

Broad-scope books such as this are bound to have some serious factual errors. Let us mention, for the sake of correction, two examples. Gavrilo Princip, the assassin of Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Habsburg throne, was not a member of the “patriotic organisation” known as “Black Hand” (p. 189), but of the revolutionary youth organisation “Young Bosnia” which, inspired by anarchist and democratic ideas common to similar European national movements, included, in the Yugoslav spirit, not only Serb but also other South-Slavic youth. Speaking about the genocide against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia during the Second World War, Cas-

tellan quotes the Serbian historian Dušan T. Bataković’s *Histoire du peuple serbe* (p. 317), but does it inaccurately. Instead of quoting that the estimated number of Serb victims varied “between 300,000 and 700,000”, Castellan’s top figure is ten times as low as in the quoted original: “between 30,000 and 70,000” (p. 248).

Despite its flaws, the clearly organised *Histoire de la Croatie et de la Slovénie* will likely capitalise on Castellan’s reputation and serve as an introduction to the history of the two countries in French as one more, this time co-authored, in the long line of his books devoted to the history and civilisation of the Balkans.

FRÉDÉRIC LE MOAL, *LA FRANCE ET L’ITALIE DANS LES BALKANS 1914–1919. LE CONTENTIEUX ADRIATIQUE*. PARIS: L’HARMATTAN, 2006, pp. 407
and
LA SERBIE, DU MARTYRE À LA VICTOIRE, 1914–1918. PARIS: 14–18 ÉDITIONS, 2008, pp. 253.

Reviewed by Veljko Stanić*

Frédéric Le Moal, professor at the Lycée militaire de Saint-Cyr and the Catholic University of Paris, is a historian of twentieth-century international relations with special interest in the period of the world wars and the Balkan region. He took his PhD from the University of Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV) under the mentorship of Professor Georges-Henri Soutou, and the first book reviewed here came out of his dissertation. His interest in the history of the Balkans led him to a separate synthesis devoted to Serbia in the First World War, published as the first in the 14–18 éditions series which is edited by Colonel Frédéric Guelton. It is also noteworthy that Le Moal subsequently published the book *Le front yougoslave pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (Soteca, 2012), which seems to be enough to make him stand out among younger French histo-

rians as a specialist in the area of military history and the history of international relations.

In the tradition of the French history of international relations, *La France et l’Italie dans les Balkans 1914–1919* looks behind the history of events to grasp the underlying history-shaping geopolitical and cultural forces. Naturally, it takes into consideration not only France and Italy but also the policies of other great powers, notably Russia, as well as major Balkan actors such as Serbia. Basing his analysis on French and Italian national, diplomatic and military source materials, Le Moal produces an exhaustive overview, the first of the kind, of Franco-Italian relations from the beginning of the First World War through the Peace Confer-

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ence in Paris, seeking to paint a broader picture of Franco-Italian relations in the contemporary history of Europe. Being focused on the period of the First World War, he naturally includes in his view the Balkans and the so-called “Adriatic Controversy”. While being allies, two “Latin sisters”, France and Italy, are also rivals as regards the territorial reorganisation of this part of the European continent, where two concepts of international relations and Europe’s future encounter each other: that of “Concert of Europe” and that of pursuing the national principle. Le Moal scrupulously presents different views on Franco-Italian relations during the First World War, opinions of politicians, diplomats, military and political writers. He is particularly concerned with the assessment and decision-making process, but also with propaganda or the prejudices about one another harboured by French and Italian statesmen, military leaders and intellectuals. The central question that he seeks to find an answer to concerns France’s gradual backtracking on the terms of the Treaty of London, the origin and causes of the shift in French policy which culminated at the peace conference at Versailles in 1919, becoming a long-standing hurdle in relations between the two countries.

The presence of Italian interest in Istria, Dalmatia, Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia much before 1914 made Italy one of those great powers – alongside Austria-Hungary and Russia – that influenced the political situation in the Balkans. Serbia’s foreign policy was at odds with Italian aspirations, and so Italy supported the creation of independent Albania, but Rome was no less frustrated by the supremacy of Austria-Hungary and her threats to Serbia. After the war broke out, Italy, even though a Central power, maintained neutrality and entered negotiations with France. Le Moal convincingly shows the traditional European concert

policy at work, i.e. mutual agreement of the powers on the redistribution of territories and the creation of a new balance of power in Europe. So Italy enters the war on the side of the Entente, having secured herself by the terms of the Treaty of London of April 1915. A blow to the Serbian government’s Yugoslav project, this treaty was also a blow to the struggle for the principle of nationality waved high by France as one of her propaganda trump cards.

Le Moal’s analysis reveals, however, that France had been changing her attitude towards the Treaty of London from as early as the end of 1915. The retreat of the Serbian army, its deployment to the Salonika Front, its military successes and, especially, the image of Serbian courage, both in French public opinion and among French politicians, added weight to the Serbian factor and, with it, to its Yugoslav project. Moreover, Le Moal identifies an influential group of “Italophobes” among French diplomats and military officers which were able to exert some influence on French mainstream politics. Among them are Berthelot, Paléologue and Fontenay, some members of the Third Bureau of the army general staff, and some intelligence structures. They see Italy as an inferior power whose military failures, especially when contrasted with Serbian vitality and perseverance, only strengthen their perceptions. Italian policy personified by Sonino, on the other hand, is a consistently rigid, inflexible policy of “national egoism”, which is frequently seen as “imperialism” in France. When France backs the Yugoslav solution in the last year of the war, Italy’s new claims to Albania and Rijeka (Fiume) are certainly not helping Franco-Italian relations. Le Moal rightly stresses that “their differences as regards the Yugoslav issue and the reorganisation of the Balkans evolve into a harsh conflict as a result of their different geopolitical plans, their national interests parting ways

and their mutually negative perceptions”, which leads him to conclude that it was “impossible [for them] to establish relations of trust”. On the whole, the book is a valuable and lasting contribution to the history of the First World War.

The goal of the other book reviewed here is to offer a comprehensive historical perspective on Serbia in the Great War intended for a broader public. Being a well-informed and academically grounded synthesis, it succeeds in achieving its goal. The book is based on the existing literature, including the works of Serbian historiography available in foreign languages, notably Andrej Mitrović's *Serbia's Great War 1914–1918* (Purdue University Press, 2007). As mentioned above, Le Moal's book opens the worthy series “Nations in the Great War”, which also contains Jean-Noël Grandhomme's *La Roumanie de la Triple à l'Entente, 1914–1919* and Max Schiavon's *L'Autriche-Hongrie dans la Première Guerre mondiale. La fin d'un empire*.

Le Moal pays equal attention to the international position of Serbia, to its agile and skilful diplomacy, to military operations both at an early stage of the war and on the Salonika Front, and to the life in occupied Serbia and large-scale crimes against her civilian population that began in 1914. Especially important is the first chapter which places Serbia in the international context prior to 1914, outlining the dynamic of her political, social and economic development. In contrast to the stereotyped notion of Serbia as Russia's loyal ally, Le Moal draws attention to the nimbleness of her diplomacy and the agility of Nikola Pašić, who combines the national energy, the wisdom of a statesman and political constancy. Le Moal opposes the quite frequent interpretation of Serbia of the Balkan Wars (1912–13) or of 1914 as a markedly belligerent nationalist factor responsible for the crises that threw Europe into war. He looks at the devel-

opment of Serbia in the context of her difficult relations with Austria-Hungary, which was intent on keeping her in political and economic dependence. Unwilling to be forced into submission, Serbia affirms an independent foreign policy and gets deeper and deeper into conflict with her powerful neighbour. Nonetheless, Le Moal does not find Serbia responsible for the assassination of Francis Ferdinand, but Bosnia and Herzegovina's young revolutionaries.

Serbia's role in the course of events in Europe cannot, however, be reduced to her conflict with the Dual Monarchy and her early entry into the war after the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war on 28 July 1914. Much more important are her military successes in the first year of the war, at the battles of Cer and the Kolubara, which prevented Austria-Hungary from scoring the expected quick victory; so are also the agonising retreat of the Serbian army before the joint offensive of the Central powers at the end of 1915 and its consolidation as an important factor within the allied armies on the Salonika Front. The shift in the public perception of Serbia in the West, especially in France, was one of significant moments in the affirmation of her struggle, Le Moal observes. Apart from shedding light on the diplomatic and military aspects of Serbia in 1914–18, Le Moal succeeds in vividly evoking the sense of self-sacrificing patriotism which he finds characteristic not only of most Serbian soldiers but also of most civilians in Serbia during the war. The strong belief that it was about defending one's own country and fighting for the nation was the source of the power of resistance which impressed Serbia's war allies.

A good part of the book is devoted to the Salonika Front (1916–18) and to discussing two options opening to post-war Serbia: a Serbian or a Yugoslav state. In the politics of Pašić in 1914–18, facing the

choice between an enlarged Serbia and a large Yugoslav state, Le Moal recognises a patient effort to keep balance between the allies, the Yugoslav Committee and the war events. He sees the outcome – the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on 1 December 1918 – as a success of Pašić's politics because the post-war Yugoslav kingdom was based on

pre-war Serbia's nation-building tradition and on her military victories.

In short, this is a book which understandingly but with measure and method portrays the road from "martyrdom to victory" travelled by a small country in the Great War. It will no doubt help alleviate the lack of literature on the history of Serbia in 1914–18 in foreign languages.

JEAN-PAUL BLEDE, *FRANÇOIS-FERDINAND D'AUTRICHE*. PARIS: TALLANDIER, 2012, pp. 367.

Reviewed by Veljko Stanić*

If the name of Franz Ferdinand as the victim of the Sarajevo assassination on 28 June 1914 has impressed itself on the collective memory of the Europeans, the same can hardly be said for the life of the heir-apparent. His life was cut short before he even got the chance to accede to the throne. Yet, his ambitions and activities in almost twenty years he bore the title raise a number of questions of relevance to understanding the last years of Austria-Hungary and international relations prior to 1914. Among the freshly released history books that re-examine the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of the First World War, stands out the biography of heir to the Habsburg throne penned by the French professor Jean-Paul Bled.

For such subject matter as Franz Ferdinand's biography one can hardly hope to find a more competent historian. Emeritus professor at the University of Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), Jean-Paul Bled is a leading specialist in the history of the Habsburg Monarchy. A prolific writer of refined style, Bled is an expert on the history of political ideas, perhaps best known for his noted biographies of some of the central figures of Austrian and German history, to mention but Franz Joseph,

Maria Theresa, Frederick the Great and Bismarck. A German edition of the biography of Franz Ferdinand has been published by the Böhlau Verlag. The author's erudite knowledge accumulated over the years devoted to the historical study of the Habsburg Monarchy is so well known that it need no special mention, but it is worthy of note that this biography is based on a scrupulous analysis of Franz Ferdinand Fonds from the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA) and the fonds of his Military Chancery deposited at the Kriegsarchiv in Vienna.

In order to clarify the main contribution of this book, we shall sketch the portrait of Franz Ferdinand as it vibrantly and suggestively emerges from the author's narrative. We shall take a look at his political convictions and views on pursuing practical politics both in domestic and in foreign affairs. The plans for a reorganisation of the Monarchy as a possible framework for the course Franz Ferdinand might have pursued in the event of his accession to the throne deserve special attention. Finally, we shall look at Franz Ferdinand's stance on Austria-Hungary's Balkan policy and, in particular, on her

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