

servations made at the time by C. A. Macartney and others on the complicated situation in Slovakia between the wars. Of the three volumes, only Dr. Jahn's has an index.

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DĚJINY STÁTU A PŘÁVA V ČESKOSLOVENSKU DO ROKU 1945. By
Václav Vaněček. 2nd revised edition. Prague: Orbis, 1970. 536 pp. Kčs. 46.

Václav Vaněček, historian of law at the Charles University in Prague and a scholar already known in the thirties for his work on the legal position of monasteries and monasterial estates in the old Bohemian state, has published the second edition of his textbook, a basic work on the history of state and law in Czechoslovakia to 1945.

The author's stated goals in this volume are to explain the present through an exposition of the past and to provide ideological tools for the lawyers, who occupy a significant place in the building of socialism (p. 9). Vaněček stresses the Marxian principle that the state, the law, and all political and legal institutions form the superstructure whose base lies in the mode of production. The state, through its origins and development, is closely linked with the class struggle. Consequently the laboring classes will always be of interest to us. We will side with the masses of working people and be openly biased in their favor, but this bias will reflect a profound objectivity. Nevertheless, the law and the state are not a passive, blind product of the economic forces. The superstructure has an active part to play—in the past it was largely a conservative and negative role, but under scientific socialism it is an active one. Clearly, the author's Marxist determinism is not absolute.

Vaněček deals at first with primitive society on the territory of Czechoslovakia from the pre-Slavic and Slavic period until the eighth century A.D. The ensuing long period of feudalism has five subperiods: early feudalism to the middle of the eleventh century; feudal decomposition and its demise until 1419; the Hussite revolution, especially the years 1419–34; the feudal monarchy until 1618; and the absolute monarchy until 1848. The modern period of capitalism (1848–1945) includes subperiods: the revolutionary years in the Habsburg monarchy (1848–49), the monarchy's reorganization (1849–71), Czech and Slovak provinces in the Habsburg monarchy (1871–1918), and the Czechoslovak state (1918–45).

Vaněček brilliantly analyzes the history of civil, penal, and administrative law and the procedures of feudalism. His contributions to this field include a number of shorter books, articles, and conference papers explaining some of the most intricate problems, such as *vdáni* and *kobyli pole*. In the realm of constitutional law and in reference to the capitalist period the author quotes too frequently from Marxist classics (and even politicians) and accepts their authority without question. As a consequence, many of the reader's critical doubts are not satisfied.

Some smaller mistakes and omissions should be mentioned. Vaněček's judgment of enlightened despotism is excessively harsh: Leopold II was not so much opposed to reform as he was hindered by the feudal opposition in Hungary and revolt in Belgium. The March Constitution of 1849 could not be decreed under the protection of the gendarmes' bayonets, for the gendarmes were not organized until 1851. Post-1867 Hungary was ruled not only by the capitalists and magnates

but also by the very powerful gentry. Vaněček fails to mention this. The fundamental articles of 1871 did not re-establish the general diet of Bohemian provinces. The future Communist leader Dr. Bohumír Šmeral especially promoted the opportunism of Czech social democrats in the last years of the monarchy. Finally, but significantly, the author overestimates the short intermezzo of the Slovak Communist Republic (June 16–July 1, 1919).

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GEOGRAPHY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. By *Jaromír Demek, Miroslav Střída*, et al. Sponsored by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. Prague: Academia, 1971. 330 pp. \$15.00.

This book is the work of sixteen geographers and scientists associated with the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. It is a unique book because "the Czechoslovak geographers themselves tackled the task [of] writing in English a brief modern manual on the geography of Czechoslovakia" (p. 9). However, the numerous descriptive data and facts it contains are already generally known or available in other sources.

A brief introduction (by K. Kuchař) describes in twelve pages the country's territory, history, and the development of cartography. The next six papers (151 pages) on "Physical Geography" discuss topography (J. Demek, E. Mazúr, O. Štelcl), climate (E. Quitt), hydrology (J. Piše, V. Vlček), soils (K. Tarábek), biogeography (J. Raušer), and conservation (J. Rubín). All of these essays are painstakingly accurate descriptions with appropriate maps. The second section (119 pages) on "Economic Geography" also covers six topics. The first, on the development of the economy (by M. Střída), is an introduction which provides a superficial Marxist interpretation of the country's economic development. The next five papers summarize the regional distribution of population (C. Votrúbec), industry (M. Střída), and agriculture (Z. Hoffmann). Also covered are the basic modes of transportation (O. Šlampa) and Czechoslovak internal and external tourist traffic (J. Hůrský).

Each paper is self-contained and each is cluttered with data and names, yet none of them offer any explanatory or interesting ideas. East European specialists who seek an understanding of the country's changeable social character will thus be disappointed. And for those whose interests have been stimulated by recently published materials on Czechoslovakia's stormy political history, the volume will provide little more than dull reading—static, complex, and incomprehensible. But perhaps it will be useful as a reference book. Professional geographers specializing in Eastern Europe also will be disillusioned. They will not be impressed by the information presented here, or by the book's rigid and naïve approach.

If this book was intended "for geographers abroad . . . even for all visitors from abroad" (p. 7), the authors have not achieved that purpose. Few geographers will read it, and potential visitors from abroad would prefer travel guides, which often contain more specific and relevant information, including explanatory notes about the country. In fairness, however, *Geography of Czechoslovakia* is as bad—or as good—as the other books which treat this subject from the traditional regional geography point of view. It offers several tables and graphs that furnish valuable data; and some of the maps are superior. Numerous black and white and color