

ABSTRACTS

I. MONOGRAPHS:

1. Petrov, B. Bulgaria and the New Slavic Movement (1941 – 1948). Sofia: Gutenberg Publishing, 2019, 315 pp. ISBN: 978-619-176-156-2. [In Bulgarian].

During the Second World War in the Soviet Union, in a direct manner the international All-Slavic Committee was set up, entrusted with the task of disseminating anti-German propaganda among the Slavic peoples. The Committee, in purely organizational terms, was in fact the first centralized body in the whole history of Slavdom, developing an active and purposeful activity on its unification. At the same time, the Slavic movement in Bulgaria, due to the objective circumstances both in the country and in whole Europe, was in a state of a complete decline and profound lethargy. After the end of the war, however, Bulgaria quickly shrugged off its past as a German satellite and managed to become one of the most active and zealous member states of the Moscow-led all-Slavic movement. It is Bulgaria's place in this new Slavic movement, from its foundation to its very end, the main scholarly object of the monograph. It should be borne in mind that it is not a simple upgrade, compilation or a new reading of what had been written so far but an original and a complete scholarly product.

2. Petrov, B. Diplomacy and Subversion in the Balkans: British Policy towards Albania during and after the Second World War. Sofia: Gutenberg Publishing, 2020, 306 pp. ISBN: 978-619-176-178-4. [In Bulgarian].

The chronological scope of the monograph exceeds a ten-year period, the lower limit of which begins in the spring of 1939 and the upper one ends in the early 1950s. The events marking this time frame are the beginning of the Italian aggression against Albania and the end of the British attempts to overthrow the regime of Enver Hoxha. The text of the monograph is arranged in a structure consisting of an introduction, two chapters with five paragraphs each, and an afterword with a conclusion, so as to be evenly spread and well-grounded. The dividing line between the chapters is naturally drawn by the end of the Italian occupation and its replacement by the German one in 1943, which played the role of a kind of detonator of the civil war. In its essence, the monograph is a classic empirical-conceptual study, like most related works dealing with issues of this kind. It reveals, in an accessible and understandable way, both the hidden decision-making mechanism of the British institutions and services in charge, and implementation of the taken decisions on the terrain in Albania itself. The study is a product of both the author's long collecting work and his scholarly accumulations over the years. The exposition itself, without compromising in the slightest its scholarly value, is presented in a comprehensible and readable form, which undoubtedly broadens the readership of the book.

II. STUDIES:

1. Petrov, B. Great Britain and Resistance in Albania, 1943-1944. - *Etudes balkaniques*, 2006, № 2, 87-118. ISSN: 0324-1645. (92 011 symbols)

The study, as its title suggests, reveals and analyses in detail Britain's policy towards the strong Albanian resistance against the foreign invaders – in the beginning against the Italians and later against the Germans who took their place. The implementation of this policy is examined on two levels - the first was diplomatic and carried out by the Foreign Office, the second was exercised on the ground in Albania itself by British military missions sent and guided by the Special Operations Executive, which began to arrive in the country since the spring of 1943. There was often inconsistency, even frictions, between the two services in decision-making process with regard to Albania. The officers of the military missions (British liaison officers) can be divided in turn into two groups, those attached to Enver Hoxha's partisans and others in liaison with nationalist organisations and independent chiefs. Each of them lobbied and advocated for their counterparts, who turned out to be active parties in the civil war in Albania that broke out the autumn of 1943.

2. Petrov, B. The Activities of General Georgios Tsolakoglou to Retain the Territorial Integrity of Occupied Greece. - *Etudes balkaniques*, 2008, № 1, 61-80. ISSN: 0324-1645. (56 527 symbols).

The aim of the study is to give as impartial as possible a picture of the events that forced General Georgios Tsolakoglu to put himself forward and accept the post of the first Quisling Prime Minister of defeated and occupied by the Axis Greece. At the same time, it is important to uncover his motives that impelled him to do so. He considered them to be patriotic and was convinced that his countrymen would appreciate his sacrifice for the sake of Greece's national interests, the preservation of its territorial integrity and the alleviation of the suffering of its population subjected to hunger and terror by the occupiers. In the end, however, the puppet government he led remained entirely dependent on them and without any real power - and therefore completely helpless to do anything which could meet Prime Minister Tsolakoglu's initial expectations.

3. Petrov, B. The Neglected Ally: Zog of Albania in British Military Plans. - *Etudes balkaniques*, 2013, No. 3-4, 38-58. ISSN: 0324-1645. (52 468 symbols).

The study reveals the intentions of various British institutions and agencies to use the services of the exiled Albanian King Zog in order to stimulate Albanian resistance against the Axis powers. The British involved him in their war plans twice. The first was in late 1940 and the second in early 1944. In both cases, however, to no avail. In the first case it was the external pressure, namely the Greek opposition, whereas the outcome of the second one was predetermined by the developments within the country itself. Regardless of Britain's reluctance to make any political commitments to Zog, which included granting him the status of an Allied leader, he did not give up assistance. But in a broader context the truth was that Albania was not such a high priority for British interests as its neighbors were. If it were not so, the attitude to its King, without any doubt, would have been different and most probably he would have had another fate.

4. Petrov, B. The Soviet Military Mission in Greece and the British-Soviet Division of the Balkans into Spheres of Influence. – *Military History Review*, 2015, No. 2, 71-83. ISSN: 0204-4080. [In Bulgarian, 56 003 symbols].

The study examines in detail the circumstances of the arrival of the Soviet military mission in Greece at the end of July 1944, which have been shrouded in obscurity down to the present day. Its arrival occurred at a critical moment for the country, when the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and the dominated by it National Liberation Front (EAM) were faced the acute dilemma whether to enter the British-sponsored coalition government of George Papandreou. It can be inferred from the course of the account that the message that the head of the mission, Lieutenant-Colonel Grigori Popov, brought with him was that the Greek Communists could not rely on Soviet diplomatic and military support and that they had been discreetly advised to enter Papandreou's government. Eventually, they did so and Greece, as a result of secret arrangements between Moscow and London, remained in the British sphere of influence after the war.

5. Petrov, B. The Personality of Exarch Stefan of Bulgaria through the Eyes of Soviet Generals. – In: Religious Institutions and National Identity in the Balkans (19th – 20th Century). Comp. and ed. by Z. Parvanova. Sofia: Prof. Marin Drinov Publishing House of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2021, 267-283. ISBN: 978-619-245-163-9. [In Bulgarian, 37 850 symbols]

The study offers a strange and seemingly unusual at first sight perspective on the personality and deeds of Exarch Stefan. In fact, it reveals the impressions of four Soviet generals who had contact with him by virtue of their official duties. Such a curious point of view inevitably presupposes strong subjectivity and bias but this should not serve as an excuse for a priori rejection. However, if these personal opinions and assessments are placed in the given historical context and subjected to critical analysis, they would only enrich the portrait of the Exarch with additional touches.

6. Petrov, B. The Anti-Urbanism of Serbian Collaborators during World War II - In: The City of the Balkans: Spaces, Images, Memory. Comp. and ed. by R. Preshlenova. Sofia: BAS – Institute of Balkan Studies with Centre of Thracology, 2021, 567-584. ISBN: 978-619-7179-25-5. [In Bulgarian, 40 596 symbols].

Anti-Urbanism was an organic integral part of Serbian collaborators' ideology and propaganda in occupied Serbia during the Second World War. The quisling Prime Minister General Milan Nedić and his henchmen considered the 'corrupt city' as an incubator of all putrefactive and noxious to the Serbiandom external agents. Their beliefs, however, were neither new nor original: their roots could be traced back to the pre-war period when anti-urbanism had been imported and 'enriched' by some representatives of the Serbian extreme Right and Orthodox clergy.

III. ARTICLES:

1. Petrov, B. The Monarchy in Albania during World War II. – *Etudes balkaniques*, 2002, № 2, 3-14. ISSN: 0324-1645.

The article traces the fate of the Albanian King Zogu, who found refuge abroad, and his efforts to return to his throne after the war with the help of the British. Despite his willingness, however, the British government never recognised his status as an Allied leader, as it did to the monarchs of Albania's neighbours, Yugoslavia and Greece. This was mainly due to the fact that Albania itself did not find a well-defined place in British plans for the post-war settlement of Europe, and for this main reason its monarch-in-exile's private status did not imply a restoration of his pre-war regime after the end of the occupation of the country.

2. Petrov, B. British Policy towards Albania: April 1939 – April 1941. - *Etudes balkaniques*, 2004, № 4, 51-68. ISSN: 0324-1645.

The article explores in depth British government's attitude to Albania's occupation by Fascist Italy in early April 1939 and its subsequent annexation. Chamberlain's cabinet turned a blind eye to the Italian aggressiveness, driven by the delusion that at the cost of concessions Italy could remain neutral in the world conflict. The first victim of this initially mistaken policy was Albania, whose occupation and annexation were officially recognized by London. After Italy's entry into the war on the side of Nazi Germany, and especially after its attack on Greece, Albania began to be seen as a place from which losses could be inflicted to the Italians. Eventually, all British plans to incite the Albanians to rebellion failed - not least because of the unprincipled policy pursued not long before that.

3. Petrov, B. The Occupation of Albania of 1939 in the Light of Anglo-Italian Relations. – In: *Italy's Balkan Strategies (19th – 20th Century)*. Ed. by Vojislav Pavlović. Institute of Balkan Studies of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Special Editions 123, Belgrade, 2014, 213-222. ISBN: 978-86-7179-082-6.

The occupation of Albania by the Italians was preceded by a series of events of European significance. The occupation of Czechoslovakia carried out without the knowledge of Mussolini finally put an end to his ambitions to exert some influence in Central Europe. For that reason he and his Foreign Minister (and son-in-law), Count Galeazzo Ciano, were resolved to restore the shaken Italian prestige. The two men saw the occupation of Albania as the first appropriate opportunity for compensation. In the context of its overall policy of appeasement, the British government headed by Chamberlain took a thoroughly wrong and shortsighted line of conduct towards Mussolini's aggressiveness stemming from the conviction that Italy could come off the Reich's orbit through ostentatious benevolence and concessions. For that reason the British government turned a blind eye to the flagrant offense against the international law. Eventually, discarding all moral and juridical principles it formally recognised the occupation and annexation of Albania.

4. Petrov, B. Was the Guerrilla Warfare in the Balkans in WWII Legitimate? – In: *Central Europe and the Balkans, XIX – XX Century*. – Collective Volume in Honour of Prof. Milcho Lalkov. Sofia: Sofia University Press “St. Clement Ohridski”, 2019, 275-288. ISBN: 978-954-07-4720-0. [In Bulgarian].

The main focus of the article is on a generally neglected aspect of the guerrilla warfare in the occupied Balkan countries during the Second World War. It concerns its legitimacy in

the light of the law of war and humanitarian law relevant at that time. Strange as it may seem, this legal case had proved to be quite controversial and subject to sharply conflicting interpretations. The article sets out the main opposing theses, which have enjoyed a long life after the war-time years. The divergence of opinions was conditioned on the one hand by the fact that the international regulations of the time were irretrievably outdated and difficult to apply, and on the other by the all-embracing and cruel nature of the war, which left no single stratum or group of population unaffected.

5. Petrov, B. The Collaborationist Idea of Turning Serbia into a Peasant State during World War II. – *Balkanistic Forum*, 2020, № 1, 63-75. ISSN: 1310-3970. [In Bulgarian].

The study focuses on the ideology of the Serbian collaborators during World War II and their views on the construction of a "New Serbia" which had to be incorporated into the Nazi "New Europe". Generally speaking, they saw Serbia's future, as strange as it may seem, in its glorious past. This meant a prior rejection of modernisation and the alien influences which they consider detrimental and malignant to Serbianism. The collaborators pinned their hopes for the revival of their country on the patriarchal village, which, in their view, had still preserved its original values and virtues.

6. Petrov, B. The Bitter End of the New Slavic Movement, 1947 – 1948. - *History*, 2021, № 3, 244-255. ISSN– 0861-37. [In Bulgarian].

The article deals with the activities of the established at the end of 1946 Pan-Slavic Committee in Belgrade which, however, lasted only a year and a half. The Committee was created with the intention of being the centralized and ruling body of the Kremlin-born Slavic Movement after June 22, 1941. The emergence of the Committee came at a time when relations between the partners of the Anti-Axis Coalition had begun to deteriorate, and this circumstance inevitably made a direct impact on the tasks it was assigned. After the final bloc division of Europe and the Tito – Stalin split, the very existence of the Pan-Slavic Committee became meaningless, since the political exploitation of the idea of Slavic unity no longer fitted into the new realities and this resulted in its abolishment in the mid of 1948.

7. The Slavic Factor in the Foreign Policy of Fatherland Front Bulgaria. – In: *Bulgaria and the Balkans in XX Century: Foreign Policy and People's Diplomacy*. Comp. and ed. by E. Kalinova. Sofia: Sofia University Press "St. Clement Ohridski", 2021, 178-190. ISBN: 978-954-07-5317-1. [In Bulgarian].

The article examines the instrumentalization of the idea of Slavic unity for the needs of Bulgaria's foreign policy at the end of WW II and the first post-war years. The flirt with the Slavic card by the Fatherland Front government was aimed not only at the Soviet but also at the Yugoslav Party and State leadership because it was aware that Tito's Yugoslavia as a winner in the war, would enjoy high international prestige whereas Bulgaria had to sign a Peace treaty, clauses of which would broach the issue of the Yugoslav territories, occupied by Bulgaria till the autumn of 1944. In short, the government sought at all costs to bring the country out of the international isolation into which it had fallen after the end of the war. After the beginning of

the Cold War and the split between Tito and Stalin, however, the used and obsolete Slavic idea was no longer needed by the latter, therefore by the Bulgarian government as well.