

them to an opposite path from the Tsankovites. The categorical definitions by which scholars impose pan-European ideologies on individual societies are in the final analysis cognitive devices and cannot be assumed without qualification to be applicable in every aspect.

In summation, while there is room for discussion and disagreement with some of Oren's conclusions, analyses, and interpretations of the documents, there is no doubt that *Bulgarian Communism* will take its rightful place as a standard treatise on the subject matter.

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Alan Cassels, *Mussolini's Early Diplomacy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1970. Pp. 425.

In the past, students of European diplomacy have usually examined the question of Fascist foreign policy within the context of the tumultuous events of the thirties. The subjugation of Ethiopia, the intervention in the Spanish Civil War, and the formalization of the Rome-Berlin axis seemed to have identified the nature of Italian policy. The earlier era of Fascist diplomacy remained a neglected period of uncertain research. Now Alan Cassels has sought to illuminate this relatively unknown chapter of diplomatic history and the result is a fine analysis of Italian diplomacy as well as an insightful commentary on the hopes and frustrations of the post-Versailles diplomatic scene.

Cassels divides the early years of Fascist foreign policy into four phases. In the first period, from Mussolini's ascension to power until the spring of 1923, diplomatic interest focused on the issues stemming from the termination of the First World War, especially the negotiation of a peace treaty with Turkey and the amelioration of the Franco-German reparations question. During this period the career diplomats of the Palazzo della Consulta exerted an important influence over Mussolini who was still a neophyte in world affairs. In the second period beginning in the summer of 1923 and lasting about a year, Il Duce began to assert his personal control over Italian foreign policy. This short period witnessed the deliberate instigation of crises over Corfu and Fiume and the elaboration of schemes for Italian penetration of Asia Minor. The assass-

sination of the opposition deputy Giacomo Matteotti in June, 1924 temporarily dampened Mussolini's ambitions and marked the beginning of the third phase of Italian policy. In an attempt to improve Italy's image Mussolini pursued more moderate policies and made conciliatory overtures to Britain and France. By 1925 Mussolini had recovered his confidence and reasserted his control over Italian foreign affairs. The appointment of Dino Grandi, a confidant of Il Duce, as undersecretary for foreign affairs marked the final ascendancy of Mussolini's personal control over the direction of Italian policy.

Although the treatment of the domestic influences on Italian foreign policy is sketchy, the author ably describes the international setting of European diplomacy in the twenties. The investigation of the ideological nature of Italian diplomacy is of special interest. The broad appeal of nationalist-revisionist-authoritarian claims fixed the environment of European diplomacy. The author might have made more of Mussolini's attempts to capitalize on this sentiment to assert and defend his policies. The description of Mussolini's attempt to export Fascist doctrine around the Mediterranean and the Western Hemisphere and to foster a personal affinity with British elites are but two strands of this question.

The author's major contribution remains his analysis of Mussolini's diplomacy in terms of continuity and evolution. He effectively refutes the traditional interpretations which view this diplomacy in terms of two contrasting periods; a decade of moderation followed by a tempestuous period of foreign adventures. Cassels demonstrates that Italian activity in the twenties foreshadowed the future crises of the thirties. The occupation of Corfu the subsequent controversy over Fiume, the early overtures to reactionary-nationalist elements in Germany and a restless preoccupation with Africa, all suggested the future evolution of Italian policy: a policy marked by increasing political economic and cultural expansionism and dominated by the ambition and vision of a single man.

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