

THE RISE OF THE POLISH MONARCHY: PIAST POLAND IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE, 1320–1370. By *Paul W. Knoll*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1972. xi, 276 pp. \$11.00.

After publishing three brief articles on Poland under Władysław Łokietek and Casimir the Great, Professor Knoll, now chairman of the Department of History at the University of Southern California, has recently studied in a remarkable doctoral dissertation the policy of the last two Piast kings who succeeded, through the restoration of the Polish monarchy, in raising the nation's position in East Central Europe. In his introduction Knoll shows a genuine understanding of what he calls the "context of Polish history," including its past glories, and the achievements of Polish historiography old and new. The first two chapters deal with the reign of Władysław Łokietek and explain the background of his "Restauratio Regni" in 1320 and his cooperation during the next thirteen years with his son Casimir, whose much longer reign is treated in the remaining six chapters with well-justified admiration but without uncritical idealization.

Stressing that there was no break with the preceding period, the author is entirely right in explaining that Casimir's policy, which relied more on diplomacy than on the military means mainly used by his father, did not hesitate to prosecute wars when they served a just cause and promised success. Therefore, chapters 3 and 4 are an objective account of his peacemaking from his coronation in 1333 to the treaty of Kalisz, which after ten years of experience assumed that neither through alliance with Hungary nor through moral support by the papacy would it be possible to avoid formal renunciation of regaining all the territories occupied by the Teutonic Order; similarly, the sovereignty of the Bohemian Luxemburgs over most of the Silesian duchies had to be recognized a few years earlier. That Casimir never gave up the hope of revising both agreements is clear from the author's study of his diplomatic and military efforts during the remaining twenty-seven years of his reign.

The affairs in the East and the West are dealt with separately, the former receiving special attention because entirely new problems appeared there. They are discussed with objective use of the numerous works of Polish and non-Polish historians, whose views are confronted by the author—the most moderate interpretations having his preference. This is especially evident in the appendix, where the involved and controversial questions of Moldavia and Podolia are analyzed—providing an indispensable supplement to the description of Casimir's territorial gains in Ruthenia amid the rivalries with Lithuania and with rather inadequate Hungarian support. Also helpful are the three maps, the two simplified genealogical tables, the eighteen-page bibliography, and a good index. The last two chapters are the easiest for Western readers to follow. One describes the relations with the Teutonic Order and with the Luxemburg, Wittelsbach, and Habsburg dynasties until the congress of Cracow in 1364, Casimir's greatest triumph in international relations; the other chapter summarizes the end of the reign.

In the whole volume the inaccuracies are so few and insignificant that they do not deserve attention in a brief review. Only the oversight of two books is rather surprising. The author has rightly given much attention to the publications of Henryk Paszkiewicz, who emerged in the twenties as the leading authority on Casimir's eastern policy; but it has not been noticed that thirty years later the same scholar included in his sensational volume *The Origin of Russia* (London,

1954) a whole section on the Slavs in Lithuania and their relations with Poland before the treaty of Krewo. And though the young American professor who knows so many languages cannot be blamed for lacking Hungarian, it is regrettable that he did not use Bálint Hóman's standard work, available in Italian, on the Neapolitan Anjous in Hungary, 1290-1403 (Rome, 1938), where the policies of Charles Robert and his son Louis are treated exhaustively.

Professor Knoll will agree that the relations of Casimir the Great with his nephew and designated successor Louis the Great were more important than those with any other neighbor, and in the eloquent last paragraph of his book he anticipates that "some early clouds during the reign of Louis of Hungary [in Poland] cast passing shadows" on the "dawning of Poland's golden age"—as the author calls the reign of Casimir. Let us add that fortunately the Anjou's youngest daughter Jadwiga, who in turn succeeded him as "king" of Poland, repaired his mistakes and revived the heritage of the last Piast, her granduncle. Her story would be a sequel to the one that the author has presented to us so brilliantly.

OSCAR HALECKI

White Plains, New York

DAS SOZIALISTISCHE PARLAMENT POLENS. By *Siegfried Lammich*.

Abhandlungen des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, vol. 25. Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1971. 112 pp. DM 28.

This volume is almost entirely devoted to the description of the Polish parliament, the Sejm, in the period after 1957. It is a disappointing study, which unfortunately typifies the kind of research conducted today in many of the West European institutes interested in Soviet and East European affairs. It is purely descriptive, superficial, and concerned almost exclusively with the institutional and legal aspects of the Sejm. This is regrettable, since the Polish parliament, especially after 1957, has differed from similar bodies in Eastern Europe by not only including a fairly sizable representation of nonparty deputies but also by being relatively active in both the plenary sessions and the commissions. To be sure, the Sejm is still a far cry from the federal and republican assemblies in Yugoslavia, but it has been steadily gaining stature and influence in Poland, as evidenced by the growing publicity and exposure accorded to it by the mass media. This process is clearly part and parcel of the gradual liberalization of the Polish political life following Gomułka's ouster in December 1970.

The monograph was published in 1971 and therefore could not discuss the most recent events in Poland. However, the period before Gomułka's downfall was not totally sterile, and the Sejm did play a part in the first brief liberalization of the late 1950s. Some interesting lessons could have been learned from that experience, which was essentially repeated in the early 1970s, yet apparently it has escaped the author's attention. Based on the experience of the late 1950s and early 1970s one could argue that a Communist leadership bent on liberalization would find parliament a useful and convenient instrument to carry out its program, especially if the latter were to be given some additional authority and autonomy. Whether a legislative body would be ready and willing to assume the new role would depend on several factors: its composition, the "morale" of the deputies, and the strength of, and attachment to, parliamentary traditions.

A description of legal and institutional aspects of Communist parliaments,