



Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi (OMAD), Cilt 2, Sayı 2, Mart 2015, ss. 77-78.

Journal of Ottoman Legacy Studies (JOLS), Volume 2, Issue 2, March 2015, pp. 77-78.

ISSN 2148-5704

Dejan Djokic, ed., *Yugoslavism: Histories of a Failed Idea, 1918-1992*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 2003.

Zachary WISE*

As its title suggests, this book is an analysis of Yugoslavism and its failure as a concept. It reevaluates the rise and fall of both Yugoslav states (1918-41) and (1943-92) and different theories of Yugoslavism, what the pitfall of those theories were, and how the pitfalls were interwoven with the collapse of both Yugoslavias. The book examines various nationalist views and political movements in both Yugoslavias and aims to determine the dominant and secondary factors that caused not only the fall of the idea of Yugoslavia but also its two products, two Yugoslavias. The book is a collection of twenty-two essays organized in five main sections: nations, leaders and institutions, intellectuals, and alternatives.

The introduction and the first section, nations, provides background information on the creation of Yugoslavism thought and the first unification of Yugoslavia as the kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes at the end of World War I. Then the book covers different ethnic groups living in Yugoslavia and their role in the first and second unifications. The roles of ethnic groups are evaluated in terms of their contributions to making unification possible or to causing the slow demise of Yugoslavia. In this part, Mitja Velikonja outlines how Slovenia helped the growth of Yugoslavia and how Yugoslavia negatively influenced Slovenia, and he ultimately questions whether or not Slovenia needed Yugoslavia.

The second section, leaders and institutions, evaluates how the leadership of King Alexander I Karadordevic (r. 1929-34) caused a rift between Serbians and Croats. Moreover, it elaborates how different Marxist ideological approaches between Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980) and Edvard Kardelj (1910-79) weakened the Yugoslav state and the idea of Yugoslavism. The book further covers how dominant religions; Orthodox, Roman Catholicism, and Islam; the Yugoslav army; and economic conditions helped or hinder the unification and caused it to thrive or collapse. Dejan Djokić points out how King Alexander I Karadordevic influenced the Serbians, Croats, and Slovenians to preserve the fragile unity by trying to keep his idea of Yugoslavism alive. In his essay "Yugoslavism and Yugoslav Communism" Dejan Jović explains the disagreements on how Yugoslavia should be governed between Josip Broz Tito and Edvard Kardelj, Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia. Jović posits that although both Tito and Kardelj were Marxists, their differences were drastic and led to the collapse of Yugoslavia. Out of all authors Dejan Jović's argument is the strongest in the book and supported by detailed research.

In the third section, the book covers the discussion of different intellectual thoughts that led to the rise of Yugoslavism, how these thoughts varied based on ethnicity, and how they shifted after the death of Josip Broz Tito, and lastly how the remaining intellectual thoughts survived after the collapse of Yugoslavia. In Yugoslavia finding a common ground for different ethnicities was one of the biggest challenges, which created a fragile government. Aleksandar

* University of Texas-Pan American, Edinburg, Texas/USA, e-mail: zachawise@gmail.com

Pavković presents that the Serbian intellectuals dominated the intellectual thought in Yugoslavia and they tried to establish a Southern Slav utopia by abandoning Tito's ideal of a multicultural utopia, which paved the road to the failed state. While some members of the intellectual community strove to create a democratic assembly among the Southern Slavs and unite once more with the help of Writers Union, the Union was doomed to fail due to fractured intellectual community.

The book is a good source for an introduction to the idea of Yugoslavism and its fall, as well as nationalism in Yugoslavia. The overall structure allows the chapters and essays tie into each other fairly well by presenting different arguments raised in Yugoslavias. One of the weaknesses of the book is insufficient explanation for Bosnian, Croatian, German, and French, Latin, and Serbian terminology. An example of this is the term "Illyrianism" and "Illyrianist", which was used by several authors, none of whom provided a definition. Like wise, Jasna Dragovic-Soso and Dejan Djokic translated terminology in several languages except in Latin. It would have been more useful had Kosta St. Pavlowitch, Tihomir Cipek, Xavier Bougarel, and John R. Lampe elaborated their arguments sufficiently in the text rather than relying on citations in text or in the footnotes. In his essay "Serbia, Montenegro, and Yugoslavia," Stevan K. Pavlowitch uses statistics and quantitative data but fails to provide sources for all of his data. His argument that Serbia was one of the biggest driving forces for Yugoslavia's creation and destruction has a merit but missing sources for his quantitative evidence weakens the argument. Lastly the book ends with an emotional revelation that reflects Yugoslav disappointment with Europe. Aleksa Djilas's "Funeral Oration for Yugoslavia" adds a bitter-sweet note to the book to exhibit that Yugoslavism is still being held by few. Djilas argues that lack of European interest during the Civil War (1992-95) that disintegrated Yugoslavia was to punish them for the deeds done by the Serbians. This essay serves as a reminder that nationalism is not confined to the parameters of strategy and statistics it is also an emotional movement.

The book achieves its main goal by providing an introduction on intellectual and political history of the Yugoslavias and it outlines major issues that caused the failure of the idea of Yugoslavism and Yugoslavias. The chapters written by Mitja Velikonja, Dejan Djokić, Dejan Jović, and Radmila Radić are clear with concise arguments. Apart from the essay by Aleksa Djilas, all the arguments presented in the book were fairly tame in keeping their bias from interfering with their argument and thus adding a great beginning for those who wish to pursue the history of Yugoslavia. This book raises the question; whether the failed idea of Yugoslavism was doomed from the start or was it multiculturalism within Yugoslavia that caused the idea to be doomed. Authors do not seem to have a common answer but their implicit message, "can Yugoslavia unite once more under one flag?" exhibits that Yugoslavism is still viewed positively at least in the minds of few. Overall, the book is a good starting point about different arguments on the failure of Yugoslavism and ultimately adds a wide spectrum of sources for readers to follow up with further research on Yugoslavism and Yugoslavian nationalism.