

Slovakia at large, from the Vienna award to the destruction of the state in March 1939. However, the author's interest is not that of a historian, who attempts to reconstruct past events on the basis of documentation as full as possible, as well as the secondary works of others. Rather, Stercho speaks as a moral critic determined to show the world that the governments of Hungary and Poland behaved unethically with regard to Czechoslovakia, and in particular plotted surreptitiously to detach Carpatho-Ukraine from Czechoslovakia. The bibliography reflects his concerns. The works of Jörg K. Hoensch and Anna M. Cienciala, for example, do not appear in it at all, and Stercho has not made use of the East European literature related to his subject. These may not have been necessary to form his conclusion that it was the "un-Christian and un-Democratic approach on the part of interested surrounding powers" that led to Czechoslovakia's ultimate disintegration.

This broad condemnation, though Stercho extends it to Nazi Germany, does not properly recognize the special role of Germany in the sequence of events culminating in the German occupation of Prague and the simultaneous Hungarian invasion of Ruthenia. It was because of Germany that Slovakia could become "an independent state under protection of the Reich," while an identical declaration of independence by Carpatho-Ukraine failed to be respected by the Magyars. For Germany, the problem of Ruthenia was just an aspect of a much wider Ukrainian problem, which it treated in the framework of relations with Poland and the USSR. Accordingly, when Ukrainians appealed to Berlin for protection, they were told not to resist the Hungarian army. This was the best advice anybody could give them at the time, but the Ukrainians disregarded it, and hundreds of young men went to certain death in battle and before Hungarian execution squads. Besides Germans, Poles, and Hungarians, Stercho is critical of the Czechs, who in 1919 had promised to grant autonomy to Ruthenia but did not keep their word. The Czechs may have been resorting to a hypocritical excuse when they argued that the people of Ruthenia lacked a capacity for self-government. One wishes that instead of assuming the contrary, Stercho had paid more attention to social, economic, political, and cultural conditions in the province before 1938. It would have been interesting to learn, for example, why the Communists were the strongest political group in the area. When they entered Czechoslovakia, the inhabitants of Ruthenia not only had no experience in self-government but even lacked a sense of national identity. They made great progress under the Prague regime, but unfortunately the author has not given us a full account and analysis of those nation-building processes which took place between 1919 and 1938. Equally regrettably, he has passed over the actual work of the Ukrainian autonomous administration, its goals, methods, and accomplishments. One hopes that Dr. Stercho, who is well qualified to cover this particular story, has reserved it for another book.

ROMAN SZFORLUK

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

RUDOLF II AND HIS WORLD: A STUDY IN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY, 1576-1612. By *R. J. W. Evans*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973. xii, 323 pp. \$24.00.

This volume is a tremendous achievement, for it provides both an intensely perceptive interpretation of Rudolf II as ruler, patron, and occultist and a brilliant

study of the intellectual milieu in which he lived and more or less reigned. The Austrian Habsburgs of the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have not been favored with many distinguished biographies, and Rudolf II has suffered more than most for two reasons. The first of these is his own character, so complex, mysterious, almost weird. The second is that his reign has invariably been assessed in the light of the disastrous Thirty Years' War, the first all-European war, which followed shortly after. Even the ambitious two-volume work by Anton Gindely, *Rudolf II und seine Zeit* (Prague, 1862–65), concentrated on the last years, 1600–1612. The great nineteenth-century historians Moriz Ritter and Leopold von Ranke stressed, as was their wont, the political, diplomatic, and Counter Reformation aspects of his reign without fully assessing Rudolf in terms of the intellectual and cultural life of which he was such an integral part. The author of this volume offers an interpretation rather than a narrative of the times or a simple biography. From Frischlin's naïve encomium (1577) to this critical yet appreciative study, historiography has come a long way. This is psychohistory and intellectual history at their best.

The author sees the intellectual life of the period as belonging integrally to late Renaissance culture. The rationalism, balance, moderation, and classicism characteristic of the humanism of the early Renaissance had under pressure from the religious Reformation given way to other forms of thought which addressed deeper and more serious questions regarding man's place in the world of nature. The preoccupation of Rudolf and others at his court with mysticism, magic, alchemy, and occultism must be seen in this context. This striving after secret knowledge had an organic connection with Florentine Neoplatonism, hermeticism, cabalism, and the world of Jakob Boehme, and Rudolf was more an extreme case than an exception to the tenor of the times. The intellectual milieu of Prague was cosmopolitan in this Renaissance sense. Mannerism provided its natural artistic expression, for here mannerist retrospection and conscious antiquarianism were grafted onto genuine survivals of medieval motifs. Understood against this background the feeble political conceptions of Rudolf seem less perplexing, his religious understanding appears more complex and less dogmatic, and his whole mentality can be appreciated more positively in the context of the times. This book is not without its minor flaws, for the author resorts at times to a Trithemian cataloguing of illustrious men and offers adequate definitions of terms—for mannerism, for example—late in the book after using them as operative concepts throughout. But this volume sheds light brilliantly on an obscure and difficult chapter in Western history. It illustrates a point all too often lost sight of by some historians, that the interior life and inner character of rulers can have a tremendous impact on the course of events.

LEWIS W. SPITZ
Stanford University

THE RELUCTANT ALLY: AUSTRIA'S POLICY IN THE AUSTRO-TURKISH WAR, 1737–1739. By *Karl A. Roider, Jr.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972. vi, 198 pp. \$7.50.

A discussion in English of Austria's military-diplomatic policies in the 1737–39 war is both unique and welcome. The volume also represents an original scholarly contribution. Roider lays bare the failures of the Austrian commanders, Neipperg