

The final blow came in 1901 when the leaders of the Slovak National Party announced that they were abandoning the common policy of boycotting parliament and would run a slate of candidates in the forthcoming elections. But the author finds the underlying causes of collapse to have been the weakness of the Slovak party and internal dissensions among the Rumanians and Serbs.

Krajčovič has made extensive use of unpublished Slovak sources and newspapers, and for this reason the sections on the Slovaks constitute the most original part of his work. His information about the Rumanians and Serbs, on the other hand, has been drawn largely from either this Slovak material or from secondary sources. Little use, for example, has been made of the Rumanian press and Rumanian archive holdings, and as a result he can offer little that is new in the way of interpretation. The same may also be said about the Serbs. But his factual account of both movements is nonetheless ample. The main weakness of the work, it seems to me, is the author's failure to place the events of the 1890s in historical perspective and to treat them as part of a complex process that had begun much earlier in the century. An introductory chapter surveying the development of the three national movements since 1848 would have enhanced the importance of the Congress of Nationalities as a departure from tradition, would have offered a broad basis upon which to judge the unworkableness of the alliance, and, perhaps most valuable of all, would have provided new insight into the general nature of nationalism in the Habsburg Monarchy.

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MAGYAR-AMERIKAI KAPCSOLATOK, 1945–1948. By *Dr. Péter Várkonyi*. Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1971. 266 pp. 25 Ft.

Contrary to Soviet history in which only the future is certain and the past changes according to the party line, in this book the history of Hungarian-American relations in 1945–48 is repeated according to the best traditions of Rákosi's and Stalin's spokesmen. As in Orwell's *1984*, in which the Ministry of Peace was responsible for waging war, in Hungary the Communist seizure of power is presented as an internal democratic transformation. This Aesopian language is used throughout the volume. The triumph of the progressive social forces was opposed by reactionaries supported by the villain of the piece, the United States. The goal of the aggressive American monocapitalism has been world domination. Accordingly, the United States supported the reactionary forces and opposed the democratization of Hungarian social life. Despite malevolent American interventions and some misleading free elections, the progressive forces prevailed, thanks to the always-ready help of the Soviet Union, the presence of the Soviet army, and Soviet leadership in the Allied Control Council. Moreover, it is noted in broader context that "it was not the military presence of the Soviet Union which determined the character of the social transformations in the East European countries—although its fateful significance can hardly be overestimated—but it was the British and before all the American military presence which prevented similar fundamental social transformations in the overwhelming majority of European countries" (pp. 36–37).

The policy of equilibrium followed by the coalition government in Hungary is presented as a sinister plot. The author even criticizes Rákosi's approval of, and participation in, the trip of a Hungarian government delegation to Washington in

1946, although it was preceded by a similar visit to Moscow. Historians may experience some revelations. For example, the president's message to Congress in March 1947 concerning the Truman Doctrine "explained that the economic results achieved by the Soviet Union as well as the progress of democratic forces in Central and South Eastern Europe, 'endanger the security of the United States'" (pp. 200–201).

Besides the narrative, the text contains a selection of documents from the Hungarian Foreign Ministry in addition to numerous references to materials published in the Soviet Union and in Western countries. Regrettably, some important Western sources are not used. For example, the perfunctory discussion of the Churchill-Stalin "percentage agreement" of 1944, which set the Soviet and British influence in Hungary on a 50-50 percent basis, does not mention the original source, Winston Churchill's *Triumph and Tragedy* (Boston, 1953, pp. 226–28). All in all, the perspective and methods of the book faithfully mirror the orthodox Stalinist interpretation of events practiced in the Rákosi era.

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A HISTORY OF THE BALKAN PEOPLES. By *René Ristelhueber*. Edited and translated by *Sherman David Spector*. New York: Twayne, 1971. xiii, 470 pp.

The publishers of this work state that they decided to avail "both students and laymen" of an English translation of René Ristelhueber's *Histoire des peuples balkaniques*, published in 1950, because they felt there was a need for an introductory survey of the history of the Balkan peoples. The author, René Ristelhueber, was a French diplomat who at various times served his country in the Balkans. He died in 1960. Sherman D. Spector (professor at Russell Sage College) was responsible for the revision and translation of this book. In his preface Spector writes that the book is not for those who are seeking a "critical, scholarly, or exhaustive history of the Balkan peoples," but is intended to serve as a one-volume "basic introduction" to the history of the Balkan peoples.

That there is need for a good survey of the history of the Balkan peoples is true. Unfortunately, this book falls short of that modest desideratum. It glosses over many important issues and topics that even the average reader should be familiar with. Practically nothing is said about the character of the diverse Balkan societies and cultures. The book is hardly more than a chronicle of major military and political moments in the history of the Balkan peoples. Some observations are flippant and some characterologies are based on legend. In one place, for example, the author tells us that the Macedonians are "apparently of both Serb and Bulgarian origins" (p. 173) and in another that the Serbs are "the most authentic Slavs in the Balkans" (p. 185). Yet despite these defects, one does encounter some good observations and insights in the book, and Professor Spector's summation of major developments in the Balkans since 1950 is done meticulously and with authority.

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