

l'auteur montrent donc la courbe descendante de l'exportation effectuée par le port de Galatzi, bien que celui-ci gardât sa première place dans le commerce roumain d'importation. Cependant, les effets négatifs de la Convention passée avec l'Autro-Hongrie devaient s'estomper dans l'intervalle des années 1876-1880 par suite de la conclusion de plusieurs autres conventions avec la Russie, la Suisse, la Grèce, l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne.

Il résulte de cet exposé détaillé des faits que la déclaration de Galatzi port ouvert avait eu tout d'abord des conséquences satisfaisantes. Ce n'est qu'une fois créé l'Etat unitaire roumain et son indépendance conquise que cette mesure cesse d'avoir encore sa raison d'être. Elle sera donc abolie en 1883, après quelques vifs débats du parlement roumain. Le chapitre final du livre de Constantin Buşe traite de l'augmentation du volume des échanges commerciaux effectués par le port de Galatzi (il s'agit surtout des affaires d'importation, l'exportation se faisant dans sa majeure partie à travers le port de Braïla), après 1883.

Par ailleurs, sur tout le parcours de cette deuxième section du livre, l'auteur jette également un regard sur la remarquable activité culturelle dont la ville de Galatzi fut le théâtre pendant toute la période étudiée. Il note par exemple entre autres que l'école publique de Galatzi comportait en 1845 des classes spéciales pour l'étude du commerce (quelques unes de ces classes enseignant même en grec ou en italien).

Nous ne saurions clôturer ce bref compte rendu sans souligner une fois de plus l'apport d'idées et de faits inédits vraiment intéressants du livre de Constantin Buşe. Ce n'est pas trop dire que de constater que la recherche concernant la vie économique et surtout les échanges commerciaux du Sud-Est européen dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle en fera sans doute son profit.

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John D. Bell, *Peasants in Power: Alexander Stamboliski and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union, 1899-1923*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977, pp. XIII + 271.

Defeated and unsuccessful leaders of socio-political movements seldom become heroes of the masses and historians do devote little attention to them. Alexander Stamboliski, the well-known leader of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU), is an exception. Although there are numerous books and articles on Stamboliski, none approaches in quality the work under review. Bell's book explores in depth the history of the origins, activity, achievements and failures of the BANU and Stamboliski's part therein. The emphasis is on the political history of Bulgarian agrarianism and on the life and ideas of Stamboliski.

The author presents a lucid summary of Bulgaria, "the peasant state", at the end of the nineteenth century, when the struggle began for the formation of a party representing the interests of the peasantry. He traces the origins of the movement by showing how the various local groups, usually formed and led by teachers, joined together in a single organization dedicated to the struggle for social justice. The author points out the diversity of the views expressed, the internecine struggles among the leaders, and the difficulties which had to be overcome to establish a truly national peasant movement. Although in the initial years of its existence the agrarian movement showed some signs of success, by 1903 its activities had fallen to their nadir. At that moment Stamboliski came to the scene and rescued the peasant movement.

Stamboliski used his position as editor of the movement's newspaper to develop his

own theory and practice of agrarianism, to gain popularity and to introduce new energy into the organization. Stamboliski was the first agrarian leader to develop and attempt to put in practice a realistic, well-defined program of political, economic, social and cultural reform. Professor Bell provides an excellent summary of Stamboliski's agrarian ideology and program. In discussing the beginnings of Stamboliski's ideological formation the author has correctly emphasized the economic aspect, that is, his view that without economic progress the peasant and society as a whole would be unable to advance. The author shows how from this standpoint Stamboliski made in 1908-1909, another step toward the development of his most significant theoretical contribution — the need for an "estatist organization" of society. Stamboliski argued that modern life had made traditional political parties obsolete and that they ought to be replaced with corporative, estatist organizations of occupational groups. There is no doubt that Stamboliski's agrarian ideology and practice seem remarkably original for his time.

The author goes on to show the steps which led to the transformation of the Agrarian Union from a semi-political group into a mass political party and the most significant peasant movement in Europe. The attitude of the Agrarian leaders toward the Balkan wars of 1912-1913 and World War I and their view of the monarchy and the necessity of transforming Bulgarian life are well delineated. These events, together with the fear, confusion, and corruption that followed represent important elements in the rise to power of the Agrarian Union.

While in power the Agrarians wanted to build a new society by introducing a number of original ideas such as the concept of "labor property" and the land reform that was based on it, cooperatives, universal and compulsory labor service, new forms of education, administration and a new approach to relations between states. The author praises the Agrarians for "the originality of the solutions" they attempted to implement to solve Bulgaria's immediate problems.

This reviewer would have liked to see the author go beyond and agree with Stamboliski that his and Lenin's were the only original social experiments and comment on the truthfulness of such a claim. The author believes that the main reason for the failure of the Stamboliski government was the inability to purge the nationalist-conservative officer corps and to convince the various opposing groups that the government's foreign policy was in line with the best interests of Bulgaria.

Professor Bell has made extensive use of archival and published materials and has produced a balanced and sympathetic account of the Agrarian movement in general and of Stamboliski in particular. There are, however, a number of problems which the author could have discussed. Notwithstanding the details the author presents, Stamboliski does not really emerge as a living person. There is enough information available on the agrarian leader which would permit at least an attempt at psychoanalysis. Moreover, the work would have had even greater significance had the author placed the Bulgarian experiment in a broader perspective. There is no discussion of the influence the BANU had, if any, on other peasant movements. How close was Stamboliski's ideology to other European peasant and populist movements and how original was the Bulgarian experiment?

These questions do not diminish the scholarly character and the significant contribution made by the author but are intended to show that there is much more work to be done in the future on Stamboliski and the Agrarian Union. Professor Bell's book is now the definitive history of the Stamboliski period in Bulgarian history.