This substantial and thorough volume is an important milestone in the history of the Habsburg monarchy in early modern times. Although scholarly interest in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Habsburg commonwealth has increased dramatically over the past two decades, leading to some remarkable reassessments of the period, and although a considerable literature has appeared on the subject in numerous languages, there is little doubt that Arno Strohmeyer’s book will establish itself as one of the new pillars of the field. The book is devoted to an analysis of the theory and practice of noble resistance to a royal absolutist agenda increasingly perceived as tyrannical in the Habsburg provinces of Upper and Lower Austria, and the author casts a wide and sophisticated analytical net.

Strohmeyer begins with a careful analysis of the kinds of arguments used by the noble estates of the two provinces to legitimate their rights of resistance to the crown. Placing these arguments in their context and reconstructing how they were understood in their time, he uncovers seven broad notions on which these estates tended to base their case. The first and most important argument was the assertion of contractual obligations inherent in the feudal relationship between ruler and nobility. Loyalty and obedience were in this view contingent on the sovereign’s respect of noble rights and privileges. This argument, in turn, tended to rely less on written contracts than on the assertion of precedent and an emphasis on custom and tradition. A third line of reasoning gave a constitutional twist to the notion of the “common good” by interpreting it as the right to have a voice in the decision-making process. Similarly, the view of society as a kind of patriarchal family conferred a right of resistance should reciprocal rights and privileges be disregarded by the father. The metaphor of the body added a further dimension to the notion that the head and body had to act in concert, but was used less frequently. The argument of self-defense tended to be employed only when the conflict acquired a military dimension. Ironically, least emphasis was placed on the notion of freedom of conscience, and theological arguments consequently played a decidedly secondary role. Finally, virtually no effort was made to have recourse to arguments drawn from Roman law. Thus, though the battle was in fact about religion, it was not fought with religious arguments. “The nobles,” Strohmeyer concludes, “preferred to go to the archives rather than reach for the Bible” (p. 449).

The bulk of the volume is then devoted to a detailed analysis of how these kinds of arguments were used, particularly at the critical moment of a sovereign’s accession to the throne. The three cases under discussion here are the respective negotiations over the oath of allegiance at the accession of Rudolph II in 1577–1578, Matthias in 1608–1609, and Ferdinand II in 1619–1620. The oath of allegiance was a vital precondition to the recognition of monarchical sovereignty and was required for its legitimization, the dynasty’s hereditary rights notwithstanding. It was given coercive power by the fact that that the cameral estates of the monarch were administered by the noble estates at each accession until the homage ceremony had been completed. Negotiations over the form of the allegiance and attendant coronation oath were frequently tense, and arguments about rights of resistance played a central role. Of course, Strohmeyer emphasizes that the old paradigm of a polarization between feudal estates and absolute monarchy has little validity in the Habsburg case, as even the much maligned Ferdinand II accepted the contractual character of sovereignty. Under debate were the nature of the social order and the relative competences of ruler and noble estates. The elasticity in the interpretation of these respective competences proved to be the dynamic factor in the process.

A significant conclusion in this study is the refutation of the traditional view of Lutheran docility in contrast to Calvinist social activism. The estates of Upper and Lower Austria were overwhelmingly Lutheran and began arguing for the right of resistance long before Calvinist thought on the subject penetrated the Habsburg Monarchy. Their assertions, based primarily on arguments about feudal contract and tradition, owed very little to Calvinist writings on the subject. Throughout, there was no trace of any putative inherent Lutheran disposition to submission and obedience. As the seventeenth century wore on, however, many of the nobility’s arguments lost their potency, primarily because the Habsburgs began holding the homage ceremony for the successor to the throne in the lifetime of the ruling prince. In this way the initiative increasingly passed to the dynasty.

A weighty and exhaustive tome in the best tradition of German-language scholarship, this volume is an essential contribution to a growing literature and deserves serious attention well beyond the circle of early modern Habsburgists.

**Reviews of Books**

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Deborah R. Coen’s book provides a sweeping panorama of Viennese liberal culture in the nineteenth century by reconstructing the history of three generations of its leading scientific family, the Exners. Franz S. Exner, the founder of the dynasty, achieved prominence in the 1830s and 1840s as a liberal philosopher and educational reformer responsible for creating the blueprint for modernizing and secularizing the monarchy’s higher education system. Exner’s educational reforms, which were put into effect after 1848, were based on the conviction that all knowledge had to be grounded on probabilistic reasoning and directed toward the cultivation of ethical individualism. Rejecting both determinism and skepticism, Exner’s probabilistic liberalism, Coen argues, was peculiarly suited to the needs of Habsburg politics, which had to distinguish itself from the dogmatisms of clerical conservatism on
the Right and the skepticism of socialist radicalism on the Left. Although Franz Exner died early, two generations of descendants carried on his philosophic legacy by elaborating the implications of relativistic reason in disciplines as varied as physics, neurology, psychology, jurisprudence, optics, and art. The story of this remarkable family, which began in the 1840s with the struggle against religious dogmatism and political reaction, came to an end in the late 1930s with Adolf Hitler's invasion of Austria and the emigration or collaboration of family members.

Although the fate of the Exner family provides the general frame for this study, it is far from a straightforward family biography. Coen is a methodologically and theoretically self-conscious historian who addresses two distinct audiences and problems in this book: historians of science, concerned with the ways scientific knowledge is generated and diffused; and historians of culture, interested in Vienna as a hotbed of cultural innovation at the turn of the century. In her role as historian of science, Coen challenges traditional approaches that have configured the scientific enterprise either as a public discourse divested of all personal components, or as an act of individual genius independent of all cultural contexts. Rejecting such polarized visions, Coen places the realm of domesticity at the center of her story, arguing that it was through the mediation of concrete emotional ties and personal relationships that the creative task of science was carried forward. In the case of the Exners, this domestic space that linked private and public and made possible a synthesis between science and emotional life was symbolized by Brunnwinkl, the Exner's summer home outside of Salzburg, where the extended Exner clan gathered every summer for over sixty years. Brunnwinkl assumes in Coen's narrative a central symbolic role as the utopian embodiment of Austrian liberal values, where scientific, artistic, political, and personal pursuits were unified under the umbrella of probabilistic reason and humanistic cultivation.

Coen's vision of Brunnwinkl as the emblem of Austrian liberal culture raises questions not only for historians of science, but also for general cultural historians interested in the relationship between liberal politics and modernism. Coen is clearly indebted to Carl E. Schorske in her conceptualization of this relationship, but she also challenges Schorske in several ways. Unlike Schorske, Coen argues that Viennese liberal culture needs to be distinguished from general European liberalism in that it was based on the principle of uncertainty and probability rather than causality and determinism. Moreover, she rejects Schorske's well-known thesis that Austrian liberalism was superseded by a modernist culture of introversion and subjectivity that retreated from the public realm of rational politics. She argues instead that bourgeois domesticity lay at the heart of enlightened Viennese culture, in which modernism and liberalism constituted continuous, rather than antagonistic, cultural forces. As she puts it, "the cultivation of the domestic sphere was not a retreat from politics but a precondition of liberal identity" (p. 90).

Despite these differences, Coen shares a great deal with Schorske's celebrated vision of Viennese liberalism. Like her distinguished predecessor, Coen also paints a deeply elegiac picture of liberal culture, whose idealized self-presentations she uncritically accepts and celebrates. Yet Coen's account also hints at internal tensions between the professed ideals and the actual practices of Austrian liberals like the Exners. Their particular brand of universalism and rationality appears particularly limited when juxtaposed to that of their Victorian contemporary, John Stuart Mill, with whom they liked to compare themselves. Unlike Mill, the Exners feared modernity and consistently opposed developments such as women's rights and modernist culture, including Sigmund Freud's theories of hysteria. By the first decade of the twentieth century, they had retreated into a snobbish insularity that was tinged with social antisemitism and permeated by contempt for democracy and modernization. Coen briefly admits in her conclusion that the particular configuration of public and private virtues characteristic of Austrian liberalism had always depended on a social geography that was essentially conservative and intricately tied to the apparatus of the state. Yet she does not pursue this train of thought very far and seems to prefer the idyllic version of the Austrian liberal story. Despite this lack of tough-mindedness, however, Coen has written a lucid and erudite account of a complex cultural phenomenon that will be of use to both historians of science and students of Austrian culture.

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MARK CORNWALL and R. J. W. EVANS, editors. Czecho-
lovakia in a Nationalist and Fascist Europe 1918–1948.
(Proceedings of the British Academy, number 140.)
New York: Oxford University Press, for The British

This edited volume of thirteen essays stems from a 2002 conference organized by the Forum of British, Czech, and Slovak Historians. As with most such works, the book does not center on a single historical problem or debate. Themes related to Czechoslovak-British relations, nationalism, and fascism (as well as radical Right politics more broadly) make frequent appearances, but none of these themes is sustained. To its great credit, however, the volume crosses chronological lines to encompass three tumultuous decades that began with the creation of Czechoslovakia and ended with the communist seizure of power. This periodization, and the talents of the individual authors, provide a number of new insights. Together, the essays reflect the rich diversity of Czechoslovak, Bohemian, and Slovak studies today.

Indeed, many of the authors wisely extended their scope beyond the period from 1918 to 1948. In the 1880s, editor Mark Cornwall writes, Bohemian Ger-