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colm. The Albanians, like the Ottomans, saw the outcome of the Balkan Wars as a defeat because they had failed to unite the four provinces of the Empire that were populated by Albanians in a greater or smaller degree, but the author stresses that the Unionists' policies, the Albanian armed revolts and the lack of military discipline due to conflicts between Albanian and Unionist officers greatly contributed to the final outcome of the war.

Çelik's book offers a comprehensive picture of Albanian political and cultural history in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire. Being a broad overview, some topics are examined in more depth than others, and therefore the presentation of

the latter mostly relies on the existing literature (mostly Turkish or available in Turkish translation). A very prominent aspect of the book is in that the author gives the Ottoman perspective on many problems, which is very important for fully understanding some of the most crucial issues of Balkan history but which is often under-researched. This book can be highly useful to those interested in the extremely complicated political situation in the Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the roots and development of the so-called *Albanian Question*, but also to those interested in how contemporary Turkish historiography views this period.

KRÜST'O MANCHEV, *SÛRBILA I SÛRBSKO-BÛLGARSKITE OTNOSHENILA 1804–2010*
[SERBIA AND SERBIAN-BULGARIAN RELATIONS 1804–2010]. SOFIA: PARADIGMA,
2014, 499 p.

Reviewed by Jelena N. Radosavljević*

The author of the book reviewed here, Krüst'o Manchev, is a Bulgarian historian who, it may be curious to note, was born in the village of Verzar near Caribrod (present-day Dimitrovgrad) in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1926. He graduated in history from the University of Sofia, and then pursued his further studies in the Democratic Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union. He worked as a fellow of the Institute for Balkan Studies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Manchev published several books on the history of Balkan peoples, but the area of his special interest is the history of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Serbia.

Manchev's book on Serbian-Bulgarian relations opens with a preface in which he expresses his view that Serbian-Bulgarian relations through history have not been adequately studied and that his book is an attempt to improve such a state of re-

search. The book is divided into two parts. The first part, *Serbia 1804–2010*, is subdivided into five chapters: "The Serbian national revolution"; "State and political development"; "National policy"; "Serbia at the time of wars (1912–1918)"; and "Serbia in Yugoslavia". The second part, *Serbian-Bulgarian relations*, consists of six chapters: "National-territorial demarcation"; "Serbia and Bulgaria in the wars of 1912–1918"; "Under the Versailles status quo (1919–1941)"; "In Hitler's 'New Order'"; "Under communism (1944–1989)"; and "Bulgaria and the end of Yugoslavia (1990–2010)".

The first two chapters span the period from the beginning of the Serbian revolution (1804) through the Principality of

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Serbia as an autonomous part of the Ottoman Empire to the Congress of Berlin (1878) at which it achieved independence. Manchev looks at the state of anarchy in the pashalik of Belgrade in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century which led to the outbreak of two Serbian uprisings, in 1804 and 1815. He describes the wartime and peacetime phases of the Serbian revolution, as well as the social, agrarian and cultural changes in Serbian society brought about during and after it. He also briefly describes Serbia's progression towards independence, the question of separation of powers in the Principality, the succession of several constitutions, the establishment of two dynasties, and the process of building administrative, judicial, military and other institutions. He looks at Serbia's relations with other Balkan peoples in the period and at the influence of major powers' interests in the Balkans, which inevitably had implications for the realisation of the interests of the Serbian people. He does not fail to emphasise that the Serbs were stuck between two empires, Habsburg and Ottoman, and hence were exposed to pressures from both. For that reason, he gives an account of not only the situation of the Serbs in the Ottoman Empire (pashalik of Belgrade, Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Old Serbia), but also of the situation of the Serbian population in the Habsburg Monarchy, both in and outside the Military Frontier. He remarks that the term "Turkish bondage", or "slavery", frequently used in Balkan history writing, is a misconception because the Ottoman Empire was not a slavery system but a feudal one. It should be noted, however, that this term is not used in Serbian historiography, but that it occasionally is in Bulgarian, though not in reference to the Ottoman Empire as a slavery system but as foreign rule. Manchev describes the Ottoman Empire as a relatively tolerant state in which all peoples were able to use their own language and practise their own faith.

The chapter on national policy analyses the national policy of the Principality, subsequently Kingdom, of Serbia from the time of Kardjordje and Miloš Obrenović to the foreign policy pursued by the Constitution Defenders and Prince Michael, to the Eastern Crisis (1875-78), to the Serbian-Bulgarian War (1885), to the Annexation Crisis (1908). It looks at the issue primarily against the background of the Eastern Question and the division of Ottoman territories among Balkan peoples, and the influence of the great powers. It explains the significance of the Serbian population that remained outside Serbia (Old Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the aspirations for their union with Serbia. In his view, problems among the newly-created Balkan states arose from the insistence on the "one people, one state" principle, which was impracticable because of the region's ethnic and religious heterogeneity. Manchev looks at the issue of interaction between the national revivals of the Balkan peoples, whose conflicts resulted both from their invocation of their respective historical medieval traditions to back up their claims and from the region's ethnic heterogeneity. An example is the conflict of Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek interests in Ottoman Macedonia. Manchev singles out as important, and discusses, the issue of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its occupation and annexation by Austria-Hungary whose foreign policy shift to the Balkans after the unifications of Germany and Italy put strong pressure on Serbia. Discussing different contemporary conceptions of how to resolve the Serbian question, he pays particular attention to the "Načertanije" of Ilija Garašanin, but overrates its significance by describing it as the main line of Serbia's national policy, and stereotypically misinterprets it as a greater-Serbian and hegemonistic project.

The following two chapters describe the period of two Balkan Wars, the war of allied Balkan states against the Ottoman Empire and the war among the former allies over the division of Macedonia, which Bulgaria lost, as well as the outbreak and course of the First World War, whose official cause was the assassination of the Austrian heir-apparent in Sarajevo, but whose real causes went much deeper, down to the conflicting foreign-political and economic interests of the great powers. Manchev describes the division of Serbia by the occupying powers, without remaining silent on the crimes of Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian troops against Serbian civilian population. In his view, the creation of the Yugoslav state was a process that unfolded under Serbian dominance and on the wrong premise that the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes are one three-named people. All of that was the reason why Yugoslavia collapsed. In his view, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, i.e. of Yugoslavia, was a greater-Serbian creation in which the other peoples were in a subordinate position. That situation changed after the Second World War, when the state was reorganised on the federal principle, but the “federal balance” was disturbed after the death of Josip Broz Tito. Even though Manchev does not fail to touch on the problems caused by Croat and other nationalisms, he places all the blame for the disintegration of Yugoslavia on Slobodan Milošević and Serbian political leadership, claiming that they waged wars for the “greater-Serbian” idea. As a matter of fact, Manchev tends to overuse the term *Greater Serbia*, a term which has been misinterpreted and misused in a number of historiographical works, his own included. On the other hand, the role of foreign factors in the disintegration of Yugoslavia is not taken into account. Manchev gives a summary outline of the military and civilian death toll in the wars of the Yugoslav succession. Yet, when discussing the Serbian-Albanian conflict in Kosovo and Metohija, he takes a biased, scholarly indefensible

perspective by describing the Albanian side as the sole victim, while completely ignoring the violence and ethnic cleansing committed against Serbs.

The second part of the book, *Serbian-Bulgarian relations*, opens with Manchev’s description of the Serbs and Bulgarians as two kindred peoples in terms of Slavic origin, culture, religion and language. Problems in their relations arose from the division of Ottoman Balkan territories which made it impossible for the Balkan states to establish themselves as fully national because of the region’s ethnically mixed populations. In his view, that was the cause of all problems in their relations. National doctrines, such as the Načertanije for Serbia and the San Stefano ideal for Bulgaria, i.e. the ideas of Greater Serbia and Greater Bulgaria, caused unnecessary problems between the two peoples. The idea of taking area as a measure of the greatness of a nation is wrong; the greatness of a nation should be measured by its form of government and the well-being of its citizens. In Manchev’s view, disputed territories were the Nišava and Morava valleys (*Zapadni bugarski zemlji*, allegedly “western Bulgarian lands”), Macedonia and the territory the Kingdom of SCS gained under the Treaty of Neuilly (*Zapadnite pokrajini* or “western provinces”). As far as the Nišava and Morava valleys are concerned, Manchev claims that the border established under the Treaty of Berlin is not subject to revision because it coincides with the line of demarcation between the two nations. With the remark that the national consciousness of the local population at the time was debateable, today, as a result of propaganda, wars, decades of living within the boundaries of one or the other state, the population to the west of the border feel themselves as Serbs and those to the east of it as Bulgarians. Manchev describes Macedonia as an area where Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek interests conflicted, with varying success, but remarks that Bulgaria

had an advantage in the nineteenth century because of the presence of the Bulgarian Exarchate and the fact that a good part of the population felt themselves as Bulgarians. Such a picture changed as a result of subsequent wars, and today the population of Macedonia is a nation in its own right, which Manchev finds to be quite natural. After all struggles for control over Macedonia, its population formed their own national consciousness in defence against outside influences and ravages of war. The chapters that cover the past hundred years offer a historical overview spanning the Balkan Wars, the First World War, and the interwar period, when the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia and Bulgaria had divergent agendas, the former being interested in the maintenance of the Versailles system, the latter in its revision. Manchev also gives an account of the efforts towards a rapprochement between the two countries, which resulted in the signing of a pact of friendship in 1937, but before long they found themselves on opposite sides in the Second World War. Manchev depicts the positions of the two countries under communism when, after the Tito-Stalin split, they were also on different sides for some time. In Manchev's view, the cession of territory from Bulgaria to the Kingdom of SCS under the 1919 Treaty of Neuilly was a mistake both because the territory was inhabited by Bulgarian population and because of its geographical position which separated it from the rest of the Kingdom of SCS by a mountain massif and from Bulgaria by a simple border. Yet, Manchev argues that it is meaningless to consider revision of the treaty, given that the present-day structure of the population is different from what it was in 1919. Finally, Manchev discusses Bulgaria's position on the disintegration of Yugoslavia, notably on Macedonia's declaration of independence, Albanian-Serbian antagonism and the events in Srebrenica. In all of these cases, he sticks to his biased

perception of the Serbian side as aggressor and non-Serb populations as its victim. The crimes committed against the Serbian population in Kosovo and former Yugoslav republics are barely mentioned. The impression is that Manchev here tackles an all too recent past to be studied with any measure of credibility due as much to the lack of historical distance and the unavailability of all relevant sources as to the potential and actual exploitation of these issues for short-term political purposes and by different political groups. A biased approach or a lack of factual knowledge in this section of the book undermines its overall scholarly merit.

The book ends with an afterword which offers the author's main conclusions about the past history of the Bulgarian and Serbian peoples and guidelines for their good relations in the future. He emphasises that the two peoples should build mutual relations in tolerance and understanding, and reject expansionist aspirations which he believes have hitherto guided them. The book is furnished with historical maps and a bibliography. The biographies of major figures of Bulgarian and Serbian history at the end of each chapter constitute useful appendices.

Manchev's book is one more work whose purpose is to make a contribution to the study of Serbian-Bulgarian relations through history. In that sense, the author does his best to show that what matters for a state is the good life of its citizens rather than its endless territorial expansion, and he does not try to conceal the Bulgarian side's treatment of the Serbs during the two world wars when it committed horrible crimes in the southern areas of Serbia. As far as the history of Yugoslavia is concerned, and especially its disintegration in the 1990s, however, he was not able to peruse all the necessary sources which affected the quality of those sections of the book devoted to it.