affairs, which made the Magyars an exception to this rule; and the repeated abandonment of promising Eastern ventures by Leopold I and Charles VI in favor of quixotic expeditions in the West, which prevented the Monarchy from becoming a truly Danubian one. These themes are all developed here with the clarity they deserve.

One may regret that so little attention is paid to the cultural and intellectual history of the Monarchy, that there are so many misprints, and that Mamatey perpetuates the legend of Maria Theresa appealing for support to the Hungarian nobles with the infant Joseph II in her arms. But these are small criticisms of so useful a book.

PAUL P. BERNARD  
*University of Illinois*

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE HABSBURG MONARCHY. By *Victor-L. Tapié*. Translated by *Stephen Hardman*. New York, Washington, London: Praeger Publishers, 1971. viii, 430 pp. \$15.00.

There are two obvious ways to set about the formidable task of writing a history of the Habsburg Empire: one, which may be called the traditional way, has the story emanate from the Austro-German center; the other, unorthodox way is from the viewpoint of the various national groups and their relations to the center. The first approach is frequently associated with a built-in German bias, the second with the difficult problem of giving a homogeneous structure to the narrative. Whenever only limited space is available, the second approach encounters the additional difficulties of having to coordinate conflicting claims at every point of the narrative.

Possibly to avoid these and other pitfalls, Professor Tapié, a distinguished historian of the baroque era in general and of the Austrian baroque in particular, has chosen a third approach, a kind of synthesis between the issues germane to the empire as a whole and those anchored in the historicopolitical entities as component parts of the Habsburg monarchy, more or less rolled into one. The national issues are generally discussed within the framework of these units. A book structured according to such a technique does not make it easy for the reader to trace specific problems through the centuries. On the other hand, what the narrative may sometimes lack in clarity is to a degree gained in readability. In this sense the author can use his unquestionable erudition and literary skill to full advantage.

In offering so huge a panorama in time and place Tapié obviously had to make difficult decisions in choice of material, and here it is manifestly impossible