

Recenzii și note bibliografice
Book reviews and bibliographical notes

John R. Lampe, Marvin R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History 1550-1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations*, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 1982, 728 p.

Western economic historians have traditionally concentrated on the success stories of major developed economies, while development economists have given most of their attention to the problems of the Third World. John R. Lampe and Marvin R. Jackson, a historian and an economist, provide in this pioneering book a refreshing perspective and suitable approach to the socioeconomic and historical characteristics the authors define as modernization. The book consists of 13 chapters and a conclusion, and about 150 maps and tables; it is divided into three parts covering the periods 1500-1860, 1860-1914 and 1912-1950. There is also some information on the post-1950 period of the four countries studied: Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece. Unfortunately, Turkey, which occupies a sizable part of the Balkan Peninsula and whose economic history provides an interesting case for comparative study, has not been included.

This book, different from other works published on the subject, provides a truly historical perspective, analysing in depth the impact of Ottoman and Habsburg rules upon the social and economic structure of the Balkans. Modernizing patterns in Balkan economic history are traced from the sixteenth century (when the territory was shared by Ottoman and Habsburg empires), through the nineteenth century (when they emerged as independent states), to the end of World War II and its aftermath. Despite present differences in economic systems – Greece’s private market economy, Yugoslavia’s planned market economy and the centrally planned economies of Romania, Bulgaria and Albania – the authors find that shared origins and common subsequent experiences are ample justifications for treating the area as an economic unit.

Lampe and Jackson’s study, without any doubt, fills a gap in our knowledge of the economic history of the Balkans and, in global terms, fulfils the dust-cover promise to “afford development economists a major case study and provide historians with an analytical survey and a standard statistical reference for that part of the European continent which has changed most during the twentieth century.” The authors set out to identify

the contribution of economic development and institutional change between 1550 and the Second World War to the subsequent years of high growth and rapid industrialization in Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and Yugoslavia. Lampe and Jackson contend that there is a greater continuity of development through the period than is commonly acknowledged.

In Part I, statistics are of course far fewer. Perhaps for that reason, Lampe exhibits geographical and sociological sensitivities that tend to become obscured later on. His account of cufflinks (pp. 33-37) is particularly clear and straightforward in repudiating the supposedly "capitalistic" character of these Turkish landholdings; and the analysis of eighteenth century Habsburg policy which "allowed Balkan traders to join German farmers and Italian bankers in carving out modernizing enclaves in the economy of the imperial borderlands" (pp78-79) is distinguished by a fine sense of the geographical setting within which Balkan economic change took place. The author concludes that mounting trade across the Habsburg-Ottoman frontiers prepared the way for the emergence of Romanian and Yugoslav national economies in the nineteenth century by pulling both sides of the borderlands away from their older connection with the respective imperial capitals, Vienna and Constantinople.

In the second part of the book they state that as the Balkan states developed their economies in the age of independence and nationhood, they placed too much emphasis on noneconomic factors, resulting in "too little industrialization and too much state initiative" (157). Agriculture bore the burden of this development. It experienced a boom characterized by a large volume of exports in the late nineteenth century. But then, partly because of population growth and increased government expenditure, it failed to maintain the momentum of growth. The authors do point to the socio-political consequences of this development—such as peasant revolt in Romania in 1907 and the emergence of political parties based on peasantry—but without sufficient elaboration. There was a massive emigration from Bulgaria, Romania and Greece to America, approximately 400,000 people from 1906 to 1915. Lampe and Jackson also deal extensively with the banking system of the Balkans. The system was already established by 1885, but the banks began to pay attention to savings and credits only after 1910 and thus were partly responsible for delaying the industrialization of the area until World War I.

The third and last part of the book is a concise synthesis of economic developments occurring in the Balkans from 1912 to 1950. Although the period has been studied by other scholars, the authors provide new information on land distribution, population, industrialization and finances of the Balkan countries along with a general account of the domestic and international politics that paralleled economic development.

The authors have used primary sources, the major published sources written in the tongues of the four countries and the relevant literature in the Western languages. They have managed to combine in an admirable

fashion historical knowledge with professional economic expertise and they display a high degree of conceptual sophistication in analysing the factors that determined the evolution of Balkan economy. ***Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950*** will be a major case study for development economists and will provide historians with the first analytical and statistical study to survey the entire region from the start of the early modern period.

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