

for someone who places such stress on comparative methods, his knowledge of the rest of Eastern Europe is disturbingly slight. The "rate of economic development" of Poland in the interwar period was not "relatively high for the region" (p. ix). It actually lagged significantly behind that of Hungary and Rumania (see I. Sventnilson, *Growth and Stagnation in the European Economy*, Geneva, 1954, pp. 304-5), and this relative stagnation had much to do with the political malaise of the thirties. Moreover, the freedom which the Polish government conceded to opposition parties can hardly be claimed to have given "Polish politics a unique position in Eastern Europe" (p. 28). Similar freedom existed in Hungary, Yugoslavia, the Baltic States, and, at least until 1938, in Rumania. In spite of these defects, Mr. Wynot's study is a useful contribution to the history of Poland between the wars.

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REVERED BY ALL: THE LIFE AND WORKS OF RABBI ISRAEL MEIR KAGAN—HAFETS HAYYIM (1838-1933). By *Lester Samuel Eckman*. New York: Shengold Publishers, 1974. ix, 214 pp. \$10.00.

Dr. Eckman's biography of the Hafets Hayyim, one of the major figures of East European Jewish Orthodoxy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is seemingly an excellent idea. But for whom is the book intended? It is pure hagiography, and as such it will not interest the serious outsider who would like to gain an insight into the life and times of the celebrated rabbi. On the other hand, those familiar with the Orthodox Jewish tradition within which the Hafets Hayyim lived will hardly find anything of substance in this confused and shoddily written book. The author discusses the rabbi's views on a variety of issues but fails to analyze in any depth the historically vital dilemma of a great traditionalist living in a time of enormous upheaval in Jewish life. The rabbi's attitudes toward Zionism and toward the anti-Zionist party Agudas Yisroel, to cite just two examples, are not seriously analyzed. The historical background is based on the books of Dubnov and Baron, and Dr. Eckman is apparently unaware of the considerable amount of new work appearing on East European Jewish history. There are bewildering digressions into Israeli religious disputes and personal theology. It is possible to sympathize with the author's piety and reverence for the Hafets Hayyim, but this book succeeds neither as scholarship nor as popularization.

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KAPITOLY Z DĚJIN ČESKÉHO UČITELSTVA (1890-1938). By *O. Kodedová* and *Z. Uherek*. Prague: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1972. 159 pp. Kčs. 21.

This slim volume describes the efforts of Czech elementary school teachers to obtain better salaries, social position, and freedom to participate in the political affairs in the prewar Austrian Empire. It also traces the later organizational efforts of the teachers, first in the newly established Czechoslovak Republic, and later during the periods of economic crisis and political uncertainty which culminated in the destruction of the republic in 1938.