

of larger figures who have grappled with the plight of the human spirit at sea in a world of appearances and grief. This volume is to be valued for making Tschizewskij's masterful elucidation of Skovoroda's philosophy widely available.

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THE BALTIC STATES: THE YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE: ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, 1917–1940. By Georg von Rauch. Translated from the German by Gerald Onn. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974. xv, 265 pp. \$10.95.

The task of writing Baltic history is enormous. The sheer number of native languages and names, the scope of German and Russian involvement, the changing historical perspective and the clash of nationalisms have turned away many otherwise intrigued and competent historians. It took a scholar of von Rauch's background, interests, and experience to produce the first history of modern Baltic development in a generation. As a German historian, furthermore, von Rauch crosses the Rubicon by grouping Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania together. Traditionally, Germans have classified only Estonia and Latvia as "Baltic" countries. Because of Germany's own historical participation, reasons did exist for this classification, but in modern times it has become obsolete. Nevertheless, until recently it was still followed by West German scholars working on modern history of the Baltic region. Thus, von Rauch gives the English reader a comparative study of the independent states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The first such comparative survey was produced by the Royal Institute on International Affairs in 1938 (*The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*), but it concentrated more on economic policies of the thirties and on the whole was less balanced in its appraisals than von Rauch's volume. It also should be added that this translation of von Rauch's book differs from the original 1970 German version by means of a welcome innovation—instead of the German place names, the native Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian toponymy are used in most instances. He also has supplemented the list of references.

The author displays an admirable open-mindedness in discussing the emergence of Baltic societies, their struggles with the dominant German or Polish minorities, and their frequently hostile relations with German and Soviet Russian neighbors. He does not hide Baltic problems or difficulties, but manages to keep his discussion of them almost entirely free of the ideological and cultural prejudices found not only in Soviet but, unfortunately, in some Western writing as well. This attitude allows von Rauch to see the Baltic nations not as mere "pawns" in the Russian-German chess game, but as self-directed entities, capable of and entitled to independent existence in the same manner as that of the Benelux countries (p. 241).

As might be expected, however, because of von Rauch's background and training, he is much stronger on Estonian and Latvian affairs than on Lithuanian. Although his profile of Lithuania is generally acceptable, his specific analysis is frequently erroneous because of errors and omissions concerning both people and events. The most controversial section is von Rauch's version of the declaration of Lithuanian independence (p. 42); the most dubious is his strong differentiation of Smetona's "presidential regime," from Pāts' and Ulmanis' "authoritarian democracies" (pp. 161–64). This raises further questions of interpretation—especially

in regard to the author's concept of authoritarianism in Latvia. The book is flawed by a number of editorial, translation, and minor factual mistakes. In general, however, von Rauch's is the most objective and valuable book on Baltic independence yet by a Western scholar.

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POLISH POLITICS IN TRANSITION: THE CAMP OF NATIONAL UNITY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER, 1935-1939. By *Edward D. Wynot, Jr.* Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1974. xvii, 294 pp. \$12.50.

The death of Marshal Piłsudski in May 1935 created a major crisis for the semi-authoritarian regime he had established after the coup of May 1926. Although ill and unable to take any real part in government in the last years of his life, Piłsudski had still personified an ultimate authority who could preserve the unity of the heterogeneous groups which supported him. Consequently his death forced into the open the deep divisions within the Polish administration. The main attempt to overcome these rifts was the creation in early 1937 of a new government party, the Camp of National Unity, and the most interesting part of Mr. Wynot's book is a detailed description of the emergence and development of this Camp. Though difficult to read (still much too heavily based upon a Ph.D. thesis), the volume contains a good deal of new material from Polish and British archives as well as some intriguing documentation from the Italian archives on Polish-Italian links.

The picture of the period that Mr. Wynot paints is convincing and also depressing. He stresses the fascist elements in the Camp's program and shows how its leaders were prepared to resort to anti-Semitic demagoguery in order to win over nationalist support. His account of the crisis of November 1937, when the Camp's leadership toyed with the idea of a fascist coup (but in the end failed to carry it through), is particularly absorbing. He also points out that even though the Camp failed to unite public opinion, it refused to share power with the opposition before the outbreak of the war—a fact that was to have considerable significance after the rapid Nazi conquest of Poland.

The introductory section on Polish social and political background is much weaker and contains many elementary errors of fact and analysis. It is highly misleading, for instance, to quote without major qualification the 1931 census figure of one million Belorussians, for their total was certainly at least 50 percent more than this (p. 14). "Three-quarters" of Polish Jews did not live "in cities": 46.5 percent lived in towns with a population of more than 20,000, 29.9 percent lived in towns with less than 20,000 inhabitants (hardly cities), and 25.6 percent lived in villages and in the country. Forty percent of the Jewish population were not artisans (p. 15); rather, Jews comprised nearly 40 percent of all artisans. The Brześć trial was directed against the Center-Left alliance and did not involve Ukrainians (p. 23). The anti-Semitic bill introduced in the Sejm in 1939 was the work of Benedykt Kienć (not Kieniec) and he was not a Nationalist, but a member of the Camp of National Unity, Mr. Wynot's subject of study (p. 18).

Mr. Wynot sees his work as "a case study of how a developing nation in the late 1930s moved increasingly toward the model of a Fascist state" (p. xi). Yet