

only by backwardness and by critics of backwardness more consistent than he, not only by his enemies and by his friends, not only by his well and ill wishers, but finally and most consistently by himself" (p. 322).

Aside from carrying out the first commandment of any biographer worth his salt, namely, to present a credible human portrait, Spira gives us a panoramic view of the Hungarian scene woven of minute, meticulously researched day-to-day details, many of which are drawn from archival sources scattered all over Hungary and hitherto unpublished or unused. His book thus becomes a treasure house of information not only for any future work on Széchenyi or Kossuth but also for the researcher of the Hungarian Age of Reforms. Whether or not Széchenyi, who for almost a decade had been Kossuth's most bitter opponent because of the revolutionary dangers anticipated in the latter's policies, succeeded in overcoming his fears to the degree claimed by Spira, and whether he joined the revolution to the extent indicated by the author, are questions on which honest students of history may disagree. But there can be no doubt about the author's sincerity of beliefs, his mastery of contemporary materials, and the virtuosity of his intellectual achievement. The Anglo-Saxon reader is in the debt of the Hungarian Academy for making available a difficult yet indispensable work in a nearly faultless translation by engaging the editorial services of Dr. Richard E. Allen, a native American connoisseur of Hungarian history as well as of the intricacies of both English and Magyar.

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BRITISH POLICY IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR. By *Elisabeth Barker*. Studies in Russian and East European History. New York: Barnes & Noble, Harper & Row. London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1976. viii, 320 pp. Maps. \$27.50.

No one interested in the Balkans, Britain, or international politics during World War II can afford to ignore this lucid, densely-packed, and informative analytical narrative. Elisabeth Barker, an accomplished journalist-historian already respected for her earlier books on Europe, has produced the best short account, to date, of the British wartime role in southeast Europe as a whole.

Neither a history of southeast Europe during the war nor a comprehensive account of British wartime policies there, it "aims rather to provide the essential materials and pointers for an understanding of British dealings" with the region and its basic criterion in allocating space to the six states that comprise the region is current historiographical need rather than their substantive importance to Britain at the time. Greece and Yugoslavia, about which more has been written, therefore receive less attention than Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania, on which new light is shed, and the comparative dimension is heightened by grouping the six states into defeated ones with mass resistance movements and those which became German (then Soviet) satellites. Turkey, though not treated as part of the region, receives considerable attention because of its bearing on British relations with the region.

The book has two parts, each consisting of ten chapters. Part 1 deals with the war from its outbreak to the Balkan military campaign of 1941. Part 2 covers the longer period that ensued but, except in broad terms of British-Soviet rivalry until the end of the war, stops with the region's liberation by the end of 1944. In each part, initial chapters treat the entire region from the standpoint of British war strategy and British-Soviet relations; subsequent ones deal with individual states. In part 2, however, the Macedonian issue receives separate treatment and a chapter on the German satellites as a whole precedes chapters on each one individually.

Apart from scope and emphasis, the volume is also important because of the rich source material on which it draws. Besides already existing publications, Barker has laboriously and skillfully used unpublished official documents now available at the Public Record Office, London (Foreign Office, cabinet, and chiefs-of-staff papers, as well as some reports and correspondence of the Special Operations Executive) and material from the Hugh Dalton papers, London School of Economics. She has also interviewed persons who were involved in the region at the time (particularly George Taylor, Bickham Sweet-Escott, Ivor Porter, and Lázló Veress) and in some cases has utilized their private collections of papers. Finally, her own wartime experience in the Political Warfare Executive has given her a special feel for her subject.

Her basic thesis is simple and balanced. British effort in southeast Europe was "a story of last-minute improvisations and the undertaking of commitments without the resources to fulfill them," a "large and strenuous undertaking" which fizzled out and did "very little to serve British national interests" in the narrow sense. But military, economic, and political facts made the British task impossible, while "unheroic muddle" contributed to Germany's defeat and did not offer "much cause for shame."

Within the terms of presentation, the thesis is indisputable, supported by new documentation, and even-handedly elaborated. But the terms themselves are inadequate. Criticisms receiving greatest scrutiny (such as sellout to the Soviet Union, or leading Balkan client groups to expect too much of the West) derive from the political right or center. Concerns of the left, such as the role of economic interests in the conduct of foreign policy, are rarely addressed. Moral criticism is cast in terms of basically personal values (bullying and deception) rather than public values (representativeness of British client groups or adequacy of British postwar planning in terms of the region's inherited problems). Stress on "muddle" and internal differences among the British, all too true, is not counterbalanced by attention to underlying perceptions and purposes common to all these competing groups. In spite of zealously drawn contrasts, inferences about British behavior in the region as a whole are colored by the cases receiving greatest attention ("failures"), especially when Greece, the deviant "success," receives so little attention. Finally, the relevance of detailed analysis to larger issues of historical interpretation is seldom made explicit.

As a result, only those already initiated into the subject will find the book exciting and easy to appreciate. For the uninitiated, sustained reading may require special interest in the subject, and much that remains problematic about a complex reality may seem "settled" by so competent and judicious a piece of writing.

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A HISTORY OF MODERN SERBIA, 1804–1918, 2 vols. By *Michael Boro Petrovich*. New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976. Vol. 1: xx, 359 pp. + 8 pp. plates. Maps. Vol. 2: xi, 372 pp. (pp. 360–731) + 8 pp. plates. Maps. \$49.50 for 2-vol. boxed set.

Hooray! Michael Petrovich's history of Serbia has arrived, and it is magnificent. Superbly designed and printed in a boxed two-volume edition by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, complete with a stunning dust jacket, this long-awaited work has immediately become the standard account of its subject in a Western language. Skillfully, and with full attention to the social, economic, and cultural aspects of Serbian history, Petrovich presents a detailed account of the transformation of the Belgrade pashalik of 1800 into the almost modern state of Serbia one hundred years later.

Petrovich's interpretation of Serbian history in the first half of the nineteenth century is traditional. He believes that the church preserved the memory of Serbia's