could be, and should be, evaluated. The journal editors are to be congratulated for providing this international forum for Slavic ethnography and for bringing the aims and accomplishments of this discipline to the attention of the non-Slavic world.

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OBRAZOVANIE MOLDAVSKOI ASSR. By *Afanasii Vasil'evich Repida.* Kishinev: "Shtiintsa," 1974. 184 pp. 1.25 rubles.

Neither the style (somewhere between popular and academic), nor the content (typical Soviet characterization of a people's struggle to achieve national self-determination) of this work on the formation of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic is as important as its message. The book is unashamedly anti-Rumanian. Great attention is paid to Rumanian intervention in the Civil War, the Rumanian conquest and occupation of Bessarabia, and Rumania's constant refusal, until 1940, to return the area to the USSR. Of course, the Rumanians in question are bourgeois interwar Rumanians, and the author's tone is less aggressive than in some other books published recently in Moldavia, but the point seems to be that Rumanians are basically hostile to the aspirations of the Moldavian people and the Soviet Union in general. The very fact that the Soviet-held section of Moldavia became an autonomous republic in 1924, rather than a less important autonomous oblast (province), is attributed to the Politburo's desire to stress the territorial claim against Rumania while simultaneously allowing self-determination.

The author's conclusion that the area's economy greatly benefited because of the creation of the MASSR seems exaggerated, as is his assertion that its formation had a "huge revolutionary influence" on the toilers of Bulgaria, Italy, France, and England. However, one must agree that the MASSR aided the further development of Moldavian culture and national identity, served as a constant reminder to Rumania that the USSR wanted Bessarabia back, and encouraged a certain amount of antigovernment activity in Bessarabia.

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DIE WEIZSÄCKER-PAPIERE, 1933–1950. Edited by *Leonidas E. Hill.* Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1974. 684 pp.

A student of the Third Reich is likely to reach eagerly for this bulky edition of Weizsäcker's selected private papers. Brought to light from the family archives by Canadian historian Leonidas Hill, they not only present a unique view of events from an important vantage point, but they also promise to provide a more authentic picture of the man than either the official documents—which Weizsäcker often signed but had not authored—or the self-serving memoirs he wrote after the war as a convicted war criminal's *apologia pro vita sua.* Unfortunately, they do not deliver all that they promise.

The papers contain little of historical significance regarding the critical events the author witnessed at close range, as state secretary in the German Foreign Office

in 1938–43, and later as Hitler's last ambassador to the Holy See, that cannot be better documented from the available Wilhelmstrasse files. Nor are Weizsäcker's personal observations a product of a mind sharp enough to give the familiar events new meanings. This is particularly true of his diary entries, which bear no trace of the uncanny perspicacity and ruthless candor that made the diary of his Italian contemporary Ciano into such a first-rate source. The state secretary obviously was overshadowed by his boss Ribbentrop, but more important—and, perhaps, typical for his central European milieu—he was too diffuse to sort out trivia from essentials.

More intriguing is the question of whether the book confirms Sir Lewis Namier's unflattering estimate of Weizsäcker as a sneaky, mendacious, and immoral Nazi accomplice. Clearly, it does not. But should the revision that is necessary go so far as to vindicate the almost admiring 1939 assessment by Attolico (Italian ambassador to Berlin)—an assessment seconded in many ways by Hill? According to this view, Weizsäcker deserves credit and respect for his desire to avoid war and, after its outbreak, to terminate it speedily by a reasonable compromise—all this while working within the regime.

It is a melancholy feature of modern totalitarian dictatorships that they tend to be singularly resistant to this type of subversive effort, while at the same time managing quite well to avail themselves of the services of those who contemplate it. There have been, to be sure, exceptions to the rule—witness the remarkable Kurt Gerstein fighting the system of the concentration camps in an SS uniform he had voluntarily put on for that purpose. But such individuals have been exceedingly rare. Besides, they had to possess a moral fiber, clear mind, and courage bordering on abandon—all qualities which Weizsäcker was conspicuously lacking.

During his early career as minister to Oslo and then Bern, Weizsäcker appears, in his private letters and other writings, as a narrow-minded German nationalist, quite elated about the "moral uplift" Hitler provided to his people and contemptuous of the "provincial" Norwegians or Swiss who dared to think otherwise. As state secretary, he earned a dubious claim to distinction for his advocacy of "chemical" rather than "physical" means of subjugating Germany's eastern neighbors—the former method being presumably less likely to provoke a war, which he feared would result in a *finis Germaniae*.

Although Weizsäcker never faltered in this correct premonition, he kept hanging on—less, however, to promote the compromise peace he desired, than because of his refusal to face the fact of his impotence. At the Vatican, where, after mid-1943, he was in a unique position to explore the ways of shortening the war by feelers to the Allies, he hardly even tried. In October 1944, he did compose but apparently never dispatched a message to Roosevelt (p. 383), but this rambling discourse in bad English, mustering arguments in support of the thesis that Germany ought to be treated gently, was merely another pathetic document of its author's incorrigible ignorance *cum* arrogance.

All things considered, Weizsäcker comes out neither as a villain nor as a tragic hero; rather than indignation or compassion, his most private papers evoke mostly embarrassment. Ironically, the only impressive figure in the book is its editor: Professor Hill has written an able introductory essay and equipped the papers with a critical apparatus that can serve as a model of historical editing.

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