

Without justifying his interest in his field, Gilfond's short presentation is focused on the story of that intrigue, the double-dealing, the struggle for power among the European nations which preceded World War I; it is also the story of the Black Hand, its organization, its purpose, the manner in which it recruited and trained its executioners, the story of those assassinations and how these schoolboys (most of them anyhow) perpetrated the most dramatic political murders in history.

Strictly speaking, Gilfond tells us nothing new whatever, but can claim the distinction of having written the most readable libretto on the Sarajevo "incident". There is no bibliography and no Index. But those who like to read history in the very entertaining presentation, without academic paraphernalia, will enjoy this small publication, and especially since the problem of assassination and terrorism is now dominating the contemporary headlines and certifying to the fact that modern violence is nothing else but the continuation of modern history—and with the roots which can be found throughout mankind's history.

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Antony Polonsky, *The Little Dictators: The History of Eastern Europe, Since 1918*, Boston, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975, pp. xii+212.

Adding another publication to the growing number of recent books on Central-Eastern-Balkan Europe, Polonsky obviously has probably justified his presentation by popularizing the histories of that region since World War I. He traces the history of Poland, Hungary, Austria, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, stressing the economic and social problems of these nations and the question of national minorities.

Although Polonsky's enthusiasm for evoking the dizzyingly diverse materials on his subject deserves our respect, he has given us a book whose virtues are merely incidental, while the disappointments are also evident. In the first place, his book's title is somewhat misleading, since Czechoslovakia had no dictators, and that country's leaders, Drs. Masaryk and Benes were really "super-democrats". (Fortunately, Polonsky has tried to salvage the problem by titling Chapter 6 as "The Czechoslovak Exception". But what is even worse, this chapter also covers Bulgaria (2 pages), Greece (2 pages), Albania (1½ page), and Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland—all in 6 pages. While these former countries cover pp. 107-115, the story of Czechoslovakia begins only on p. 114).

"Suggestions for Further Reading" (pp. 194-205) is also not quite reliable. His statement about the reviewer's *Contemporary Roumania and Her Problems* (1932) indicates that the book "does not go past the 1920s"—although it is a systematic presentation of detailed political and economic events up to 1931. Or, on p. 203, we read: "On the attempt to create a Greek Empire in Asia Minor, A.A. Dallas, *Greece's Anatolian Venture and After* (London,

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rajevo: Design and accident", *Journal of Central European Affairs*, Vol. XXI, 2, July, 1961, pp. 165-175; Robert William Seton-Watson, *Sarajevo, A Study in the Origins of the Great War*, H. Fertig, New York, 1973 (Originally, 1926), bibliography, pp. 293-298; Roberta Strauss, *Feuerlicht, The Desperate Act: The Assassination of Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo*, McCraw-Hill, New York, 1968; Lewis S. Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations: The Character and Significance of Student Movements*, Basic Books, New York, 1970, Chapter 3, "Gavrilo Princip: The Bosnian Student Movements Blindly Provokes the First World War", pp. 76-87; etc.

1937): actually, it is "A.A. Pallis" who is the author of this work. One of the best studies of the region, covering much more comprehensively this very field, is not noted: Alan Palmer, *The Lands Between: A History of East-Central Europe Since the Congress of Vienna* (Macmillan, 1970).

In general, this publication is in no sense a penetrating work of academic significance, although it provides a readable prelude to its subject. As a historical contribution it is interesting but indistinguished.

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Max Gallo, *Mussolini's Italy: Twenty Years of the Fascist Era*, translation of *L'Italie de Mussolini* by Charles Lam Markmann, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1973, pp. xii+452.

Fascist Italy has a remarkably small literature in comparison with the mass of material on the Third Reich. One reason is that the major elements in the tragicomic history of the long fascist dictatorship have been well known for many years. This general and straightforward narrative by Professor Gallo of the University of Nice offers additional details but no surprises. The author shows clearly how the regime rested upon vanity and opportunism, functioned through confusion and corruption, and temporarily concealed its real nature behind pretentious claims and pompous display. Yet a weakness of this book is that it too often includes rather trivial or anecdotal material while it neglects detailed discussion and analysis of significant questions.

Readers interested in Italian foreign relations will be particularly disappointed by Gallo's limited treatment. His emphasis on chronological development and domestic issues prevents any full explanations of international problems. But in Chapter 13 he does make it clear that no planned program, no consistent policy, no capable and experienced leadership guided Italy's foreign affairs. Mussolini was soon trying only to keep up with Hitler. The whole move into the Balkans is shown in this way. Albania is described as compensation for Austria and Czechoslovakia; Greece was to "restore the balance" after Germany occupied Romania. Fearing some of his military commanders would object to his continuing aggressiveness, Mussolini did not forewarn them but supposedly vowed to Ciano, "I will resign my Italian nationality if anyone makes any fuss about fighting Greeks". Gallo's account has little new on that tragic campaign (pp. 320-326) or the subsequent total collapse of Italy. But he presents a valuable picture of a regime where personal vanity and political miscalculations had become disastrously routine under "a man who was drunk on power and who played with its appurtenances as if he were a child whose dream had come true" (p. viii).

There are a number of points on which the book must be criticized. The author's focus on Mussolini is at times misleading. His interpretation is at its best when he places Mussolini in the domestic milieu that created and sustained fascism. When he deals with international questions, however, his presentation is much too simple. Because of the almost total lack of footnotes and bibliography it is impossible to determine the sources of various quotations and assertions. Nor is the translation always smooth and free from misprints. For all these reasons this new work does not replace the respected older studies. But like another recent book on the same subject, Denis Mack Smith's *Mussolini's Roman Empire*, it should serve the more general reader quite well.

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