

Black Sea, the Adriatic, Ionian and Aegean Seas, and the Mediterranean. Their history is aptly captured in the pages of this book on war and society in Central East and Southeastern Europe.

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Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, paperback edition, 1988, p. 452.

All too often in the past, accounts of Balkan politics have suffered from stereotyping and condescending disparagement. Yet the complexity of the region, stemming from the ethnic and religious diversity of the peoples, the tangled demographic conditions and the historical vicissitudes of state and social development make the study of political life here a rewarding experience for the patient and discerning observer. And among the interesting societies in the Balkans none is more striking than the Yugoslav multinational state. It is a subject that is bound to elicit emotion and even passion. The author of this work is well aware of this as he issues his own caveat to those who read his study.

The Triune Kingdom was born in controversy and emotion out of war and political upheaval. Rather than recount the political maneuvering that went into the creation of the state edifice, Banac focuses on the political groups among the South Slavs and their historically conditioned ideas and ideals that became ideologies in the crucible of the Great War.

Before proceeding to the detailed account of the political personalities and their parties, which confronted one another as Yugoslavia took form, the author reaches back in time to delineate the broader forces that shaped the complex world of the South Slav lands and peoples. The role of religion, territory, language, and social estates are examined in the shaping of culture and national identities. Rather than searching for "purity" (whatever that dangerous term connotes) and fixed identities among the peoples of the area, the author correctly emphasizes the alterations societies underwent through demographic developments such as migrations, whether voluntary or enforced by overlords. But the notion of "nations" and "national consciousness" formed and existing before the development of nationalist ideology and politics based on it, is asserted by Banac. Through the centuries of development by the South Slavs, especially with regard to the Croatian political leadership during the nineteenth century, the author is really dealing with high culture and intellectuals when describing the "national consciousness" of the various peoples.

The bulk of the book is an extensive and extended examination of the personalities, their groups, and their political objectives, which were the basis of the paradox that became the multinational Yugoslav state in an era of nationalist demands. All groups are given their due, which is one of the author's real contributions to the history of Yugoslavia. However, the study focuses on the Serbs and their supporters in their drive to create a unitary, centralized state and the opposition, primarily by the Croat political leaders, to such a vision. The strength and weaknesses in the character of political figures, the position of their parties when dealing with each other, and the tactics adopted by them are described and assessed, often with a biting turn of phrase.

The thrust of Banac's lengthy narrative comes down to demonstrating that a determined but shortsighted Serbian political leadership erected a constitutional structure that did not accommodate the concerns of the other South Slav nations. The author has his likes and dislikes for personalities and parties, as in his trenchant criticism of the Serbian National Radical Party and its leader, Nikola Pasic. Behind Banac's treatment of this critical era in Yugoslav history is his firm belief that the South Slav nationalities could come together and cooperate fruitfully "...only if each of them was fully autonomous in its own house." (p. 16). With the recent developments taking place in the country, perhaps this condition may now arise. Yet, the issue is not simple, as the author would no doubt agree. But is not a dark problem either. Which is all the more reason for those interested in the politics of small states to read this volume.

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Ivo Banac, *With Stalin, Against Tito. Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988, pp. xvi + 294.

While this work is primarily a study of Yugoslav Cominformism it also provides the reader with a general overview of all the factional movements which plagued the Yugoslav Party prior to 1952. At the same time its analysis of the Cominformist and Popular Front deviations amounts to a triumph of historical scholarship.

Cominformism, we learn, was basically a Serb and Montenegrin phenomenon. Percentage-wise the strength of the movement was greatest in Montenegro but in absolute terms it was strongest in Serbia proper. Yet its true home appeared nonetheless to be the extended family of the Dinaric Alps. These concentrations greatly magnified the Cominformist threat to the unity of the CPY, for both Tito's original army, the one destroyed in southern Serbia in 1941, as well as that subsequently created in the Dinarics by the Ustasha massacres, were basically Serb formations, not to mention the over-representation of the Serbs from the quondam Austrian military frontier in the ranks of the Croatian Partisans. Cominformism was thus an intra-Serbian quarrel and as many as a fifth of Party members turned out to be Cominformists at the time of the breach with Moscow in 1948.

In its effort to master this most dangerous threat the Party was thrown (1948-1952) into a spasm of control by terror, one analogous to the Great Terror which began with the forcible collectivization of Soviet agriculture in 1928. For the threat of a Cominformist underground Party guided from Moscow was greatly amplified by the massing of Soviet satellite armies deployed along Yugoslavia's long eastern frontier. The two threats together made possible the creation by the CPY of an enormous bureaucracy controlling, in minute detail, economic as well as political life. The new controls were consolidated in 1949 by the introduction of Soviet *oblasti* within the republics at both state and Party levels, thus diminishing the importance of the federal organization of the country. Simultaneously camps were organized for holding Party comrades suspected of Cominformism and subjecting them to humiliation and torture from which the only escape lay in confession and conversion to Titoism, as visibly demonstrated by their enthusiastic participation in the torture of the unrepentant.