

George W. Hoffman, *Regional Development Strategy in Southeast Europe; A Comparative Analysis of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia*, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1972, pp. 322.

As the author of the book states in the very beginning of his work, few areas in the world show as great regional contrast in their physical, cultural, and economic diversity as the five countries of Southeast Europe. George Hoffman, however, is among the leading students of this fascinating region and in his latest book one can find the continuous attempt for a synthesis of the broader trends that have shaped and are shaping socio-cultural aspects of the area.

The selection of these five countries (four of them in the Socialist camp and one in what broadly may be described as the «Western» model) provides the fertile ground for an exhausting study of trends of economic development and of the forces that characterize spatial arrangements and administrative efforts for regional development in Southeast Europe.

The essential argument of the book can be summarized in a number of central propositions having to do with the host of background factors —natural, historical, and socio-cultural— that have affected through political and ideological commitments patterns of regional development in the countries of the region as well as the spatial organization of economic activities in Southeast Europe. The author proceeds skillfully in synthesizing a vast amount of data and in presenting a vivid picture of the development patterns of five diverse, yet strikingly parallel paths of regional development. Furthermore, what is particularly gratifying for the reader who does not want to get entangled with the intricacies of Balkan history and politics, is the even-handed approach of some explosive nationalistic issues which even today are highly debated among a variety of authors and countries of the region. Hoffman manages to avoid opinionated analysis, although his pre-occupation with the Yugoslavian case may throw the developmental patterns of other countries under less desirable light.

The three major parts of the book move roughly through an evolutionary analysis by starkly outlining the difficult effort of cogent regional development policies. In the first part, the roots of the problem are discussed by providing a regional synthesis and the spatial distribution of economic activities during the «formative years». In this first part a most interesting analysis is made of the pre-war patterns of underdevelopment and the commonality of problems in essentially backward agricultures, characterized by heavy demographic pressures, some uncoordinated attempts of domestic industrial expansion, by a dependence to foreign capital, and with heavy military outlays absorbing a large part of the national budget.

It is in the second part of the book on post-war development strategies that one sees the emergence of the background of what in the literature may be referred to as «growth environment». Four of the countries of Southeastern Europe, having adopted at large the «Soviet model», with whatever modifications the national case has permitted them, have committed themselves to a planned economy that depends on rapid economic development through heavy industrialization, maximum use of domestic resources, and commitment to an ultimate goal of «equality» for their regions. On the other hand, Greece pursued a development strategy modeled after that of other western European countries and thus, differed radically in its strategy, emphasis, and direction from the rest of the Southeast

European countries in regional development efforts. This exception in development strategy provides an imaginative background for contrasting experiences and planning options by showing the divergence not only in ideological commitments but in policies pursued between the spectrum of «Soviet models» in the socialist countries of Southeast Europe and the advantages and disadvantages derived from the open-market mechanisms of Greece.

In the third part of the book Hoffman discusses and analyzes the regional development processes both from a theoretical point of view and from an implementation approach. Particular emphasis is placed on the consequences for the spatial organization of the country and on the ramifications of over-concentration, the shifting attention to lagging or depressed regions, and to differentiations in the pursuit of the variety of policies which emphasize «trickling-down» effects as compared to the priority of development of under-developed regions. For the social scientist, it is this last part of the volume that provides promising leads for further investigation and where the reader can benefit from an understanding of the implications of implementing certain political decisions and of the pursuit of locational decisions resulting from conflicting and complementary economic, social and political pressures and behavior.

As one follows the evolution of the argument, from the formation of the national states in Southeastern Europe to today's economic policies, one is struck by the fatefulness in post-war developments as a result of the reconstruction following the political upheaval and large movements of World War II. Yet, despite the obvious successes guaranteed by a centralized planning economy one detects throughout the book the nagging doubt about the pursuit of socialist models and to the responsiveness to today's conditions of technological change as well as to the demands for efficiency and full citizen participation. Even for Yugoslavia, where the regional development has found its apex, regional strains seem to cast a deep shadow and vascillations have become apparent concerning policies to be followed in promoting the well-being of various parts of the country.

Hoffman has managed to include within this rather hefty volume quite a large amount of information which occasionally becomes repetitious as the author follows the revolution of regional policies over time. Occasionally the text is mind-boggling as detailed data distract from the central argument. In such parts, closer editing would have maintained a tauter text in sharply outlining the major forces of developmental change rather than the details of particular policies and differentiations. Yet, despite what in the mind of some readers may be endless repetition of policy variations, the book serves as an important reference text for the student of socio-economic changes in the region.

Personally, I found Chapter 6, «Concepts of Regional Development», and Chapter 7, «Implementation of Development Policies» the most interesting and informative as to the larger trends concerning developmental efforts. These two chapters together with the epilogue provide a fascinating juxtaposition of the need for a comprehensive approach to economic development policies and regional development. It is sad to realize that despite the adoption of centralized planning and the commitment towards equality, most countries of Southeast Europe lack comprehensive regional planning-policies even to the extent that some scholars question whether they have any regional policies at all (p. 149). Hoffman discusses very perceptively the choices of growth and the range of development policies by pointing out that essentially Marxian theory applies concepts generally identical to the writings of western scholars for the creation of propulsive power for territorial structures that would stimulate growth in underdeveloped and lagging regions of a country. It is this

similarity in commitment that brings together socialist and non-socialist examples throughout the book of Hoffman. By following this commonality concerning approaches of regional planning and attention to lagging region, Hoffman attempts to promote also the discussion and the increasing importance of regional cooperation in the overall development strategies of the countries of Southeast Europe. One could agree with the concluding statement of the author that «the five countries of Southeast Europe, by their example, could show to their people, as well as to the rest of the world, the way to accomplish rapid economic growth based on closed-regional economic cooperation without losing their own identity in an area of great geographic, socio-economic, and political differences». Yet, the preceding 239 pages of the book seem to negate that wishful conclusion by pointing out how fateful are not only the natural and historical differences, but also the socio-cultural variations resulting from ideological commitments and from different assumptions as to desired social goals.

Overall, the book of Hoffman, a combination of his continuous interest and careful work on the region should provide beneficial reading for all persons interested in Southeast Europe. The Appendices, full of data, as well as the careful bibliographies also provide additional material for the researcher. One only would have wished that more careful editorial work and rearrangement of some topics would have provided a tighter text without the cul-de-sacs and the seemingly interminable discussions of regional policies of individual countries in Southeast Europe.

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Newspapers of the Greek War of Independence, vol. IV: *Γενική Ἐφημερίς τῆς Ἑλλάδος* (General Newspaper of Greece), 7th year (1832), Athens (Publications of the Prefecture of Attica on the 150th Anniversary of Greek Independence), 1973, National Printing Press. Preface and Introduction by George D. Demacopoulos, pp. α'-ιβ' + I-XXIII. *General Newspaper of Greece*, pp. 1-144. Index pp. I*-10*. List of Official Acts, pp. 13*-16*.

On the occasion of the photostatic offprint by the Prefecture of Attica of the *General Newspaper of Greece* (*Γενική Ἐφημερίς τῆς Ἑλλάδος*), 7th year (1832), I would like to make a few comments about the significance of the press as a crucial unifying force for a people striving to progress towards individual and national advancement (see *Balkan Studies* 13.2 [1972], 332-334). The usefulness of the press as a source for the study of a particular historical period is considerable. Emerging nations, states as Greece was in 1832, require a systematic critical evaluation of their traditions, institutions and aspirations so that their newly won political freedom may find proper expression and gradually lead to political and social integration and effective representation. Over and above the economic situation, political figures, the law, the constitution, and other factors that make up the structure of an emerging nation, the press exercises a continuous and uninterrupted influence on the course of historical reality. Moreover, the process of a people's political and cultural growth inevitably leads to a variety of con-