

and influence in that country gradually diminishing, which finally degenerated into an open revolt against the dictates of the Tsar with the coup d'état in Eastern Rumelia. The irony of the situation is that in order to draw the Bulgarians under their direct influence, the Russians sacrificed the Serbs to the Austrians and jeopardized their interests forever in Serbia as well as in Greece. It was only after the debacle in Eastern Rumelia that the Russians appeared to realize that playing the Bulgarian card could hardly serve their interests. Dr. Jelavich quotes the Russian Foreign Minister as saying that, "we have had a lesson we can never forget and which is most wholesome for us—Never again to go forth making moral conquests with our blood and money but to think of ourselves and our interests only". And, elsewhere, he makes reference to a letter written by Tsar Alexander III in connection with the Russian interests in the Straits: "Everything else that takes place in the Balkan Peninsula is secondary for us. There has been enough propaganda to the detriment of the true interests of Russia. The Slavs must now serve us and not we them".

These, and numerous similar personal and detailed accounts, brought to light by Dr. Jelavich's conscientious research, provide both interesting reading to the layman and a wealth of documentary evidence to the scholar which transcends the limited chronological confines of the book (1879-1886) and gives valuable insight to the study of Russian and Balkan politics of any period. For, as Dr. Jelavich remarks in the beginning of his book, the similarities of Tsarist policy then and of Communist policy now are indeed striking.

One thing, however, appears to receive little notice, and that is the position of Greece, that third little Balkan country which was equally affected by Russian Balkan policy and the realignment of power in the Balkans following the Congress of Berlin. It is regrettable that the Greek language, still a *terra incognita* to most Western scholars, has not allowed a proper evaluation of the Greek factor in Balkan and international developments of the time. Sources of immeasurable historical value are still untapped, even by Greek scholars, awaiting the qualified researcher to bring them to light.

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Djoko Slijepcevic, *The Macedonian Question; The Struggle for Southern Serbia*, (Chicago: The American Institute for Balkan Affairs, 1958), 267 pp.

Three have been the major critical eras of what has been known as the Macedonian Question. The first began with the establishment of the Exarchate (1870), reached its peak with the Treaty of San Stefano and closed with the Congress of Berlin (1878) but not before it established among the Bulgarians the legacy for territorial expansion toward Macedonia. The second, commenced with the Macedonian Struggle (1903-1908), reached the climax during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and ended with the World War I Peace Treaties. The third was ushered

in with the German invasion of the Balkans and acquired momentum with the emergence of communist power until it came to the breaking point with Tito's expulsion from the Cominform which partially was caused by the former's Macedonian policy. This last critical era appeared to have come to a closure with Stalin's death, although occasional, more recent developments kept the issue far from dormant.

Scholars as well as propagandists have dealt for years on end with the first two critical eras, but recent research continues to unveil new data. It is the last era, however, (which should be traced back to the genesis of the communist policy on Macedonia in the 1920's) that has not received its due scholarly treatment, except for a few cases as, for example, with Elizabeth Barker's *Macedonia, its Place in Balkan Politics* (Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1950), and to a lesser extent with George Zotiades', *The Macedonian Controversy* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2nd edition, 1961).

Dr. Slijepcevic' *The Macedonian Question*, comes precisely to fill partly this need. A thoroughly documented undertaking, it has as its main thesis the fact that the part of Macedonia which belongs to Yugoslavia today rightfully belongs there, and,—Bulgarian statements to the contrary,—the inhabitants and the historical tradition of the region are Serbian. Of course, Dr. Slijepcevic' numerous sources quoted in support to his theory could be easily countered by the other side—the Bulgarian in this case—by an equally impressive documentary presentation. Unhappily, Yugoslav Macedonia, has experienced the evil effects of this historical feud between Serbs and Bulgars by finding itself always in the midst of constant wars, diplomatic give-and-take and underground subversive activities.

It should be emphasized, however, that the author makes a strong presentation of his case—the case of "Southern Serbia"—which he correctly confines in the present boundaries of what is known as the Peoples' Republic of Macedonia. If he is not thoroughly convincing, this is not because of his inability to do so, but simply because historical truth does not seem to support his views in their entirety. In one case, however, his conclusions cannot be contested by historical fact, namely in his assertion that Macedonia is nothing but a geographical region and any reference to "Macedonians" as members of a distinct ethnic group is groundless. This is a strong rebuke to the Yugoslav communists who, during the past twenty years, have gone out of their way to build a "Macedonian nation".

In the opinion of this writer, the author has devoted far too much space (two-thirds of the book), tracing the history of the Southern Slavs, in his attempt to establish the Serbian character of Yugoslav Macedonia. At the same time he has neglected to analyze and evaluate certain phases of the third era, as for example the Bulgarian occupation of Yugoslav and Greek Macedonia during the German invasion of the Balkans, which had tremendous repercussions in later developments in the region. Furthermore, the author has allowed him-

self to repeat the same error of many writers who have preceded him. Rather lightly he has accepted the inaccurate theory of the alleged malignant role of the Greek orthodox clergy during the Ottoman rule while he has discarded the findings of recent research which point to the opposite direction of the condemnation leveled against the Greek clergy by Slav nationalists of the previous century. One more weak point is the fact that while he is keen to observe a particularly important development, he neglects to investigate its more general repercussions which more than once passed the Balkan scene and had themselves felt on international politics.

For the student of Macedonian history and politics, the book's greatest value lies in the unpublished documentary material on the Yugoslav Communist Party's policy on the Macedonian Question, which the author collected many times at great personal risk and is now presenting it for the first time. This, however, has led the author to concentrate too much on the case of "Southern Serbia" and to ignore the other angles of the dispute.

In regard to the Yugoslav attempt to take over Greek Macedonia he allows only two pages where he lightly refers to "Aegean Macedonia"—a term so dear to Yugoslav communists who see in this name the continuity of their "state" of Macedonia. For, while the question is still open as to the ethnical affinity of the inhabitants of Yugoslav Macedonia, there can be not even the slightest question in a scholarly work which might raise doubts as to the undisputable homogeneity of Greek Macedonia.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the title "*The Macedonian Question*" is misleading in the sense that while it deals almost exclusively with Yugoslav Macedonia, it makes only scant reference to developments which have affected the other regions. The above should not be construed as condemning the merits of the book but to inform the reader who may be seeking a book dealing with the Macedonian question as a whole.

The author should be congratulated for the excellent exposition of Yugoslav attempts to consolidate control over their part of Macedonia. While one should bear in mind the proverbial uncertainty of Balkan politics, one should only accept the author's conclusion that :

"it is clear that the Macedonian question has been reduced to a matter of Yugoslav internal politics, where it represents one of the present Communist regime's most powerful weapons in its campaign against the Serbs. In the future relations of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece, it will play a progressively diminishing role. The frontiers dividing these three countries may be taken as being definitive: only another war can change them".

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