

“THE BALKANS IN TRANSITION”

A REVIEW ARTICLE

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The conference is now as much a part of American academic life as the reports of learned societies and the articles in scholarly journals. While it may be true that such meetings encourage the exchange of ideas, the appearance of this volume of essays, the end-product of a conference held in June 1960 at the Berkeley campus of the University of California, suggests a further truth: publication in book form of the papers of the conference is usually a mistake. Unity and cohesiveness, the adherence to a guiding principle, are difficult objectives even for a single author. The problem is enormously compounded when thirteen papers, of mixed quality and diverse outlook, are assembled. Only systematic discussions in advance might provide guidelines to which the authors agree; in practice, this task usually falls to the editor.

In this case, the editors urge us to break with the time-honored study of individual Balkan nations or regions, and instead consider the peninsula as an entity with a common heritage of Ottoman rule, nation-building during the 19th and early 20th centuries, and the drive for political, economic, and social modernity in recent decades. The essays can therefore be placed in several categories: the Ottoman legacy; the impact of the West and of Russia; the role of historiography, and of Greek and Slavic literature on the growth of nationalism; economic development; the social basis and tone of Balkan politics; and the transformation wrought by Communism.

Huey Louis Kostanick opens, in “The Geopolitics of the Balkans” (pp. 1-55), an essay heavily laden with maps, ethnic statistics, and data, but also with substantial errors of fact, interpretation, and grammar. These might be excused were it not for the peculiar viewpoint which Kostanick adopts. Instead of providing a backdrop for succeeding essays by discussing the changes in agricultural productivity, natural resources, transportation, and population during the past century or more, he chooses to comment on various “problem areas,” such as Macedonia, Cyprus, Kosovo, and Trieste. In doing so, he adds nothing new to the detailed studies already available,

and, furthermore, contradicts the avowed concern of the editors for historical transition and development by treating his subject in narrowly contemporary terms. His essay therefore is reminiscent of a briefing report for a visiting government official, complete with predictions of what the future may bring.

The question of Ottoman influence in the Balkans has often roused strong, even violent, feelings among scholars of all nations. It is therefore refreshing to find Stanford Shaw, in "The Ottoman View of the Balkans" (pp. 56-80), offer a dispassionate yet highly imaginative analysis of the internal dynamics of Ottoman power. He begins slowly, with a clear, but over-long and pedantic (is it really necessary to use obscure Turkish terms when English approximations are available?) description of the Ottoman socio-governmental structure as it existed at its zenith in the 16th century. His interpretation is simple, logical, and convincing: the Ottomans, viewing the various social and religious groups in their empire solely in terms of the money and manpower which could be extracted from each, therefore had no special attitude regarding the "Balkan" peoples, and, in fact, used the term only in its geographical sense. We ask, however: did the Ottoman view change between, say, 1453, and their departure from the Balkans in 1913? If so, why? And, if so, what did the new view become?

In a bold imaginative digression, Shaw analyzes the conflict between the old Turkish noble families, who gained in power through the acquisition of large Balkan estates during the Ottoman conquests of the 14th and 15th centuries, and the growing *devshirme* slave class, whom the sultans built up in an attempt to counter the rise of this free Turkish nobility. The resulting equilibrium left the sultan's power quite unchecked. Shaw argues that the equilibrium began to crumble in the late 15th century and after through the introduction of gunpowder, muskets and cannon, the consequent obsolescence of the cavalry levies provided by the nobility, and the rise to military primacy of well-trained janissary infantry, recruited from the *devshirme* class, maintained in permanent units whose leaders gained a monopoly over all major military and political offices. The *devshirme* class consolidated its power by acquiring great estates, especially in the Balkans, and often at the expense of the old Turkish nobility.

This thesis must hereafter receive serious consideration (along with such possibilities as the effects of inflation on the Ottoman fiscal system, and of logistical and strategic difficulties on the advance of Ottoman armies into Central Europe and also Persia) by anyone trying to understand the Ottoman crisis of the 16th century. Shaw's concern with changing military technology also suggests analogies for Eastern Europe and Russia, where a connection may exist between the advent of gunpowder weapons, the attendant

decline in the military effectiveness of the traditional peasant militia, and the growth of serfdom.

But does Shaw's analysis, however intriguing, however elegant, belong in a work on the Balkans since the 18th century? Does it even square with his own presumed interest in the Ottoman *view* of the Balkans? His infrequent references to the Balkans seem highly forced, even when the opportunity exists for extended treatment. Thus his concluding remarks, on the Turkish reformers of the 19th century and the revolutionaries of 1908, deal with their general ideas on reform, barely mentioning their anxiety lest all of the Balkans, with its substantial Moslem population, be lost to the empire. Should this occur, Constantinople and even Anatolia itself might be threatened, as the Graeco-Turkish war of 1919-1922 proved. Moreover, all hope of spreading Islam by the sword, the *ghazi* tradition which provided the ideological *raison d' être* for the sultan's authority, would be gone, and with it, the rationale for retaining the Arab provinces. Shaw also overlooks the revolutionary effect which the Western idea of sovereignty, of territorial inviolability, had on the Ottoman reformers, whose nationalistic response to the territorial ambitions of the Balkan states had not been felt by their ancestors; Shaw's essay thus stops precisely where it should begin. Can the undeniable brilliance of his ideas regarding the Ottoman governmental system at its peak compensate for his failure to conform to the theme of this book?

The question of Ottoman influence is pursued more directly by Wayne Vucinich in "Some Aspects of the Ottoman Legacy" (pp. 81-114). Unlike Shaw, whose concern with the Balkans is peripheral, Vucinich probes into the effects of Ottoman rule on the socio-political development, the attitudes, customs, food, clothing, artifacts, art, literature, music, language, and religious life of the Balkan peoples. His tone is balanced and moderate; nevertheless, his thesis adheres to the mainstream of Balkan historiography by treating the Ottoman conquest as a great disaster which forced the Balkan nations off the path followed by Western Europe and thus retarded their development by at least four centuries. This thesis not only side-steps the task of explaining the relatively easy victory of the Turkish armies (which were not overwhelming in numbers), but, above all, entails retroactive predictions regarding the "inevitable" consummation of certain trends "if only" events had not interfered; this sort of thinking has much in common with prophecy, but little with historical study.

Vucinich develops his theme by arguing that the Ottoman reliance on indirect rule through the village, the tribe, the clan, the extended family and, above all, the *millet*, led to the revival of such particularistic institutions among the Balkan Christians after strong, centralized government had been

achieved under the medieval Serbian and Bulgarian empires. And this revival vastly complicated the building of a state structure after the Ottomans were evicted. His argument thus rests implicitly on a firm belief in the rationalistic, centralized state, and he ignores the well-documented contention that the absence of a centralized bureaucracy under Ottoman rule gave the Balkan villagers more local autonomy (albeit at the cost of material progress) than they enjoyed before or since.

Vucinich continues his assault by linking Ottoman rule with the development among the Balkan peoples of various negative personality characteristics: laziness, hedonism, and fatalism; submissiveness and suspiciousness regarding authority, combined with evasiveness and subterfuge; peasant antagonism toward the city; and a low status for women and children. These generalizations, however irritating in their superficiality (were the Rumanian or Bulgarian peasants "lazy"? Were the Greek *klepths*, the Serbian *hajduks*, or the Albanian *Gheg* tribesmen "submissive" to authority?) are less objectionable than his unhesitating attribution of these traits to the effects of Ottoman rule. In reality, these characteristics often typify peasant behavior in the great, traditional, civilizations of the ancient and medieval Near East, Far East, and Latin America, where neither the Turk nor, often, any other foreign conqueror ever trod. In a subsistence economy, lacking urban markets and efficient transportation systems, leisure (i.e., "laziness") becomes, *faute de mieux*, an approved pattern of behavior. So does fatalism, and its frequent companion, hedonism, in a society where man has few defenses against disease and famine. Antagonism toward the city, and toward the government and merchants who operated there, was no less true of Tsarist Russia, 19th century Mexico, and the Populist movement of the American Midwest than it was of the Balkans, and has its roots, not in habits acquired under foreign conquest, but in the conflict between the dynamic, modernizing, individualistic values of the townsmen and the traditional, familial beliefs of the peasantry. Respect for the individual personality, and especially for women and children, has never been great in the traditional, patriarchal societies; the veil and the harem, evidence of this disrespect, were unknown to the nomadic Turkish tribes, but were developed under the dual impact of Byzantine and orthodox Muslim culture.

There can be no disagreement (although some nationalistic historians would demur) with Vucinich's conclusion that several centuries of contact between the Balkan peoples and the Ottoman Turks "helped to create a new civilization" (p. 85). Unfortunately, his essay provides little help in understanding the extent or the nature of the Ottoman contribution to it.

Vucinich's condemnation of Ottoman influence is carried still farther

by George G. Arnakis, in "The Role of Religion in the Development of Balkan Nationalism" (pp. 115-144). In a discussion primarily devoted to the Eastern Orthodox Church, he nevertheless manages to include attacks more appropriate to political journalism than to scholarship. For example, Arnakis' statement that the Balkan Christians lived in constant fear lest their women be snatched for the harem contains a kernel, but only a kernel, of truth. In actuality, until the 16th century, most harem women were European prisoners of war; afterward, many were bought from the Muslim and also the Christian slave-dealers of the Caucasus. To argue that the purpose of the *devshirme* and the harem lay in "improving the human stock of the 'master race' and depleting the biological resources of the Christian peoples..." (p. 132) imputes the racist thinking of the Nazi era to the 15th century Ottomans; this sort of reasoning makes sound polemicizing but poor history.

Arnakis' thesis shows a similar lack of balance and moderation. He argues that the Ottoman conquest exposed the Balkan nations to a serious danger of Islamization and thus of "Turkification," and that only the Orthodox Church served as a "preserver of [their] nationality" (p. 126) against both Islam and the continual onslaughts of Western Catholicism and Protestantism. The collaboration of the Church with the sultans was therefore, he tacitly suggests, perfectly justifiable in order to accomplish this great mission. As to clerical corruption, final responsibility again falls to the Ottoman, as does blame for the suppression of the Slavic churches of Ohrid and Peć in the 14th century, and once again in the 18th century. Would a Yugoslav or Bulgarian, or even a Western, historian (whom Arnakis dismisses on p. 117 as "not always [being] able to penetrate into the character of Balkan Christianity") agree?

Arnakis does not test his views on the role of the Church as a "preserver of nationality" by examining Church policy during the national revolutions of the 19th century. He totally ignores the ambivalent attitude of the Orthodox hierarchy toward the Greek War of Independence, or its share in the responsibility for the fighting in Macedonia after 1893. Instead, Arnakis decries the break-up of Orthodox universalism without showing the slightest awareness that the intellectual leaders of the Balkan revolutions cared little about religion or the grandeur of medieval Christendom but much about building new, rationalistic, secular states on the Western model. Indeed, it might be argued that, while collaboration with the Turk enabled the Church to preserve the Byzantine heritage, the attendant loss of morale and intellectual vigor left it defenseless against the Western ideas which ultimately undermined this very heritage.

Although Shaw, Vucinich, and Arnakis all deal with aspects of the Ottoman period, their essays do not add up to a solid, coherent picture of traditional (the term is never even defined) Balkan society. The example they offer is hardly encouraging.

The influence of ideas and forces from the surrounding European and Russian world is widely seen as a key factor in the vast changes sweeping the Balkans since the 19th century. In his essay on "Russia and the Modernization of the Balkans" (pp. 145-183), Cyril Black presents a shrewd analysis of the military and diplomatic features of Russian influence, but falters somewhat in his handling of its intellectual aspects. For it is clear that Western ideas and innovations were much more attractive than those of Russia, and that while Russia's military power could partially redress the balance, her defeat in the Crimean War and at the Congress of Berlin, clearly exposed her own weaknesses. Black suggests that Russian power in the Balkans during 1815-1856 was doubly assured by her leadership of the conservative dynasties which then dominated all Europe east of the Rhine. The social and political changes signified by German unification and the weakening of the Habsburg Empire undermined this position, however, as (it could be added) did the relative decline of Russian military capacity vis-à-vis the industrialized European powers. In this reduction of Russian power during 1856-1917, Black sees the basic cause for such apparent incongruities as her willingness to back even liberal Balkan governments when Russian national interests were at stake; prior to 1878, and especially to 1856, Russia had felt free to support groups (such as the Rumanian boyars and the followers of Capodistrias in Greece) which tried to combine political and social conservatism with the goal of national independence.

Black's examination of the Russian intellectual contribution is less successful, however. Although he clearly regards the liberal and socialist segments (which predominated from the mid-nineteenth century onward) of this contribution as essentially a Russian variation on a Western theme (see p. 179) and thus views Russian schools and books less as a source of fresh ideas than as a conveyor belt for those of the West, Black occasionally tries to accommodate the conflicting thesis that, somehow, Russia was an intellectual center in its own right. He therefore over-emphasizes the importance of the fleeting contacts between the Decembrists and the Philike Hetaeria, as well as that between socialists in the Balkans and their Russian counterparts. In actuality, the Philike Hetaeria was careful to avoid any involvement in Russian politics since it hoped for the backing of the Russian government, however reactionary it might be, against Ottoman Turkey. The Balkan socialists, moreover, looked westward, to the industrialized states of Europe, for the

signal of revolution, and argued that Russia was incorrigibly backward, lacking the political attributes—a constitution, parliamentary government, and at least limited suffrage—which even the Balkan states possessed. Only the Balkan populists, who rejected modernity and industrialization, found much to attract them in Russia, but, like the Slavophiles before them, they were deeply repelled by the autocracy and its bureaucratic lieutenants.

The situation changed drastically after 1917, however, as Russia leaped suddenly from backwardness to the aggressive modernity symbolized by social engineering, an avowedly classless society, and equality for its nationalities. Black underestimates the attraction which the new Russia had for many Balkan intellectuals and leaders of the minority groups and thus fails to make explicit a theme underlying his entire essay: while Western ideas proved themselves through the extraordinary accomplishments of the Western nations in the 19th century, the allure of Russian thought was largely negated by Russia's status as an autocratic state, riven by internal discontent, and clearly inferior in military and economic power to the European states. Communism, by providing both the moral imperative and the practical formula which enabled Russia to "end" this disparity, displayed in the Balkans an attraction which has subsequently been revealed in other underdeveloped areas.

L.S. Stavrianos' treatment of "The Influence of the West on the Balkans" (pp. 184-226), follows closely the themes already enunciated in his masterful survey, *The Balkans Since 1453* (1958). As in that study, he draws on sources which range in variety from Toynbee and the autobiography of Dositej Obradović to *The New York Times*, to sketch a picture extending in time from 1203 to 1959, and in space from the Balkans to British India and the main street of La Paz, Bolivia. In so doing, he contends that the transformation of Balkan society during the last century or more is not unique, but an early step in a process which is leading all the regions of the globe toward "a cosmopolitan or supra-national world civilization based on a single scientific value system." (p. 221).

Stavrianos finds the roots of this transformation far before the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century or the accompanying growth in Western military power. He argues that the base of the Balkan Orthodox world was being eroded by the interlocking commercial, scientific, and political revolutions which swept Western Europe during the 16th-18th centuries. As European commercial activity spread through the world, European manufactured goods and colonial products entered the Balkans in exchange for cotton and maize. As a result, there developed in the 18th century Balkans a commercial bourgeoisie of merchants and mariners, who in turn rejected the beliefs

and attitudes of a traditional society from which their economic activity set them apart, and adopted instead the ideas of the scientific and political revolutions in the West—secular, rationalistic thinking, individual self-fulfillment, and civil and political rights for the nation and the individual. While the growth of a native bourgeoisie is obviously the keystone in Stavrianos' argument, he does not ignore such other factors as the expansion of the *chiflik* landholding system, the consequent spread of disaffection among the peasantry and therefore the increase in banditry, and, finally, the reverberations of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars; all helped prepare the ground for the Balkan revolutions of the early 19th century.

Although there can be little doubt regarding the validity of Stavrianos' thesis, he overstates and oversimplifies his case. Certainly, many Balkan merchants accepted European ideas, but the prime significance of their interest lay in the financial and psychological support which they lent the new, secular intellectuals, men such as Korais and Obradović. Only the intellectuals, possessing the self-esteem and prestige gained by a concern with values, beliefs and the great questions of human existence, were equipped to adapt Western theory to Balkan practice, to spread their ideas among the populace, and to do battle with the traditional religio-intellectual hierarchy. Stavrianos, moreover, oversimplifies by treating the ideology of the Enlightenment as a single current. In actuality, profound differences existed between the rational, tolerant skepticism of Voltaire, and the muscular, populist democracy of Rousseau, as the conflict between enlightened despotism and mass revolution suggests; similar contests occurred between the forces of order and property, and those of political and social egalitarianism after independence was achieved in Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria.

The concern which Stavrianos shows for the institutional and especially the socio-economic aspects of Western influence increases as he describes the developments which marked the 19th and 20th centuries—emigration, railroad building, and the growth of population, of a market economy, of public and private indebtedness, of industrialization, and of Western investments. These developments, he argues, have utterly transformed, not only the obvious, physical aspects of traditional Balkan society, but its values and practices as well, which have been replaced by Western ideals. This also may be exaggerated. New values and practices rarely entirely supplant the old; both sets often continue to exist in an illogical, inconsistent, and entirely human melange. It is in the daily aspects of human existence—in attitudes toward work, authority, and leisure, toward government and the role of the citizen, in family life, child rearing, and kinship structures, and in religious and moral beliefs—that the beliefs of Balkan society remained most firmly

rooted in the past. To suggest, as Stavrianos does, that these beliefs are definitely being replaced by those appropriated to a modernizing society is to confuse the superficial, physical aspects of modernity with its fundamental spirit.

Despite these objections, Stavrianos deserves the fullest credit for the breadth of outlook which leads him to view his subject within a global context; how many specialists on the Balkans can do the same?

The values, beliefs, and ideas of a society are often both created and reflected in its literature. No one reading C.A. Trypanis' "Greek Literature Since the Fall of Constantinople in 1453" (pp. 227-257) would, however, find such information here, although there are many authors listed, with capsule accounts of their lives, and titles of their principal works. Only incidentally does Trypanis discuss the changing patterns of life in modern Greece as mirrored by its literature, or present the ideas of the modern, secular Greek intelligentsia as revealed in the books they have written. "Historical Studies in the Balkans in Modern Times" (placed, for some inexplicable reason, on pp. 420-438, at the very end of the volume), by George C. Soulis, is another survey, obscuring the intellectual passions of the period 1850-1939 with a tedious presentation of the names and dates of the leading Balkan historians and historical institutions. Few questions are asked or issues raised, and little effort is made to analyze or investigate. Only a handful of rather obvious generalizations are offered: research in the period of Ottoman rule has lagged far behind study of the years since independence and, above all, of the medieval and Byzantine era; there have been few broad syntheses and a great many monographs; most Balkan historians have concentrated on their own national history, viewing regional problems in essentially national terms; many have involved themselves in political and other non-academic tasks; and, most obvious of all, Balkan historians have been "susceptible in varying degrees" to national rivalries. A reading of this essay fully corroborates J. H. Plumb's denunciation of the timidity of the academic historian, who "once a human being enters his field of vision slips away in fright."

Richer fare is fortunately offered by Albert Lord in "Nationalism and the Muses in Balkan Slavic Literature in the Modern Period" (pp. 258-296). Even here there are difficulties, primarily in organization, so that ideas which show a logical connection are sometimes separated by a dozen or more paragraphs. Nevertheless, Lord's thesis is clear. In the progression from the nationalistic folk poetry of the early 19th century to the novels of social criticism found before World War I and, more recently, to prose which moves parallel to Western models by showing a deep interest in experimental forms and objectives, he finds evidence that South Slavic literature has shed the

chrysalis of parochialism and is ready to take its place in the mainstream of European literature.

Lord suggested that the starting point on this long road was the writing of national histories by such men as Paisii in Bulgaria and Rajić in Serbia. Then followed the development of a native literary language, the establishment of nationalistic periodicals, and the rise of interest among the intelligentsia in their folk literature.

While this blueprint is generally acceptable, it needs considerable refinement and amendment to be really useful. For example, it is doubtful if the first, rather rudimentary, histories by Paisii, Rajić, and others were as significant as Lord suggests. Their circulation was extremely limited, and only later, as the 19th century wore on, and rivalry developed among the various subject nations, were these works trotted out to bolster conflicting claims regarding the intellectual accomplishments of their ancestors. Lord does mention the ferment among the Balkan intellectuals in the European and Russian cities on the Balkan periphery, but barely touches this theme. In reality, these intellectual circles were highly significant, since their members could not only speak and write without fear of Ottoman interference but, above all, gained a heightened awareness of their national heritage and identity through contact with peoples more advanced than themselves. Especially in the Habsburg lands, encouragement came from many German scholars interested in Slavic linguistics and folk poetry, from noblemen who served as patrons of scholarship, and from officials who hoped simultaneously to build up the Croatian and Serbian minorities to counter-balance the Hungarian gentry, while also extending Austria's influence among the Balkan Christians. And this encouragement was vital in leading the South Slavic intellectuals, once contemptuous of the "blind beggars' songs" of their peasant countrymen, to look at them in a new light.

As Lord moves on to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, his analysis is replaced by a conventional survey, of authors and their chief works. The inflammatory, patriotic, epic poetry of the early years now gave way, he asserts, to realistic, strongly critical novels of social criticism and satire. With this development, Lord argues, South Slavic literature began to draw level with its European and Russian counterparts; he concludes, optimistically, that "the gulf between Balkan Slavic literature and that of the West, ... is chiefly, perhaps solely, caused by language" (p. 293).

With Traian Stoianovich's "The Social Foundations of Balkan Politics, 1750-1941" (pp. 297-345), the long drought finally ends. Stoianovich attempts nothing less than a broad interpretation, in terms which admirably synthesize social, political, and intellectual history, of the grand sweep of

the ideas of Brandel, Lefebvre, and Labrousse, while turning as well to scholars rarely invoked by authorities on the Balkans: R.R. Palmer, Robert Merton, Seymour Lipsett, Durkheim, J.S. Mill, and Bertrand Russell. By applying broad theoretical propositions derived from knowledge of more sophisticated disciplines, Stoianovich presents an alternative to the traditional parochialism of Balkan studies; this is a hopeful sign for a field whose future in the United States is not very bright.

This essay, rich in original details and provocative opinions, focuses very largely on the political conflicts stemming from the process of social differentiation and change in the Balkans over the last 200 years. Stoianovich prepares the ground with a careful analysis of the effects of Ottoman conquest, arguing that this intensified an already existing trend toward a society composed not of social classes, but of carefully delimited estates. He tends to minimize the allegedly disastrous results of the conquest on the social structure, emphasizing that the Christians retained a hold, limited to be sure, on the upper rungs of the estate ladder, where the Phanariot oligarchy formed an estate of its own, and also in the middle, where a place existed for village primates and headmen, and for the armed villages which performed auxiliary military functions in return for local autonomy and exemption from taxation.

The inherent difficulties of an estate structure increased (especially, it might be added, in the absence of a strong government to assure order) during the 18th century, as both the Moslem provincial nobility, and the Phanariot oligarchy tried to consolidate their position by gaining hereditary, irrevocable, rights. To do so, the nobility recruited armed supporters — brigands, destitute townsmen, and underpaid soldiers — and this movement, reaching its height with the growing power of Pasvanoglu, Ali Pasha, and the outlaw janissaries of Belgrade in the 1790s and after, led to what Stoianovich calls a "Great Fear" through much of the southern Balkans, analogous to that which afflicted the French peasantry in 1789. In pointing to these social and psychological factors, Stoianovich offers much of interest, as he does throughout this consistently stimulating essay. Thus, his views on the effect of the Enlightenment among the Ottoman upper bureaucracy under Selim III are of more than specialized concern, as is his provocative argument that the Balkan uprisings of the early 19th century occurred in two phases: a "democratic revolution" (1788-1808), and then a "Thermidorean reaction" (1809-1830), in which he includes the Greek revolution, as having far more conservative leaders and goals than its Serbian counterpart.

This conflict between democratic and conservative ideals continued, he argues, within the independent Balkan states throughout the years from

1830 to 1912. Although all parties were agreed regarding the importance of material progress and the rational ordering of society, the positivistic, consciously "realistic" views of the conservatives, no less than concern for their socioeconomic interests, led them to advocate oligarchic, albeit enlightened, rule. By contrast, the liberals and those to their left favored popular democracy, and the speediest possible transposition from a society of estates to one of classes, open to the rise of all individuals of talent and capacity.

No precis can hope to adequately convey the depth of Stoianovich's analysis, above all the illumination which he casts on data that has been in the public domain for decades, but which has never been used with the talent and grace he displays.

Of the final essays, little need be said. Nicolas Spulber, in "Changes in the Economic Structures of the Balkans, 1860-1960" (pp. 346-375), easily fulfills a rather limited set of objectives. With the wisdom of hindsight, he condemns the political and economic means—excessive foreign borrowing, high protective tariffs, deficit financing, and other measures which led to a "merciless squeeze of the peasantry" (p. 353)—used by the Balkan states to achieve political and economic modernity during the period from approximately 1860 to 1913. His conclusion is advanced rather cautiously, but harmonizes well with the current disenchantment regarding nationalism: the nationalistic ambitions of the Balkan states were out of all proportion to their capabilities, and prevented "a broader unity of the area and... [the] more rational utilization of its resources" (p. 353). And Spulber cites the economic development of the Balkan provinces of the Habsburg Empire as an example of the progress attainable in a well-ordered state. He restates his case while analyzing the interwar years, emphasizing the nationalization by Rumania and Yugoslavia of large enterprises owned by Germans and Hungarians, and the destruction of the financial links between these countries and Vienna. Similar nationalistic pressures exist in the Communist system as well, he argues, pointing to the striving for economic self-sufficiency of the Eastern European states, their rivalry for Soviet and Chinese markets, and their evasiveness regarding regional planning and coordination. There can be no doubt of the factual accuracy of Spulber's remarks, but his tone is disturbing. He speaks not as a historian, striving to understand and explain, but as a reforming critic, tacitly denouncing the nationalistic "irrationality" of the Balkans, and decrying the actions of men whose political values differ from his own.

The aggressive simplicity of Spulber's essay is followed by Henry Roberts' "Politics in a Small State: The Balkan Example" (pp. 376-395), a discussion of Balkan international relations hedged with so many qualifications

and conditions as to be largely valueless. Our knowledge of the Balkans is hardly enhanced by such statements as, "It is the thesis of this essay, at least as a hypothesis warranting testing, that this factor of smallness [i.e., of the Balkan countries] has had significant and continuing effect" (p. 379), or by the masterful conclusion that "the foreign-policy choices before the Balkan states have been difficult and dangerous and within a frame of alternatives different from that of the great powers" (p. 387).

The essay by John C. Campbell, "The Balkans: Heritage and Continuity" (pp. 396-420), is not the summation implied by its title, but a very general discussion of the varying aspects of Communist rule, with scattered remarks on the interwar period. Campbell tells us nothing new, and perhaps should not be expected to: how can the perspective needed for really shrewd interpretation be obtained about a subject whose place in the historical continuum is still completely uncertain?

This is a disturbing, irritating book, for more than one reason. Irritating, because there is an air of haste about it, revealed in a number of grammatical errors (which should have been caught by the publisher), and, above all, in the many inconsistencies, the many contradictions, to be found even within the individual essays. Several read like first drafts, slightly revised at a later date, but never submitted to really searching scrutiny. Irritating also because no effort whatever has been made to integrate these essays, to summarize them, or draw conclusions, either at appropriate stages within the book, or at the end. Is it unfair to suggest that greater attention to detail and to nuance, combined with higher standards of performance, might have eliminated or at least lessened these irritations?

But it is the extraordinary banality of too many of these essays which is really disturbing. So many essays follow the beaten paths, so few strike out along the new. Nothing about urbanization, its extraordinary upsurge since 1918 and especially since 1945, the unhealthy disparity between the rapid growth of the Balkan capitals and the much slower pace of the provincial towns, and the effects which urbanization has had on popular attitudes and values. Nothing, despite the growing literature regarding the problem in other non-Western areas, on the growth of standing armies since the mid-19th century, on the ideas, the attitudes, the training, the background, of the officers who led them. Nothing on the bureaucracies, their growth, recruitment, training, self-image. Nothing about education, primary, secondary, and above all, university, about the role of foreign schools and tutors in the Balkans, or about the thousands of Balkan students who have gone to Europe or to Russia. Nothing, except several excellent paragraphs in Stoianovich's

essay, about the rise of the intelligentsia, its numerical strength, its institutions, its ideas and values, and its role in society. All of these matters are not, of course, totally ignored; a few pertinent remarks are made here and there, but only in passing, as the authors pursue their familiar themes.

The book exemplifies the crisis which faces Balkan studies in the United States. The current output in the field is very limited: we can expect little more than one or two slender monographs per year, and perhaps six or seven substantial articles. The leading scholars in the field, whose interest often stems from their Balkan origin, extraction, or experience, are largely in their mid-40s or 50's; relatively few younger men have followed their scholarly lead. By contrast, other fields of area study — Russia, Africa, the Far East, Southeast Asia and, more recently, Latin America — are flourishing. Some may argue that the political significance of these areas make them intensely attractive to American students and that the Balkans seem peripheral and unimportant. And the way in which Balkan history is usually taught unwittingly justifies this attitude. The question then follows: will Balkan studies remain a cul-de-sac populated by the admirers of minutiae, or will it, using the best in methodology provided by other disciplines, begin to approach the level of sophistication sought by scholars in other area studies?

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