

Reviews of Books

Karl Gladt, *Kaisertraum und Königskrone. Aufstieg und Untergang einer serbischen Dynastie*, Verlag Styria, Graz - Wien - Köln, 1972, pp. 493.

The subject of this book is the rise and fall of the Serbian Obrenović dynasty. It opens (after the table of contents, p. 5-6) with a chapter entitled «The dream of an imperial crown» (pp. 7-10), in which the author Karl Gladt describes the plans of the Serbian leader Stefan Dušan (1331-1355) to establish himself as emperor of the Balkan Peninsula.

The second chapter, «Karadjordje's struggles for liberation» (pp.11-19), is devoted to the Serbian struggles under the leadership initially of Karadjordje and later of Miloš Obrenović to win their liberation from the Turkish yoke. Serbia's rebirth started with a revolutionary movement that broke out amongst the Christians of the pashalik of Belgrade in February 1804. In its early stages this movement was directed not so much against the Sultan, as against the janissary commandants —known generally as the dahije— who had entrenched themselves in the pashalik and were loathed by the Christians over whom they exercised tyrannical authority. George Petrović, nicknamed Karadjordje or Crni Djordje (Black George) because of his swarthy complexion, was made leader of the revolutionary movement; his courage, together with his military and political talent, soon earned him recognition as the real Vožd naroda Srpskog, i.e. Leader of the Serbian People. The international political situation did not favour their cause, however, and in spite of heroic struggles they were forced towards the end of 1813 to lay down their arms.

To Gladt's account I should like to add the fact that temporary peace between Serbs and Turks had been achieved in the year 1806. Leading the Serbs at these peace negotiations was Petros Itsko, a Greek from Katranitsa in Macedonia [see Dušan Kašić, «'Η 'Ελληνική 'Επανάστασις καὶ οἱ Σέρβοι» (The Greek Revolution and the Serbs) *Θεολογία* 42 (1971), p. 97].

A new Turkish pasha, Süleiman, was installed in Belgrade after the suppression of the first Serb revolution. He started out with a display of tolerance, but only a short time had elapsed before he proved to be a dire persecutor of the Serbs. The ensuing reign of terror drove the Serbs to take up arms once again; the word was given at Takovo on Palm Sunday, 23 April 1815, and Miloš Obrenović was accorded recognition as the leader of the Serbs' new revolutionary movement against the Turks.

The revolutionaries proved victorious in a number of clashes with the Turks stationed in the pashalik of Belgrade, and soon controlled the small towns of Valjevo and Požarevac as well as a large part of the countryside. It was then, however, that Miloš Obrenović's real difficulties began. The Turks mobilized two large armies against him, one from the West under Hurshid Pasha of Bosnia, the other from the East under Marasli Pasha, Vali of Rumeli. Realizing that the Serbs could not resist the Sultan's army, Obrenović hastened to open negotiations at which he threw the entire blame for the revolt upon Süleiman's tyrannical rule, and requested that the Serbian nation be permitted to submit its claims to the Sultan. The European political situation by now (1815) favoured the Serbs more than it had in Karadjordje's time, and Obrenović derived some assistance in his efforts from this direction. The Sublime Porte was particularly afraid of Russia, and for this reason Marasli Pasha was instructed to put an end to the Serbian problem as quickly as

possible. Negotiations between Obrenović and Marasli Pasha opened in 1815 and ended in verbal agreement upon the following terms: 1) the Serbian revolutionaries were to receive a general amnesty; 2) Turkish authorities would continue to administer the pashalik of Belgrade, but with the difference that taxes were to be collected not by them but by Serbian knezi; and 3) in the dispensing of justice a Serb knez would sit jointly with the Turkish judge.

The years during which Serbia was governed by Miloš Obrenović and his son Mihailo are examined in chapter III pp. 20-30, headed «The Obrenović gain power». Starting from the extremely limited prerogatives secured for in the above-mentioned verbal agreement (initially concerned only with taxation and the courts), little by little, Miloš achieved full internal autonomy. His internal policy was aimed at a single end: the consolidation of his position as leader of the Serbs. In the early stages, he had a number of serious rivals amongst the nobility, and during the years 1815-1817, he secured his position by ridding himself of them in various ways. Amongst the first to fall was Karadjordje. While he was in Bessarabia, he had reached understanding with members of the «Filiki Etairia» in neighbouring Moldavia for a common Greek-Serbian struggle against the Turks, and with the help of the «Filiki Etairia» (Friendly Society) had managed to slip secretly back into Serbia; he was murdered on Miloš Obrenović's orders on the night of July 12th, 1817. In August 1830 the Sublime Porte promulgated a khattisherif recognizing Serbia as an autonomous principality. In the same year, Miloš was granted a special berat in which he was recognized as Prince of Serbia with the right of hereditary succession.

Gladt gives a very lucid account of these events. A general history of the Balkan nations, however, should not overlook the following «co-incidence»: the year 1830, in which the autonomy of Serbia was recognized, also marks the virtual end to the struggles and sacrifices made since 1821 by another heroic Balkan people, the Greeks, for it was in this year that the Great Powers officially recognized Greece as an independent State.

Miloš Obrenović's absolutist conduct as a ruler roused a mounting wave of resentment against him amongst the people. When a considerable number of his personal enemies managed to get into the Senate, he saw that an end to his unlimited powers was imminent. Rather than wait for this to happen, he chose to abdicate (13 June 1839) in favour of his eldest son Milan, and to leave the country with his other son, Mihailo. But Milan was gravely ill, and died after three weeks (8 July 1839). A joint regency consisting of Ephraim Obrenović (the brother of Miloš), Abraham Petronijević and Thomas Vučić governed the country until March 1840, when Mihailo Obrenović returned from abroad and assumed power. The new prince was fated to remain in authority a mere two years. The Senate—led by Thomas Vučić—enjoyed the confidence of the Sublime Porte, and although Mihailo had the support of the Tsar of Russia, he soon found himself at odds with him; the Russians' efforts at reconciliation were unsuccessful.

In his fourth chapter «The interim role of the Karadjordjević», pp. 31-54, the author examines the years during which Alexander Karadjordjević (1842-1858) was Prince of Serbia. Starting with the tacit approval of the Sublime Porte Thomas Vučić commanded the artillery stationed in the city of Kragujevac, won the soldiery over to his side, and in the night of 6th September 1842, forced Mihailo Obrenović to take refuge in the Austrian border town of Zemun. He then proclaimed himself «Leader of the people», summoned a national assembly on the plain of Vračar (near Belgrade), which elected Alexander Karadjordjević Prince. His election was confirmed by a firman from the Sublime

Porte, and when this had been officially promulgated, Alexander was installed in Belgrade (7th November 1842).

In his discussion of this period, the author rightly pays attention to the appearance on the scene of the greatest nineteenth-century Serbian political mind, Elias Garašanin (1812-1874). In 1844, Garašanin submitted to Prince Alexander Karadjordjević his confidential note (*Načertanije*) which in fact was a program of national policy, and which served as a guide to later generations of Serbs in their foreign policy. One might point out here, the importance of the effect exercised upon Garašanin's education in the then flourishing Greek school in the Austrian border town of Zemun [see M. Dj. Milićević, *Pomenik znamenitih ljudi u srpskog naroda novijega doba*, Beograd 1888, p. 94].

It was impossible for Alexander Karadjordjević not to clash with the then all-powerful Senate, against which he sought to find support from neighbouring Austria. When a conspiracy organized by the exiled Miloš Obrenović for the murder of Alexander was discovered in 1857, the Prince exploited the incident, and purged the Senate. The situation, instead of improving, deteriorated. Eventually, under pressure from Garašanin, Alexander summoned the national assembly which convened in Belgrade on the feast of St. Andrew (30 November 1858, old calendar). At the Assembly of St. Andrew (*Svetoandrejska Skupština*), the oligarchs of the Senate, the liberal intellectuals who had studied in the West, and the rural representatives who reflected the resentment of the popular masses, unpredictably formed a united front: they all demanded the resignation of Alexander Karadjordjević and the restoration of the former Prince Miloš Obrenović.

In the fifth chapter, entitled «Miloš one more time» (pp. 55-64), the author examines Miloš Obrenović's second term in office (1859-1860). A man of eighty years, Miloš, returned to his homeland on February 6, 1859, still with exactly the same old-fashioned ideas on governing. His first act upon restoration, was to launch a relentless persecution against those hostile to his dynasty; in government he was autocratic, over-riding or simply ignoring the Senate altogether. In spite of the extreme measures he took, however, Miloš Obrenović's power was doomed to be short-lived, and in the following year, he was forced to abdicate in favour of his son Mihailo.

In the sixth chapter, «The Murder at Košutnjak» (pp. 65-85), Gladst sets out the main events that took place in Serbia during the years of Mihailo Obrenović's second administration, concluding with his murder in Košutnjak Park, on the outskirts of Belgrade, on 29 May 1868 (old calendar). Gladst's account is commendably clear and precise. On one detail, however, we are unable to agree with him: discussing Mihailo Obrenović's Balkan policy, he relates (p. 68) that the Prince tried to gain control over the Macedonians. There have never existed «Macedonians» in the sense of a distinct nationality. The term Macedonia is purely geographical and not ethnic.

The author of the book under discussion touches upon Serbia's diplomatic relations with Greece. We should like to add that the first Greek-Serbian treaty of alliance was signed on 14/26 August 1867 in the small town of Feslau, near Vienna. Signatories of the treaty were the parliamentarian Petros Zanos, a trusted friend of Greece's Foreign Minister Charilaos Trikoupis, and Milan Petronijević, Vice-Minister of Justice. The fourth article of this treaty solved in advance the delicate problem of the future fate of the province of European Turkey in the event of a successful war: «The purpose of the alliance is the liberation of all Christians living in European Turkey. In the event that the full realization of this purpose becomes unattainable, each of the subscribing states shall have the right

to lay down arms, provided that Serbia has secured the cession of Epirus-Thessaly to Greece and Greece the cession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia». [See Michael Th. Lascaris, *Tò 'Ανατολικὸν Ζήτημα 1800-1923* (The Eastern Question 1800-1923), Thessaloniki 1948, pp. 224-225].

With the title, «I want to learn how to become a true leader of Serbia», the seventh chapter (pp. 86-95), is devoted to the early years of Milan Obrenović IV's reign. As Mihailo Obrenović did not have issue from his lawful marriage, at the instigation of colonel Milivoje Petrović-Blaznavac, the army corps in Belgrade proclaimed the fourteen-year-old Milan Obrenović, Mihailo's nephew, Prince. With Jovan Ristić and Jovan Gavrilović, colonel Blaznavac formed the regency which governed the country from 1868 - August 1872, until the young Prince was declared to be of age.

In the eighth chapter, headed «The coup and the Prince's marriage» (pp. 96-104), the author examines the revolt that broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1874, and Prince Milan IV's marriage to Nattali Keško on October 9, 1875. The first Serbo-Turkish war of 1876 is the subject of the next chapter «War against the Turks — now or never», pp. 105-112, while the tenth «Years of disillusionment», pp. 113-131, is devoted to the intractable internal problems that Prince Milan had to face.

In the eleventh chapter, under the title «The war against Bulgaria» (pp. 132-143), the author deals at length with the Serbo-Bulgarian war of 1885. On the 2/14 November 1885, Serbian troops invaded Bulgarian territory, marking the outbreak of war with Bulgaria. The Great Powers intervened between the conflicting parties with proposals for a termination of hostilities, and in the following year (3 March 1886), the Bulgarians and Serbs signed a peace treaty. The terms of this pact fully satisfied the Bulgarians' demands, principally the recognition of their right to annex East Romylia.

The tribulations of the court, together with the interventions of the Great Powers in the internal affairs of Serbia, constitute the subject matter of the twelfth chapter, «Discord between the royal couple and the Struggles of the Great Powers» (pp. 144-155). In the following chapter, «The king abdicates» (pp. 156-163), the author deals at length with the causes leading up to Milan Obrenović IV's abdication, which he announced on 22 February 1889 (old calendar). His son Alexander came to power. The first years of Alexander Obrenović's life, his education and the unfortunate effects that his parents' separation had upon the young man's life are treated in chapters fourteen and fifteen, entitled respectively «Alexander V Obrenović» (pp. 164-173) and «An orphan whose parents are still living» (pp. 174-187).

The last part of the book comprises chapters 16-33 (pp. 188-426). In these chapters Karl Gladst gives an extended account of the following events: the regency's administration of Serbia and the rise of the radical party; the coups of the years 1893 and 1894; Alexander Obrenović's imposition of a personal regime during the years 1897-1900; the cultural, social and economic development of Serbia during the years 1889-1903; Serbia's relations with the other Balkan states during the closing years of the nineteenth century; the interference of the fallen king Milan and his wife Nattali in the affairs of state, and finally the fall of the Obrenović dynasty in 1903.

The author concludes his work with an informative and substantial bibliography (pp. 475-476).

Karl Gladst has given us the entire history of the Serbian Obrenović dynasty. At the same time the work includes an extensive account of the historical events that took place in

Serbia between the years 1780-1903. The author's narrative is clear and precise, his style elegantly readable. The few criticisms we have made above in no way diminish the importance of Glad's work, and we can only congratulate the author warmly on his commendable achievement.

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I. A. PAPADRIANOS

P. N. Berkov, *Literary contacts between Russia and the West since the Fourteenth Century*, Collected Studies, Preface by T. Borov, London, (Variorum Reprints), 1973, pp. 488.

This volume contains a total of twenty three articles published by the author Pavel Naumovič Berkov (1896-1969) between the years 1937-1972 in a variety of literary and other journals. The table of contents furnishes a complete analytical list of the articles, citing each one's full title, the periodical in which it was originally published, and the relevant page references.

In his preface to the work, T. Borov (pp. i-vi) refers chiefly to P. N. Berkov's career as a philologist, slavologist and bibliographer. His early studies were pursued in Russia and Austria; after teaching Russian language and literature in a high school in Leningrad, in 1934, he was appointed lector, and in 1944, professor of Russian philology at the University of Leningrad. In 1960, he was made a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and in 1967 he was similarly elected to the German (East Berlin) Academy of Sciences. [See also, Anonymous, Pavel Naumovič Berkov, in *Bol'shaja Sovetskaja Enciklopedija*, tret'e izdanie, vol. 3, col. 697 (Moskva, izd. «Sovetskaja Enciklopedija», 1970) and S. G. Korneev, *Sovetskie Učenyje-početnyh členy inostrannyh naučnyh učreždenij*, Moskva, izd. «Nauka», 1973, p. 18]. P. N. Berkov's 23 articles may be classified into three groups: *a.* the literary relations between Russia and the West (articles Nos. 1, 2, 11, 14, 15, 18 and 20); *b.* Slavic Studies (articles Nos. 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 21 and 23); and *c.* comparative literature (articles Nos. 3, 5, 8, 9, 13, 16, 17, 19 and 22). The author refers to the Russian, German, French, English, Italian, Bulgarian, and Greek literary sources.

The twenty three articles are accompanied by a fifteen-page index of proper names.

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CONSTANTINE PAPOULIDIS

M. Stojanov, *Ukrasa na slavjanskite rākopisi v Bālgarija*, Sofia (Bālgarski Hudoznik), 1973, pp. 250.

The study of manuscripts today interests not only the historian and the scholar, but lovers of art in general. The work of M. Stojanov, former director of the manuscript section of the National Library in Sofia, is of much and varied interest. The author examines the illumination of Slavic manuscripts in Bulgaria from the 11th, to the opening of the 19th Centuries. The illustrations are taken mainly from ecclesiastical codices that are now