

Zitierhinweis

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Der vorliegende Band wurde von einem hervorragenden Kenner der Politik Stalins und der davon geprägten Ära, Oleg Chlevnjuk, mit einer erläuternden Einleitung versehen. Die 149 abgedruckten Briefe – durchweg solche, die zwar zumeist nicht Stalin vorgelegt wurden, doch in jedem Fall bei der obersten Führung Beachtung fanden, – wurden von Ende 1951 bis Februar 1953 geschrieben. Insgesamt handelt es sich um eine Sammlung, die jeder lesen sollte, der sich für die gemeinhin wenig bekannten Alltagsverhältnisse der Spätzeit Stalins interessiert.

GERHARD WETTIG

Kommen

Balkany v evropskych politických projektech XIX–XXI vv.

Sbornik statej. Otv. red. Ritta P. Grišina. Moskva: Inslav RAN, 2014. 632 S. ISBN: 978-5-7576-0316-2.

This volume of essays had its origins in an international conference on the Balkans in European perspective from the 19th to the 21st century held in Moscow in 2013 by the leading academic Slavic and Balkan institutes of four countries: Romania, Russia, Serbia, and Bulgaria. A mixture of history, political science, and international relations, the theme of the publication is Balkan politics, with focus on efforts at integration during the global crises of the 20th century. Although specialists will make few discoveries, several essays provide insights and suggest avenues for further research. Overall, the volume indicates the types of questions currently being posed by Russian and Balkan researchers exploring Russian and Balkan political history in the major research institutions of these regions.

The book is divided into five sections roughly organized in chronological fashion: *The Balkans in Modern Times: The National and Slavic Ideas, Ideas of Yugoslavism and Attempts at Their Realization*, *The Balkan Federation: Ideas, Projects, and Attempts at Their Realization*, *Plans of Economic and Political Integration, 20th – 21st century*, and *Eternal Themes*. Nearly each chapter employs archives, published sources, scholarly studies, and websites. Of the thirty-one contributors, four come from Serbia, eight from Bulgaria, and the rest hail from Russia.

The essays in the first section explore Russian thinkers in the 19th century, the development of the Uniate movement in western Macedonia, territorial disputes between Serbia and Albania during the Balkan Wars, and the activities of the Internal Macedonian-Ochrid Revolutionary Organization on the eve of 1914. An insightful study by Inna Manasieva reveals how Ukrainian political activists embraced the Slavic idea as an anti-Russian concept in their quest for independence during the Great War. Based on rare

newspapers and pamphlets, Manasieva's findings highlight a crucial transitional moment of identity formation in the shatterzone of empires.

The question of Yugoslavia and plans for a South Slavic union comprise the main themes of section two, which includes essays on Nikola Pašić and Serb-Bulgarian relations, plans for a Yugoslav kingdom during the First World War, and Croatian and Slovenian efforts to foster a federative relationship. An interesting chapter by Aleksandr A. Silkin considers the problems of implementing the Yugoslav idea during the 1920s. Common threads linking each chapter are the elusive nature of political stability, the failure of reform, and the pressure imposed by powerful European neighbours.

Section three of *Balkany v evropejskich političeskich proektach* covers the interwar decades, perhaps the most fecund period for intercommunal relations since the halcyon years of Ottoman rule. Pan-Balkan communist organizations and their national counterparts promoted networking between national leaders. The mixture of theory and praxis that typified the policy of Kristo Rakovskii, Grigorii Dimitrov, Josip Broz Tito, Ivan Shubashich, and other Balkan luminaries provided the groundwork for a broader alliance among the Balkan peoples. Yet the ideology of nationalism and territorial rivalries persisted, and the intrusion of the great powers hindered cross-border connections. An excellent study by Leonid Ia. Gibianskii uncovers Stalin's role in Yugoslav-Albanian relations during World War Two. A companion piece by Alekandr Zhivotich relates the absorbing story of Albanian-Yugoslav relations in the immediate post-war years. What began as a fruitful partnership between Balkan capitals ended in acrimony in a process that matched the downward course of Tito's relations with Stalin overall. This section also features essays on Transylvania, and a review of plans for a confederation of European socialist countries in the 1960s.

Section four surveys efforts at cooperation among the Balkan states during the late Cold War. Integration with the Western European economy is the common theme. Individual chapters survey the Balkan communist leadership during Gorbachev's perestroika, the pros and cons of EU membership, and Serbia's ambiguous relationship with the European community.

The final section of the collection is the most interesting (it could have been first). It opens with a sweeping outline of Russian plans to seize Constantinople, followed by a study of Russian designs to make Bulgaria join the Entente powers during the First World War. Aleksei Iu. Timofeev contributes an intriguing, well-documented essay on Soviet military plans for seizing the Turkish capital during World War II. In the next chapter, Zorka Pyrvanova provides a distinct assessment of the Young Turk Revolution and its impact on the Balkans. Pyrvanova argues that Osmanism was a euphemism for Turkification. Other chapters include an archival-based exploration of the assimilation of ethnic minorities in Bulgaria (the so-called regeneration process) during the 1980s, and Turkish cooperation with the Balkan states today.

Composed by Balkan specialists, these essays exhibit the strengths and weaknesses of conference papers revised for publication. As a whole, the group neglects the elements of Ottoman rule and the general spirit of religious toleration which historically facilitated internal cooperation in the region. Bosnia and Montenegro are left out, and the sections on Transylvania stray from the Balkans. In addition, the forum would have benefitted from a discussion of political culture.

An impressive amount of work transpired in the genesis of this large volume, which provides a broad appraisal of the current state of research and suggests the types of monographs soon to appear. The references to archival and online sources ought to provide interested researchers with useful leads, primarily in Slavic languages. The translators of the several pieces into Russian deserve a special note of praise; so does the general editor, Ritta Petrovna Grišina, who died a year after the publication of this book: a concrete example of the fruitful exchange between Russia and the Balkans that the contributors sought to advertise.

LUCIEN FRARY

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**Frühneuzeitliche Reiche in Europa. Das Heilige Römische Reich
und Polen-Litauen im Vergleich – Empires in Early Modern Europe.
The Holy Roman Empire and Poland-Lithuania in Comparison**

Hrsg. von / Ed. by Tomasz Gromelski, Christian Preusse, Alan Ross, Damien Tricoire. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2016. 264 S. = Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau. Quellen und Studien, 32. ISBN: 978-3-447-10574-3.

Der hier zu besprechende Sammelband geht auf Vorträge zurück, die im Rahmen einer am Zentrum für Historische Forschung der Polnischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin im November 2010 durchgeführten Tagung unter dem Titel *Politische Ordnungsvorstellungen und Ordnungskonfigurationen im Heiligen Römischen Reich und in Polen-Litauen in der Frühen Neuzeit. Vergleiche und Transfers* gehalten worden sind. In der programmatischen Einleitung des Bandes skizziert CHRISTIAN PREUSSE die Forschungstraditionen und institutionellen Rahmenbedingungen, in denen sich die Erforschung des Alten Reichs sowie Polen-Litauens bislang vollzogen hat und die zu einer Fokussierung vor allem auf das Studium der politischen Verhältnisse führte. Ein (auch kulturhistorisch inspirierter) Vergleich verschiedener Phänomene in den beiden Reichen