

BOOK REVIEWS/COMPTEs RENDUS

Jerzy Zdrada, *Jarosław Dąbrowski 1836-1871*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1973. 473 pp. 65 illustrations and one map.

The triple vivisection of Poland at the close of the eighteenth century merely changed the character of the "Polish question." From 1795 to the end of World War I the Poles would struggle, arms in hand, to regain their independence. For four generations, the Poles took part in most conspiratorial and revolutionary movements, and fought in practically all "international brigades" (*avant la lettre*) of contemporary Europe.

As Alfonse Lamartine, the head of the French Provisional Government in 1848, put it, the Poles were "a ferment of Europe." The liberal Lamartine did not differ much from the arch-conservative Metternich who expressed his opinion about the international role of the "Polish question" in the following words: "Polonism is only a formula, the sound of a word underneath which hides a revolution in its most glaring form: it is not a small part of a revolution, but a revolution itself. Polonism does not declare war on the monarchies which possess Polish territory: it declares war on all the common foundations which form the basis of society."

The Socialist movements of Russia, Austria and Germany were crowded with Poles. The Paris commune had well over 600 Poles among its soldiers and was led by two generals, Jarosław Dąbrowski and Walery Wróblewski, both of them veterans of the Polish revolutionary movement of the 1860s.

Jerry Zdrada, a former student of Professor Stefan Kieniewicz, has written a semi-scholarly, semi-popular biography of Dąbrowski and Walery Wróblewski, both of them veterans of the Polish revolutionary movement. Zdrada has traced Dąbrowski's career from his service as a Russian field artillery officer in the Caucasus, as a general staff officer in St. Petersburg and in Warsaw, through his conspiratorial activities in both cities, his imprisonment, his flight abroad, and the dramatic events of 1870-71 in France that made Dąbrowski one of the commanders of the Paris Commune's national guard. The biography does not end with Dąbrowski's heroic death at a Paris barricade, but deals also with the fate of his wife and three sons.

The book, probably an outgrowth of a Ph.D. thesis, is slightly overloaded with quotations, and it sins on the side of hero worship. Otherwise, it is a factual and readable presentation of one of the obscure yet significant figures that link Polish and West European histories. The book has sixty-five illustrations, a French summary, and a short but clear and quite adequate bibliographic essay at the end.

M. K. Dziewanowski

Boston University

Jan Steiner, *Ha-chakika neged ha-J'hudim vnishulam min ha-kalkala bm'dinat Slovakia* [*Anti-Jewish Legislation and Elimination of the Jews from the Economic Life of the Slovakian State*] (1939-1945), Tel Aviv: The Institute for Study of the Diaspora, Tel Aviv University, 1974. 209 pp.

The Slovak state, the Reich's first satellite, had well-developed anti-Jewish legislation. Jan Steiner, a lawyer by training and a research fellow of Tel Aviv University, has devoted a historical-juridical study to this legislation. He begins with an analysis of the socio-economic foundation of Slovak Jewry before World War II. That community, a transition between the developed Western and the traditional-type Eastern Jews, played an important role in Slovak retail trade, crafts, and the free professions. It was less conspicuous in industry and agriculture, and insignificant in banking.

Steiner's basic thesis is that, in addition to the traditional Slovak anti-Semitism and more recent local Nazi-style hostility, it was hunger for Jewish property which guided the action of the Slovak rulers. Identification of the Jew constituted the fundamental step of the anti-Jewish

legislation. In deviating from preceding writers on the topic, Steiner shows that the first Law of Definition, although based on religious faith, already put the overwhelming majority of the local Jews into the category of a proscribed minority. Indeed, he demonstrates racist undertones in this Law (of 18 April 1939) as well. The next definition, a part of the so-called "Jewish Code" (of 9 September 1941), had an unbridled racist basis. Steiner alleges that the Code, in its extent and thoroughness, was an exception even in the Nazi "New Europe." The law granted the head of the state (Father Jozef Tiso) the right to exempt Jews from provisions of the discriminatory legislation. Sympathizers of the Slovak state in the West habitually point to this provision, claiming that Tiso showed consideration for Jewish suffering. But now we know for the first time that Tiso only saved about 1.2 percent of the 89,000 local Jews and granted 1,111 full or partial exemptions from provisions of the discriminatory legislation (p. 39).

The author describes the process of "Aryanization" of the Jewish property in the various branches of the Slovak economy and the gradual pauperization of the Jews. He shows that the state's fathers were anxious to impress an image of legality on the process of robbery. Men close to the regime and ethnic Germans were the first to acquire the confiscated assets. Only 40 percent of Jewish land was distributed among the land-hungry peasants, however. The promised land reform, whether of Jewish or other land, was never carried out. In addition to the anti-Jewish legislation, Steiner identifies the institutions and some of the personalities involved in persecution of the Jews.

There are several shortcomings in the substance and form of this work. Steiner seems barely familiar with recent scholarship on the Slovak state. The reader is disturbed by occasionally emotional language and frequent adjectives, superlatives, and exclamation points. On the formal side, one misses an index and detailed footnoting. The author could have exposed the euphemistic vocabulary of the anti-Jewish law; on the other hand he has little to say about laws and legislators that favored the persecuted ones. Of considerable importance for the Hebrew reader is the descriptive list of anti-Jewish laws promulgated in Slovakia.

Steiner's book deserves to be published in a language understandable to the broad scholarly community.

Yeshayahu Jelinek

University of Haifa, Israel

Erich Schmied, *Das Staatsangehörigkeitsrecht der Tschechoslowakei*, 2nd ed. ("Sammlung geltender Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetze," Band 18), Frankfurt am Main: Alfred Metzner Verlag, 1974. 97 pp. DM 29. Paper.

During the last decade the Czechoslovak citizenship legislation has undergone considerable changes, justifying a new and up-to-date edition of a book first published in 1956, mainly as a consequence of the creation of separate Czech and Slovak citizenships. Unfortunately, the editor did not re-publish from the old volume those legal enactments which are still relevant so that the reader of the new edition frequently has to look up the original one. The explanatory notes supplied by Dr. Schmied do not provide answers to all questions, nor are they always correct. Hungary was forced by the peace treaty of 10 February 1947, to cede to Czechoslovakia the villages of Horvátjalfalu, Oroszvár, and Dunacsun (near Bratislava), but we are not told anywhere how the question concerning their inhabitants' citizenship has been settled. Schmied says that the Germans in the Protectorate became German citizens *ipso jure* by Hitler's Proclamation of 16 March 1939. Apart from the fact that Hitler referred only to the *volksdeutsch* inhabitants of the Protectorate, i.e., those who were recognized as Germans by the Nürnberg legislation, contrary to Hitler's decision, recognition of German citizenship regarding the persons concerned was made dependent on the fulfillment of certain conditions—and some Germans were thus enabled to escape from something they did not consider a privilege, but a degradation.