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BRITISH-SERBIAN RELATIONS. FROM THE 18TH TO THE 21ST CENTURIES, ED. SLOBODAN G. MARKOVICH. BELGRADE: FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE & ZEPTER BOOK WORLD, 2018, 521 p.

Reviewed by Dušan Fundić*

Britannia Pacificatrix, the mural adorning the Ambassadors' Staircase at the Foreign Office depicts Britain in the guise of goddess Athena surrounded by her war allies and the imperial domains, protectively shielding with her left arm three young girls personifying Belgium, Serbia and Montenegro. The triumphant depiction of Britain and her allies can also be seen on the cover of the book reviewed here: *British-Serbian Relations: From the 18th to the 21st Centuries*. Referring to the mural, its editor, Slobodan G. Markovich, Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Belgrade, author of several important works in the field of British-Serbian relations,¹ writes in conclusion to his introductory study that between 1915 and 1918 Serbia indeed was "under the mantle of Britannia" (p. 104). Since the First World War is in the middle of the period covered by this book, this image is also symbolic of the road Serbia travelled from being "hardly detectable" in British public opinion (p. 28) to becoming the powerful empire's "protégée".

The book is divided into four sections: Britain and Serbia: Cultural and Political Relations; Great Britain, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Communist Yugoslavia; Cultural and Educational Encounters of the UK and Serbia in the 21st Century and Recent Past; British-Serbian Contemporary Diplomatic and Political Relations: Challenges and Prospects. Although a full account of a period of more than two centuries (1874–2018) is virtually impossible to squeeze into a single volume,

the topics addressed by the contributions are selected in such a way as to cover as many political and cultural phenomena relevant to relations between the two countries as possible. The volume is mostly the result of an international conference held in Belgrade in January 2018 under the auspices of the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Belgrade, Centre for British Studies, with the support of the British Embassy in Belgrade.

The book opens with Slobodan G. Markovich's extensive and thorough overview of British-Serbian political and cultural relations from the end of the eighteenth century to 1918 (pp. 13–117). Since it makes up almost a fifth of the volume's contents it will be paid due attention here. Markovich chose to begin his analysis with Dositey Obradovich's² visit to London in 1784/5 because it made a crucial impact on the future work of this leading proponent of the Josephan Enlightenment among the Serbs. One of the key focuses of the study is the attempt to reconstruct the evolution of Serbia's visibility in British public opinion. Cautiously using The Times Digital Archive, Markovich finds that the British public knowledge of Serbia became wider in the 1850s and 1860s, reaching its peak in the course of the Great Eastern Crisis (1875–78). A similar conclusion is suggested by various editions of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The 1771 edition merely mentions "Servia" as "a province of European Turkey", and it is only the 1886 edition that gives grounds to claim that Serbia became "a known fact in Britain" (p. 21). In the following decades the British political system gained considerable currency as a model to look up to – primarily through the work of the leading Serbian Anglophiles Vladimir Yovanovitch, who promoted liberal ideas (especially

* Institute for Balkan Studies SASA

¹ See esp. his *British Perceptions of Serbia and the Balkans 1903–1906* (Paris: Dialogue, 2000) and *Grof Čedomilj Mijatović. Viktorijanac među Srbima* [Chedomille Myatovich. A Victorian among the Serbs] (Belgrade: Dosije and Pravni fakultet, 2006).

² The transliteration of names in the review follows the transliteration used by the authors.

Herbert Spenser and John Stuart Mill), Čedomille Miyatovitch, a statesman and Serbia's ambassador in London, and Ljubomir Nedić, who introduced Serbia to Darwin's theories. Therefore, Markovich concludes, the 1880s marked the period of the strongest influence of British culture on Serbian culture.³ Markovich also explores the presence of each country in the public opinion of the other, by analyzing important publications about the Serbs in Britain and vice versa, pointing in particular to the travel account of two British women, G. M. Mackenzie and A. P. Irby, *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces in Turkey-in-Europe* (1867). Published amidst the Great Eastern Crisis, its second edition (1877) prefaced by William Gladstone gained wide popularity in Britain, as did Herbert Vivian's *Servia. The Poor Man's Paradise* (1897).

In this part of the book, which in fact has the form of a shorter monograph, particular attention is paid to the British parliamentary system and to the crisis in relations between the two countries caused by the assassination of the Serbian royal couple in 1903. Markovich puts a special emphasis on the period of the First World War, dividing it into four phases based on the British attitude towards Serbia: Sympathies for Serbia (Autumn of 1914 – Summer of 1915); Glorification of Serbia (Autumn of 1915 – Winter of 1916); Pro-Serbian Euphoria (April – July 1916); Very positive coverage of "the brave little ally" (Autumn of 1916 – 1918) (p. 66), and pays due attention to the role of British medical doctors and nurses in Serbia during the Great War.

The section devoted to the period until 1918 comprises another three short contributions: by Čedomir Antić, on Serbia and Great Britain until 1875 with special reference to the arrival of the first British consul in Belgrade in 1837; by Saša Knežević, on the attitude of the British Prime Minister William Gladstone

towards the Balkan Christians, and especially towards Montenegro, which benefited from the influential statesman's favour because it was owing to him that the Ottoman Empire was forced in 1880 to cede the coastal town of Ulcinj; and finally, David Norris's interesting contribution on two important British legacies to Belgrade: Francis Mackenzie's urbanization of a part of the Serbian capital and Frank Storm Mottershaw's camera recording of the day of the coronation of King Peter Karadjordjević in 1904.

The rest of the volume begins with Bojan Aleksov's interesting text on British women and Serbs (1717–1945), including the hitherto largely neglected analysis of their motives for visiting a Balkan country, and with a particular emphasis on the importance that the British political and social context has for understanding their activity within the complex tangle of British liberal ideas, Christian solidarity and Orientalist constructions, without losing sight of their wish to improve the position of women in Serbia and in the Balkans in general. The focus of Zorica Bečanović Nikolić's contribution is on the importance of the works of William Shakespeare, their translations and reception in Serbian culture. This first chronological section concludes with Slobodan G. Markovich's contribution devoted to the British ministers to Serbia and the Serbian ministers to Britain between 1837 and 1919, furnished with two useful tables containing basic prosopographical data.

The section devoted to relations between Britain and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and then communist Yugoslavia may in fact be described as being composed of two complementary subsections. One, which discusses various aspects of political and diplomatic relations between the two countries, would comprise the texts of Dragan Bakić and Eric Beckett Weaver covering the period until 1941. The other would comprise the contributions of Vojislav G. Pavlović and Milan Ristović focused on the period of the final phase of the Second World War and afterwards. The contributions of Bakić and Pavlović provide the reader with overviews of relations between "two Yugoslavias" and Great Britain, while Beckett Weaver focuses

³ Yovanovitch and Miyatovitch sought to get the commonly used British spelling "Servia" and "Servians" replaced with the more appropriate one "Serbia" and "Serbians", but the change did not really take place until after 1914, when the two countries became war allies.

on the issue of border change in the interwar period and its influence on Yugoslavia, and also on the consequences of British indifference to the attempts to subvert Yugoslavia, especially after the assassination of King Alexander which, in his view, paved the way for the country's rapprochement with the Third Reich. For the issue to be viewed in its entirety, it is important to add the thesis put forward by Bakić that the British foreign policy makers looked with a certain measure of goodwill at the problems and challenges the Yugoslav government faced without ever giving it their full support. Pavlović points to the remarkably prominent role that Britain's foreign policy played in international recognition of Communist Yugoslavia, at first in 1944, when the Churchill government accepted Josip Broz Tito as the leader of Yugoslav resistance, then in 1951, when Anthony Eden visited Belgrade, and in 1953, when Tito visited London, his first visit to a Western country. Ristović focuses on relations within the Yugoslav-British-Greek "triangle" in the period of 1945–49, when the civil war in the southernmost Balkan country was the dominant issue.

The contribution by Dušan Babac is concerned with the development of relations between two dynasties, the Windsor and the Karadjordjević, while Radmila Radić looks at relations between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Church of England, emphasizing the importance of their collaboration during the First World War and the negotiations about their possible union after 1918. Zoran Milutinović looks at the main characteristics of British society and culture looked up to as models by the Serbian Anglophiles of the first half of the twentieth century.

The remaining two sections of the volume are devoted to cultural and educational contacts between Britain and Serbia, and to their contemporary diplomatic and political relations, respectively. What gives the former section a touch of vividness are the authors' brief and interesting accounts of the events or processes they participated in themselves. Thus Ranko Bugarski writes about "The English-speaking Union" in Yugoslavia/Serbia as an important aspect of the two countries'

cultural relations, Nenad Šebek describes his experience of working for the BBC for more than twenty years, and Vukašin Pavlović writes about collaboration with British colleagues at the time of international sanctions (1992–2000) imposed on Yugoslavia, singling out the projects on civil society in Serbia and the "Yugoslav-British Summer School for Democracy". The subject of the contribution by Boris Hlebec are English-Serbian and Serbian-English dictionaries, while Vesna Goldsworthy offers an interesting discussion on the role of her own books *Inventing Ruritania* and *Chernobyl Strawberries* in mediation between the two cultures. The section concludes with Katarina Rasulić's concise overview of the history of the Department of English Language and Literature of the University of Belgrade since its foundation in 1929.

As the previous section, the last, fourth one is devoted to the contemporary period and is marked by a strong personal imprint of the contributors. Thus Baron Randall of Uxbridge gives "an almost personal view of British-Serbian relations" (p. 407). British Ambassador to Serbia Denis Keefe looks at the events commemorating the centenary of the Great War in 2014–18. David Gowan offers the British perspective on the two countries' contemporary relations, including a look at his own term as Ambassador in Belgrade, and Ambassador Branimir Filipović offers the Serbian perspective. A more academic type of analysis is provided by Aleksandra Joksimović, whose contribution covers the period of 2000–5, while Christopher Cooker speaks of the issue of security in the western Balkans and the consequences of the geopolitical changes taking place over the last five years. Spyros Economides analyzes the consequences of Britain's participation in NATO interventions in the Balkans. In accordance with the weight that the Kosovo question has in relations between the two countries, the volume concludes with James Ker-Lindsay's text on the consequences of British policy since 1999. He finds that it is undoubtedly dominant in relations between the two countries, certainly as a result of, among other things, of Britain's decreasing importance in the region after the opening of the Brexit process.

With its twenty-seven contributors of diverse research interests and from different disciplines, the book has an interdisciplinary character, which indeed is necessary for a subject as multifaceted as this. A single volume may seem to be a limiting factor for a comprehensive coverage of relations between any two countries. For researchers in different disciplines, however, this becomes a reference book

they will be able to draw on in the effort to understand British-Serbian relations in a period of more than two centuries. Last but not least, more than two hundred photographs, images, reproductions of the front covers of important books, pamphlets or posters add a remarkable visual dimension to the text, bringing the reader closer to the subject of the volume.

STUDIA BALKANICA BOHEMO-SLOVACA VII. PŘÍSPĚVKY PŘEDNESENÉ NA VII. MEZINÁRODNÍM BALKANISTICKÉM SYMPOZIU V BRNĚ VE DNECH 28.–29. LISTOPADU 2016, EDS. VÁCLAV ŠTĚPÁNEK AND JIŘÍ MITÁČEK. BRNO: MORAVSKÉ ZEMSKÉ MUZEUM – ÚSTAV SLAVISTIKY FILOZOFICKÉ FAKULTY MASARYKOVY UNIVERZITY, 2017, 714 p.

Reviewed by Miloš Luković*

The volume reviewed here is the proceedings of the 7th International Symposium on Balkan Studies held in Brno, Czech Republic, on 28 and 29 November 2016 under the auspices of three institutions: the Department of Slavic Studies of Masaryk University's Faculty of Arts, the Moravian Museum and the Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences.¹

The volume opens with an introduction and the introductory words by the organizers (Tomáš Pospíšil, Ivo Pospíšil, Jiří Mitáček and Eva Semotanová) and by the President of the Czech National Committee for Balkan Studies (Miroslav Tejchman), followed by four main sections presenting the papers presented at the Symposium, and ends with a list of contributors.

The Introduction (pp. 13–22) in Czech and English, *The Tradition of Balkan Studies Symposia in Brno*, by Václav Štěpánek, head of the volume's editorial team composed of

Pavel Boček, Ladislav Hladký, Pavel Pilch and Petr Stehlík, provides background information relevant to understanding the genesis and nature of the publication.

The Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University in Brno has a long tradition of Balkan Studies that dates back to its very founding in 1919. It was only in the 1960s, however, that this field saw a major boom, and thanks to Professor Josef Macůrek (1901–1992) and his colleague Josef Kabrda (1906–1968), a renowned European expert in Ottoman and Balkan Studies. It was them who founded in 1966 – at the then Department of the History and Ethnography of Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe of the Faculty of Arts in Brno – the Institute for Balkan and Hungarian Studies, which until 1995 coordinated research in the field of Balkan Studies at the Faculty. Although being a part of a department focused on history and ethnography, the Institute also provided instruction in South-Slavic languages and produced scholarship concerned with Balkan literatures. The Institute is

¹ See *Symposium Programme* at: <http://www.hiu.cas.cz/cs/download/konference/2016/program-balkanisticke-sympozium-brno2016.pdf>

* Institute for Balkan Studies SASA