

KOŚCIUSZKO NIEZNANY. By *Jan Dihm*. Wydanie pośmiertne. Wrocław, Warsaw, Kraków: Ossolineum, 1969. 447 pp. 80 zł.

The fascinating figure of Kościuszko still awaits a scholarly biography, since the one by Korzon in 1894 needs updating in view of the controversy raised by Skalkowski's revisionist work of 1924. Jan Dihm, scrupulous editor of Niemcewicz's memoirs, undertook an arduous task, the "historical appraisal of Kościuszko in the light of recent sources and scholarly dissertations." Planned as a loose collection of eighteen studies and essays rather than a new definitive biography, the work deals with the psychological motivations behind Kościuszko's main decisions. Unfortunately, owing to the author's death in 1965, only eight sections were completed for this precious volume.

Although the first essay sheds new light on Kościuszko's military schooling in Warsaw and prerevolutionary Paris, the main part of the book deals tediously with the complexities of the Dubienka battle, July 18, 1792, against the overwhelming forces of Russian intervention. Dihm tries to shield his hero from the critics. Using a plethora of minor monographs by Polish military historians, he offers a painstaking but inconclusive apology without solving the puzzle of an unscheduled retreat. He also discusses Kościuszko's bold project of kidnaping Stanislas II Augustus after the king's accession to the infamous Targowica Confederacy.

The third chapter explains the trauma of Kościuszko's release from prison in St. Petersburg by Tsar Paul under the humiliating though not bona fide oath of allegiance that was rewarded by a land grant. The author claims that Kościuszko, though depressed by defeat and weakened by simulated sickness, was already plotting to use that dearly bought freedom toward future leadership in the struggle for independence. The fourth chapter covers the departure from St. Petersburg and the triumphant journey through Sweden and England to Philadelphia (his second, transitory, trip to America). On crutches and constantly aware of the long arm of the tsarist secret police, the overly suspicious Kościuszko was determined to fool Russian "guardian angels"; disclosure of his clandestine 1793 sojourn in Paris and the minutes of his secluded conference with Robespierre had increased his caution so that he distrusted almost everybody, with Jefferson a notable exception. The fifth part analyzes the dramatic parting with Niemcewicz, prompted by American Jacobins eager to use the famous general's services in plots with the Paris Directory. Apparently Niemcewicz was flabbergasted at Kościuszko's having, even with him, simulated sickness to counteract stories regarding his credibility.

The sixth chapter presents interesting research on Niemcewicz's firsthand account of Kościuszko, "Notes sur ma captivité." The seventh concerns the 1798 intrigue of Talleyrand, who cynically brought Kościuszko to France to use this Polish trump card in anti-Russian negotiations with Prussia. Meanwhile Kościuszko, using American arrears payments for his services in the Revolutionary War, repaid the grant from the tsar, thus honorably fulfilling his painful obligation.

The final study is an in-depth analysis of the unpublished "In Praise of Kościuszko," written by his secretary Niemcewicz in 1820 in answer to Jullien's biography. Here Dihm evaluates Kościuszko's brilliant fortifications and artillery sites in the three major operations of the American Revolutionary War. We also learn that Kościuszko's first American trip was motivated not only by eagerness to fight British oppression but also by his unhappy romance with Ludwika Sosnowska-Lubomirska. Although these facts somewhat demythologize the "hero of two worlds," they are more human than the banquet-speech oleographs of American politicians fishing for Polish votes.

In sum, the author has made a valuable contribution to our understanding of a complicated person. Moreover, the book demonstrates the impressive craftsmanship and intellectual courage of some historians in Poland today.

GEORGE J. LERSKI
University of San Francisco

SVEDECTVO O SLOVENSKOM NÁRODNOM POVSTANÍ. By *Gustáv Husák*. 2nd revised edition. Bratislava: Epoque, 1969. 635 pp. Kčs. 30.

The story of the Slovak resistance movement in World War II, which culminated in the Slovak National Uprising (August 29–October 29, 1944), remains virtually untouched in Western historical literature. To the knowledge of this reviewer, there is only one substantial account of it in a Western language: Wolfgang Venohr, *Aufstand für die Tschechoslowakei: Der Slowakische Freiheitskampf von 1944* (Hamburg, 1969). On the other hand, the Slovak and Czech literature about it is extensive, but varies greatly in approach and quality. During the witch hunt against the Slovak nationalist (Titoist) Communists in the 1950s the Slovak resistance was maligned and its participants persecuted. One of the prominent victims was Gustáv Husák, the present secretary-general of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC), who was imprisoned from 1951 to 1960 for “bourgeois nationalism.” His book on the Slovak National Uprising, which was originally published in 1964, is an attempt to vindicate the Slovak resistance and his personal role (as well as that of other Slovak Communists) in it.

After the breakup of Czechoslovakia into the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the German-protected Slovak state in March 1939, the Slovak Communists organized, with the permission of the KSC leadership in Moscow (Klement Gottwald), an autonomous underground Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS). At first, Husák—a lawyer by training and a very junior member (he was born in 1913) of the *Davisti*, a group of Slovak Communist intellectuals so named after their review *Dav* (*The Masses*)—played only a minor role in the resistance. However, as a result of successive arrests of Communist leaders by the Slovak police, Husák moved up the party hierarchy until by 1943 he was the leader of the KSS’s Fifth Underground Central Committee. In this capacity it fell to him to negotiate the well-known “Christmas Agreement” of 1943 with the leaders of the Slovak democratic resistance (Ján Ursiny and Jozef Lettrich). The agreement provided for the formation of the Slovak National Council to direct the resistance. As a result of it, unlike the resistance in Poland or Yugoslavia, no East-West, Communists versus nationalists schism developed in the Slovak resistance. The Slovak Communist and democratic resistance movements cooperated, albeit warily, to the end of the war. This served partly as the basis for the charge of “bourgeois nationalism” leveled against Husák after the war.

Unlike most Soviet historians who have lived under a totalitarian regime so long that they have lost the habit of supporting their arguments with anything but cant, Husák was trained as a Communist before the Communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia and has not lost the habit of supporting his arguments with logic. He is a combative polemicist and adroit dialectician. Unlike most Soviet historiography, which is numbingly dull, this is a lively and provocative book. Husák directs his fire in many directions—the Slovak Stalinists (V. Široký and K. Bačilek), the Slovak democrats (Ursiny and Lettrich), and the Czechoslovak government in exile (President Beneš). He is not very candid or revealing about the peculiar