

THE LANDS BETWEEN: A HISTORY OF EAST-CENTRAL EUROPE SINCE THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA. By *Alan Palmer*. New York: Macmillan, 1970. x, 405 pp. \$9.95.

The English historian Alan Palmer had written extensively on Eastern Europe before attempting the extremely difficult task of writing the history of all East European peoples (except the Greeks and Turks) from 1815 to 1968. Such a history was badly needed, but the magnitude of the undertaking has discouraged so far all potential authors. Mr. Palmer's volume justifies the reluctance of his fellow specialists to embark on such a complicated venture. To cover in a book of about four hundred pages all the events, changes, intrigues, economic developments, and social transformations that took place in "the lands between" during 150 years proved to be a task beyond even Palmer's obvious knowledge and competence.

The book is mainly a political history with some references to economic and social developments and almost no coverage of intellectual and, strictly speaking, social history. The author was clearly entitled to place the emphasis on political history, and it would be unfair to criticize him for what he has not done. Nevertheless, one feels justified in asking how a satisfactory political history of Eastern Europe can be written—especially for the nineteenth century—without discussing the Magyar and Polish nobility with its traditions and political functions, the peasant problem in the entire region under review, the role of churches, especially the Orthodox Church in the Balkans, and several similar basic problems. Political history cannot be explained satisfactorily without presenting the forces that shaped political thinking and action.

Shortcomings of this kind are especially numerous in the 119 pages devoted to the nineteenth century. This century needs much more detailed treatment than it has received, not only because of the numerous fundamental changes that occurred in this period but also because without understanding them fully the next half-century is much more difficult to explain and to describe. How can one understand the birth of Yugoslavia when Gaj and Illyrism are handled in two lines and Bishop Strossmayer with two references? There is no mention of such crucial events as the Kremsier meeting and constitution, the Bach system, the post-1863 "organic work" in Poland, the importance for Bulgaria of people like Paisii or Sofronii and the *çorbacis*. In treating the twentieth century the author practically neglects such movements as fascism, and discusses the problems of the Little Entente almost exclusively in a European and not a regional context. Yet the pages devoted to the twentieth century are considerably better than those dealing with the previous hundred years.

Although Palmer has not written the history of East Central Europe in the last 150 years that is so badly needed, he has produced an interesting volume, sections of which are just as good as those which have been criticized are unsatisfactory. The chapter "To Sarajevo" is one of the best short summaries I have ever read of the diplomatic-political events leading to the murder of the Archduke Franz-Ferdinand. The last chapter, "From Budapest to Prague," is an extremely satisfactory short summary of the complicated 1956-68 period in Eastern Europe's history.

There are minor mistakes: Budapest-Csepel is called a center of industrialization in the 1860s, the Magyar reform diet is placed seven years later than when it really began, numerous names and words are misspelled, and the city of Blaj is misplaced on the map on page 55. In general, however, Palmer displays an enviable

knowledge and an ability to write clearly, often brilliantly. One has the feeling that with more attention given to the nineteenth century, a somewhat broader focus, and better proofreading, he could indeed have produced the study that I hoped to find when I picked up this volume.

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THE VATICAN AND EASTERN EUROPE. By *Wilfried Daim*. Translated by *Alexander Gode*. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1970. vii, 189 pp. \$7.00.

This is a partisan and not always accurate book by a Viennese leftist Catholic whose sharp and not entirely unjustified criticism of the Vatican's *Ostpolitik* is not matched by an equally critical assessment of the Soviet bloc's religious policies. The author prefaces his examination of the Holy See's relations with individual Communist countries by giving a general exposition of Vatican politics, which he characterizes as a "combination of Christian universality and Roman imperialism" (p. 15). As for Rome's policy toward the Communist bloc, Dr. Daim postulates a rather farfetched "ultimate objective": "to change communism from an anti-religious into a proreligious movement" (p. 32). In dealing with Vatican-Kremlin relations, the author considers their conciliation and the reunion of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of Rome as the two principal objectives. Accordingly, he offers little justification and even less sympathy for the Ukrainian Uniat Church, even if the Russians in liquidating it "did not display extraordinary delicacy" (p. 53). "Obviously," we are assured by the author, "the Soviets would have no objection whatever to an Orthodox-Catholic union, if the Catholic Church were willing to endorse socialism" (p. 75).

Despite occasional insights, the book displays a mixture of ideological bias, wishful thinking, and a superficial orientation toward church-state relations and the individual Communist countries. Daim assumes that "the faith in communism which the progressivists thus displayed is as superior to the motivation of orthodox communists as the faith of the Catholics of leftist orientation is to that of the right-wing Catholics" (p. 146). Though this proposition remains to be proved, the author all too generously ascribes such superior faith and insight to such odious figures as Piasecki of Poland and Plojhar of Czechoslovakia, and portrays as darkest reactionaries Pope Pius XII, Cardinals Wyszynski and Mindszenty, and an assortment of others whose motives and attitudes are sometimes crudely caricatured. The reader is left with an impression that the harsh treatment of the Catholic Church in the bloc countries has been justified, largely because of its reactionary policies. No mention whatever is made of the massive antireligious campaign within the USSR (1959-64) that coincided with Khrushchev's and the Moscow patriarchate's advances to the Vatican. The author seems to place the Russian Orthodox Church among the progressive forces, although in terms of its dogmas, canons, and rites it is far more conservative than the Catholic Church; and its leaders, judging by the voices of dissent among its clergy and faithful, have not exactly been models of spiritual, intellectual, or moral strength.

The book, with all its sweeping conclusions, is insufficiently documented and contains serious factual errors, despite the author's concern for "reliable and frank information" (p. v). For example, we are told: "During the German occupation (1942) the Ukrainian bishops tried to proclaim an 'independent' Ukraine under the