

YEAR 1920 AND ITS CLIMAX: THE BATTLE OF WARSAW DURING THE POLISH-SOVIET WAR, 1919–1920. WITH THE ADDITION OF SOVIET MARSHAL TUKHACHEVSKI'S MARCH BEYOND THE VISTULA. By *Józef Piłsudski*. London and New York: Piłsudski Institute of London and Piłsudski Institute of America, 1972. x, 283 pp. \$10.00.

WHITE EAGLE, RED STAR: THE POLISH-SOVIET WAR, 1919–20. By *Norman Davies*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1972. xviii, 318 pp.

POLITICS IN INDEPENDENT POLAND, 1921–1939: THE CRISIS OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. By *Antony Polonsky*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972. xvi, 572 pp. \$24.00.

All three books are about interwar Poland. The first two cover the little-known and largely misunderstood chapter of East European diplomatic and military history, the Polish-Soviet War of 1920. The third deals primarily with domestic affairs: it is an analytical study of the political and socioeconomic evolution of Poland from the Treaty of Riga to the outbreak of World War II.

The first book is a reprint of the seminal strategic studies of Marshal Józef Piłsudski, who was in 1920 both Polish commander in chief and head of the Polish state. The book was written as a response to a Soviet challenge in the form of a series of lectures delivered by his main opponent on the battlefield, Mikhail N. Tukhachevsky, to the advanced class of the Moscow Military Academy, February 7–10, 1923; that is why Piłsudski added the full texts of Tukhachevsky's lectures to his book in the form of an appendix.

The second book is a readable and exciting monograph about the war, written by a young British scholar from Oxford and London. One of the main contributions of Norman Davies to contemporary historiography is the final destruction of the myth that General Weygand had anything to do with the Battle of Warsaw. Actually, Weygand's suggestions concerning possible Polish strategy, which he submitted after his arrival in Warsaw to Piłsudski, were rejected outright by the Polish commander in chief. The two leaders quarreled and never even saw each other until Weygand's departure from Poland. Weygand repeatedly and explicitly denied that he had contributed to the Polish victory. Oddly enough, these denials were completely ignored by Western historians, most of whom obviously preferred contemporary press reports to primary source material. It is one of the lasting contributions of Davies's book that he has demolished the myth that Weygand was the father of the "Miracle of the Vistula" on the basis of much convincing evidence, including Weygand's own writing. Another merit of Davies's book is that it views the war of 1920 not as an isolated and exotic event but as part of a wider scene of action and as a crucial event which determined the fate of Eastern Europe for some twenty years. That is why Lord d'Abernon called the battle the "eighteenth decisive battle of the world's history."

The study of interwar Poland by Antony Polonsky is also a valuable monograph based on broad reading and research. One of the weak points of this praiseworthy book is its treatment of the minority problems, especially its exaggerated emphasis on the scope and intensity of Polish anti-Semitism before World War II. As a Jewish-American historian has put it in a recent penetrating study, Polish anti-Semitism was of an "objective variety": it represented a manifestation of hostility "born of a genuine conflict of interest between the Jews and their host

people," mainly merchants, traders, artisans, and professional people, who were involved in fierce competition with the corresponding groups of the local Jewish population. (See Eric Goldhagen, "Pragmatism, Function and Belief in Nazi Anti-Semitism," *Midstream*, December 1972.)

Although during the interwar period Poland had the highest percentage of Jewish population in the world, neither the intensity nor the scope of the Polish anti-Semitic movement reached the proportions of similar trends in neighboring countries with a comparable number of Jews, such as Rumania with its large Iron Guard Fascist Party, or Hungary with its Arrow Cross. Until World War II and the extermination of Polish Jewry by Hitler, Jews in Poland enjoyed equal rights with other citizens and played a considerable role in all fields of activity. Jews occupied numerous high positions not only in the scholarly world (several hundreds of them including Szymon Aszkenazy, Marcei Handelsman, Rafał Taubenzlag, to mention only the most important ones), but also in the state administration (including some cabinet members, such as Floyer Reichman, minister of finance), and in the army (including several generals, such as General Bernard Mond, commander of the Cracow Military District). They were also prominent in the artistic and literary world (Julian Tuwim, Józef Wittlin, Bolesław Leśmian, Antoni Słonimski), while others received high official favors, such as membership in the Academy of Literature. It was also on Polish territory at Wilno that a flourishing center of Judaic studies existed until World War II.

Highly placed representatives of world Jewry often praised the liberalism of the Polish government. For instance, at a conference of the Federation of Polish Jews in London in July 1933, which had as its objective the assessment of the situation which had arisen in Germany, its president, Nahum Sokolow, said that Poland had been "as liberal and hospitable as possible under current circumstances," and that he wished to give expression to the appreciation of the Jewish people for the Polish government's attitude toward the Jews. At the same conference the Chief Rabbi (of Britain) said that for centuries Poland had had no more loyal friends than the Jews, "simply because Poland had been the mother country of Polish Jewry for over 900 years" ("Federation of Polish Jews, Well-Attended Conference," *Jewish Chronicle*, London, July 21, 1933, p. 12).

The chief statesman of Poland, Piłsudski, was not an anti-Semite, a fact widely recognized by Jews in Poland and abroad. Polonsky repeatedly admits this himself and stresses that the Polish government was one of the few to extend military assistance to Vladimir Jabotinsky: "The Polish Government strongly supported Jewish aspirations in Palestine, and entered into close contact with international Zionist organizations, the World Zionist Organization of Chaim Weizmann, the Jewish Agency, and the Revisionists, led by Vladimir Jabotinsky" (p. 468). When Piłsudski died, the *New York Times* correspondent in Warsaw on May 15 reported: "All classes share in this sorrow. There is no radical division whatever, for Marshal Piłsudski is mourned by Jews as much as by Christians." On May 17 the same paper reported a message of condolence on the death of Marshal Piłsudski, sent to the Polish ambassador in Washington, by the American Jewish Committee, which stated, *inter alia*: "We specially recognize his [Piłsudski's] firm opposition to all chauvinistic movements seeking to sow discord among the various elements composing the population of Poland." On May 20 the *Times* reported, in an article entitled "Jews Plan Novel Piłsudski Honor," that "Jewish boys born this month in

Równo, Poland, will be named Joseph for the late Marshal Piłsudski, the rabbinite of Równo decided today."

It is worth recalling that it was Piłsudski who granted Polish citizenship to over six hundred thousand Jewish refugees who sought shelter in Poland from the Russian pogroms during the Civil War of 1918–21. As Professor Joseph Rothschild of Columbia University has written, the Jews of Poland had a "high regard for Piłsudski" (*Piłsudski's Coup d'Etat*, New York, 1966, p. 236).

As these facts indicate, Polonsky's picture of the position of Jews in Poland is somewhat overdrawn.

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ČESKOSLOVENSKÉ PRÁCE O JAZYCE, DĚJINÁCH A KULTUŘE SLOVANSKÝCH NÁRODŮ OD R. 1760: BIOGRAFICKO-BIBLIOGRAFICKÝ SLOVNÍK. Edited by *Milan Kudělka* and *Zdeněk Šimeček*. Prague: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1972. 561 pp. Kčs. 60.

This book is a collection of 594 biobibliographical articles on selected Czech and Slovak scholars, contemporary and historical, who have made important contributions to the study of the languages, history, and culture of the Slavic nations since 1760. The term "Slavistics" is broadly defined, but only those who have done scholarly work of the highest caliber or who have made a basic contribution to the field in their discipline and in their own time are included. The dictionary is a veritable "Who's Who" and "Who Was Who" of Czech and Slovak scholars in the social sciences and humanities, ranging from Ján Herkel' (1786–1865?), the Slovak linguistic "Pan-Slavist," to the late Milada Paulová (1891–1970), the noted Czech authority on the Yugoslavs. Included also are a small number of foreign scholars who worked and published significantly in the Czech and Slovak lands (notably post-1917 Russian and Ukrainian émigrés), and even a few native and adopted sons who moved to the United States (for example, František Dvorník, Otakar Odložilík, Roman Jakobson). German and Magyar Slavists who worked among the Czechs and Slovaks have been omitted.

Each entry consists of five parts: (1) biographical, primarily academic and professional data, (2) a characterization of the subject's scholarly interests and activities, (3) a listing of his major publications, (4) a core bibliography on him and his work, including bibliographies of his literary production, and (5) references to his published correspondence and memoirs and, where applicable, to the repositories of his unpublished manuscripts and papers.

Prepared by a large "collective" under the direction of the Brno branch of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, the work was officially completed in February 1968, though isolated data were inserted even later. Like other manuscripts planned and completed but not actually published before 1968, it had to undergo rigorous scrutiny before its publication was permitted in 1972. A number of persons who had fled the country or fallen into disfavor were deleted, and little formal publicity was given the book. In Prague the work can be purchased only by specifically asking for it at the Slavonic Library. Curiously, some persons markedly out of favor with the current regime (such as Edvard Beneš, Tomáš G. Masaryk, Josef Macek, Milan Švankmajer, Jaroslav Valenta) are still in it.

This work was meant to serve not only as a scholarly reference book but also