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Constantine, was allowed to return to the country thanks to a quite dubious referendum. Thus, Greece under Constantine's leadership had to face the war with the Turkey of Kemal Atatürk and the subsequent population transfer codified by the Treaty of Lausanne.

The evolution of South-East Europe in the 1930s was interrupted by the Great Depression which the region began to feel only at the beginning of the decade. The progressive closing of European markets for agricultural exports from the Balkan kingdoms caused protracted economic and political instability in the region, leading to the emergence of authoritarian regimes. Democracy was a victim of the economic crisis, while the revival of German influence in the Hitler period created something of a German-dominated economic space in South-East Europe. King Alexander and Milan Stojadinović in Yugoslavia, King Carol and General Antonescu in Romania, Tsankov and Liapchev in Bulgaria, King Zog and his Italian mentors in Albania and, finally, Metaxas in Greece, were not in power at the same time, but taken together they demonstrate the fact that democratic processes in the Balkans were dying down. After Hitler's army overpowered western democracies, South-East Europe, already economically incorporated into Hitler's New Order, chose

to join it formally with the exception of Yugoslavia and Greece.

The Second World War and its aftermath confirmed the gap that had been created between Western Europe and its south-eastern part from the mid-1930s onwards. The domination of two totalitarian regimes over the region created the impression that the efforts the Balkan democracies had made in the 1920s and 1930s had not produced any result, but rather had been a failed experiment which had proved the ineptitude of these societies for democracy. Basciani's book, however, proves otherwise. Its merit is in putting forward the fruits of an important bibliography on the region that provides irrefutable evidence for its evident evolution, the evolution based on the idea of democracy and free economy. The common effort to bridge the gap which separated the region from the rest of Europe was thwarted by geopolitical developments on a broader European scale. Nevertheless, the illusion of modernity, as Basciani's book is titled, cannot and should not obscure the efforts to modernise Balkans societies. Their results may have been annihilated by subsequent communist dictatorships, but historiography such as Basciani's excellent study has the obligation to rediscover and present the interwar efforts of Europe's "Third World" to join the mainstream of European development.

MILAN RISTOVIĆ, *NA PRAGU HLADNOG RATA. JUGOSLAVIJA I GRADJANSKI RAT U GRČKOJ (1945–1949)*. [ON THE BRINK OF THE COLD WAR. YUGOSLAVIA AND THE CIVIL WAR IN GREECE (1945–1949)]. BELGRADE: FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET UNIVERZITETA U BEOGRADU, 2016, 461 p.

*Reviewed by Radmila Pejić**

Milan Ristović, Professor of Modern History at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, is a leading expert on the history of Yugoslav-Greek relations in the latter half of the twentieth century. He is the author of several distinguished monographs, which

have been translated into English (*A Long Journey Home: Greek Refugee Children in Yugoslavia: 1948–1960*, Thessaloniki: Institute

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for Balkan Studies, 2000) and Greek (*Το πείραμα Μπούλκες “Η ελληνική δημοκρατία” στη Γιουγκοσλαβία 1945–1949*, 1η έκδ. – Θεσσαλονίκη : Κυριακίδη Αφοί, 2006). This monograph is a synthesis of two decades of research, based on the archival material of Yugoslav provenance and extensive literature written in several languages. In his theoretical introduction, Ristović examines conceptual differences in defining and exploring an internal conflict, i.e. the nature of a civil war. In this respect, Ristović concludes, “The experience of the Greek society and state during the Second World War and at the beginning of the Cold War in the 1940s is one of the most striking examples produced by modern European history in terms of its complexity, the number of participants and the effects of ‘long duration.’ The civil war in Greece, with its three ‘rounds,’ is part of a wider phenomenon of modern European history; from the conflict of the warring factions of the resistance movement it transformed after the end of the Second World War into an all-encompassing, political, ideological and military confrontation, which, in the environment of the newly-divided Balkans, Europe and the world, assumed greater significance than that of a limited inter-Greek showdown. Political confrontation thus ‘degenerated’ into a ‘total civil war’” (p. 43). Modern Greek historiography divides the civil war in Greece into three phases (1943/1944; 1944/1945; 1946/1949), and Prof. Ristović largely deals with the last phase in his monograph.

Drawing on the rich archival material, the author details the forms in which both Greek movements acted from 1941 onwards. The more massive one was the EAM (Εθνικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο – People’s Liberation Front), founded in September 1941 at the initiative of communists and its military wing ELAS (Εθνικός Λαϊκός Απελευθερωτικός Στρατός – National Popular Liberation army). The other resistance movement was the EDES (Εθνικός Δημοκρατικός Ελληνικός Σύνδεσμος – National Democratic Hellenic

League) under command of Napoleon Zervas, which was defeated and broken during the December 1944 uprising. The EAM was the largest resistance movement and it fought against the other movements as well as against the paramilitary formations of the collaborationist government. After the agreement in Varkiza in February 1945, the ELAS was disbanded. Next year the fighting was continued. The Democratic Army of Greece (Δημοκρατικός Στρατός Ελλάδας – DAG) was formed under the leadership of the ELAS veteran Markos Vafiadis, who commanded from a base located in Yugoslavia. Ristović demonstrates that the assistance given to DAG from Yugoslavia was extensive, varied and essential to DAG’s fighting capabilities. Systematic supplying of DAG from Yugoslavia started in the second half of 1946 and continued on a large scale until the second half of 1948 – it was publically announced in October 1946. It lasted in different forms and with different intensity until the break-down of relations between the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Communist Party of Greece in connection with the 1948 Cominform Resolution. The aid consisted of various war material, medical equipment, medicines, the treatment and rehabilitation of the wounded on Yugoslav territory, deliveries of foodstuff, clothes and footwear.¹ From July 1947 to the spring of 1948, there were

¹ Ristović has showed that Tito’s envoy Svetozar Vukmanović Tempo was inaccurate in his brochure “O narodnoj revoluciji u Grčkoj”, published in Belgrade in 1950, where he wrote that “we did not receive receipts for the aid in weaponry and war material which we gave to the People’s Liberation Movement in Greece.” Tempo’s brochure was also published in English: *How and why the People’s Liberation Struggle of Greece met with Defeat* (London, 1960). Such receipts, in fact, existed and they allowed the author to reconstruct the extent and the kind of assistance provided by the Yugoslav government.

also radio shows broadcasted from Yugoslav territory (*Slobodna Grčka – Glas istine*) for the listeners in Greece, before the radio stations were transferred to Bucharest. Ristović reveals how “military advisers” were sent to Greece from Yugoslavia, who provided help in military training and handling of certain types of weapons in the headquarters of DAG. In a separate chapter discussing the case of a community of Greek communists in the Yugoslav village of Buljkes, Ristović shows how the Yugoslav territory constituted something of a logistic base, but also a training camp for the DAG fighters. The author precisely registers 6,317 wounded and sick members of DAG and civilians treated in Yugoslavia and 2,333 difficult surgical interventions for which more than 80 million dinars were spent in the period from June 1947 to August 1949. Besides the situation on the ground and the relations between the Yugoslav authorities and Greek communists, Ristović dedicates part of his study to reviewing the civil war in Greece in the wider, European and global, context, giving a title to one of his chapters “‘Truman’s Doctrine,’ ‘Russian Baby’ and ‘British Child.’”² Ristović points out that, apart from the interference of Great Britain and the Soviet Union, the situation on the ground was influenced by the proclamation of the Truman’s Doctrine in March 1947, which was followed by considerable American military and economic assistance to the official government in Athens.

To make a study of the civil war in Greece complete, it is necessary to look into

the conflicts arising from the Macedonian question both as it concerned the Yugoslav official relations with the government in Athens (which were nearly at the point of break-down) and the difficulties this controversy created in the relations between the Yugoslav and Greek communists. Special attention is given to the question of Slav-Macedonians or Slavophones in Greek Macedonia, who probably constituted the majority of the rank and file in the fighting forces of Greek communists in the latest phase of the civil war. The estimates of the total number of Slav-Macedonians in northern Greece after the First World War varies from 250,000 to 360,000. The influence from Skoplje on the “Slav-Macedonian” political and military organisations in northern Greece was an acute problem. It became even more pronounced and central to the fierce dispute between the Yugoslav and Greek communists after the conflict between Yugoslavia and Cominform emerged in 1948 and especially during the last months of the civil war. Archival research allowed the author fresh insights and new, original interpretations. Tito’s systematic support to Greek communists had twin aims: first, to resolve the Macedonian question as a whole, in accordance with the Cominform’s views; and second, to establish a “brotherly” ideological regime at the southern flank of communist Yugoslavia at the beginning of the Cold War. Logistic support of Tito’s Yugoslavia to Greek communists became impossible after the split between Belgrade and Moscow in the summer of 1948. Following the conflict with the Cominform, Tito sought for support in the west and he could not receive it without dropping his backing for DAG. The closure of the Greek border and depriving Greek communists of logistic support allowed the pro-western government in Athens to win the civil war and to entrench Greece permanently in the Western bloc. The Eastern Mediterranean was crucial to the Western Powers and Stalin acknowledged this fact – he was

² This title is derived from a letter sent by Orme Sargent of the Foreign Office to the British Ambassador in Belgrade in November 1945, in which the former noted that it was “disconcerting that the Russian baby, Yugoslavia, shows all signs of vitality although it is underweight, whereas the British infant, Greece, remains a sickly child incapable of walking without considerable help and has a constant need for artificial nutrition.”

unwilling to engage in a new conflict in the area in which his ideological protégés stood little chance of scoring a victory.

In conclusion, Ristović has produced a valuable monograph with a wealth of information, carefully balanced interpretations and excellent grounding in the wider Balkan

and European context of the civil war in Greece, which will serve as a point of departure for all researchers of Balkan history in this period. In particular, he has convincingly proved that the Yugoslav dimension to the Greek civil war was of considerable importance for its outcome.

BOJAN MITROVIĆ AND MARIJA MITROVIĆ, *STORIA DELLA CULTURA E DELLA LETTERATURA SERBA*. LECCE: ARGO, 2015, 256 p.

*Reviewed by Bojan Aleksov**

Italian publishing house Argo from Lecce in Puglia promotes the lands on the other side of the Adriatic Sea either with studies on the Balkan past or the translations of works of Balkan authors. Among hundreds of titles it published in recent years unfortunately only two address Serbian culture and history specifically – the Italian translation of Dositej Obradović's memoirs and Marija Mitrović's monograph on the Serbian culture in Trieste. Now professor Mitrović has teamed up with her son, historian Bojan Mitrović, to change that and produced a volume that introduces to the Italian public Serbian culture and literature from its Byzantine origins right to contemporary times. Given the interest and a great sympathy for Serbia and Serbian culture among Italian readers this book has been long overdue. It is thus with great relief to learn that the Ministry of Culture of Serbia recognised its value and supported publication.

Written decades after previous attempts, this volume not only updates them but brings a fresh and modern perspective. It rightly sees and interprets Serbian culture and literature as a symbiosis of foreign influences whereby both commonalities and particularities are singled out. This is a must when presenting a culture to an audience in the country whose art and culture have so powerfully radiated beyond their confines and inspired so many Serbian authors. First

Serbian books were published in Italy after all, and from Dositej Obradović via Njegoš, Ivo Andrić, Laza Kostić, Jovan Dučić to recent times all significant Serbian authors spent time in Italy or grew with Italian culture. Many of these links and inspirations are duly illuminated by the well-versed Mitrović team.

Another novel and very useful approach in this volume is Bojan Mitrović's historical contextualisation of all literary and cultural trends and achievements. Furthermore, even though essentially a non-referenced textbook in its genre and thus necessarily of a general nature, this literature and culture overview on almost every page brings a citation, a footnote or a comment that explain or frame the material discussed. Usually these little vignettes discuss in more depth some interesting, often disputed issue, such as explaining the origins and development of *slava* celebration and its later-day appropriation by the Serbian Orthodox Church. The most numerous and relevant are those aimed at the Italian audience, documenting either political or cultural encounters between the two peoples, or making parallels, comparisons, links to Italian history and culture. Very usefully Italian translations

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