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PLURALISTIC APPROACH AND A NEW HISTORY OF THE BALKANS*

Pluralism in history could be defined rather as a new historiographic methodology than a new broad philosophical system. The distinction of Pluralism, considering the previous philosophical streams in historiography, was obvious from its beginnings in the early 1980's. Historical Pluralism first appeared in practice, when it was applied in several historical studies, but the theoretical shapes and patterns were given only after several years¹. The founders of historical Pluralism did not try to develop firm theoretical bases nor to define standing points, range of interests or possible conclusions, which would be recommended to historians as better and more secure path towards to the 'New History'. On the contrary, following recent trends in historiography, they tried to give a new meaning to some points of the historical structuralism and to re-define usage of classical narratives. In contrast to previous periods (classical historicism), theoreticians of Historical Pluralism did not consider the history of event as a final goal of historian's efforts; in addition they have not discarded the narrative form of historical synthesis (as theoreticians of historical structuralism and postmodernism had done). *Event* and *individual* thus acquired a role of 'creative phenomena'² a common denominator not only in history of an age and state, but in case of structures as well.

Instead of discussing the standpoints of recent theories, followers of Historical Pluralism tend to reconcile and unite them³. The eclectic methodol-

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¹ Р. Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, Cambridge, 1991.; J. Appleby, L. Hunt, M. Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History*, London 1994.

² Burke, pp. 233-4.

³ Burke, pp. 239-40.

ogy, which was developed, introduced some old methodologies and approaches to history, as well.⁴ However, Historical Pluralism should not be understood as a conservative and uncritical revival of narratives and already abandoned fashions in historiography. When the new methods were adopted, such as the quantitative, sociological and economical, pluralistic historians announced a generally new school in historiography. The first step in that direction was to sum up the entire historiographical heritage of the 20th century. Ceasing to support unconditionally any of the last century's streams in historiography, the pluralistic historians started an antiquarian mission, which in historiography happens at the end of any major period.⁵

Analysing the nature of those cycles in historiography, Macaulay once remarked that history starts with 'world history' and ends with 'essay'. Historians, who were trying to recon⁶cile the narrative history of events and analytical survey on the structures, started preparations by all means for a new reevaluation of historical science and searching for the new philosophical and scientific stream.

The approaches of Pluralism, in their essence, make the question of the historical methods relative. Its theoreticians, probably unintentionally, were influenced by the assumptions of Postmodernism, which theory of language argues that historical texts do not refer to reality and imply that for those reasons there is no difference between truth and fiction. Michael Foucault was among the first philosophers who made a further step towards 'absolute historical relativism', when he eliminated 'the author' as a relevant factor in the production of texts.⁶ The final implication then should be disappearance of meaning from the text. Without going so far, theoreticians of Historical Pluralism recognized the relevance of all philosophical and methodological streams in historiography, trying to evaluate their contribution in reconstruction of the past. Among the total history of structures and narrative history of events, Pluralistic historians opted for a total history based on events and structures as well. Their goal was to establish 'a comprehensive narrative totality'⁷, which according to their opinion corresponds to the old historiographic forms: history of the nation, state, statesman, revolution etc.⁸

⁴ S. Schama used the genre of the 18th century chronicles while writing a book on French revolution, Burke, p. 234 ; S. Schama, *A History of Britain, At the Edge of the World?* 3000 B.C.-A.D. 1603, London 2000, Ch.7, *The Body of the Queen*, p 331.

⁵ Burke, p 233.

⁶ G.G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century, From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge*, Hanover, 1997, pp. 120-1.

⁷ Burke, 'Problems of Expansion', pp. 15-17.

⁸ Burke, p 17.

Pluralism as historical methodology is especially applicable in the cases of broad subjects such as those that represent the history of age and entire regions. The History of the Balkans in Modern Times, an example which will be presented in this essay, is still paradoxically unexplored and unblended topic.⁹ Nevertheless, while historiographies of the Balkan states during the 19th century have been developed side by side with the European, the studies of the Balkans have been neglected by the peninsular historians.¹⁰ Many reasons could be mentioned as causes for this phenomenon: discontinuity as consequence of frequent wars, impact of many economic crises, geographical influences and the Balkans' ethnic and cultural disunity.

Another very strong factor for the present state of the Balkans' studies is the sense of inferiority, which native intellectual elites always feel while trying to overcome the backwardness and integrate their states and national cultures in the West European Civilization. The topics regarding the Balkans seemed to them as a new limitation and re-orientalisation of their national projects, which they would like to see as a part of the broader, European project.¹¹

The question of the Balkan modern history presents several additional problems. First among them is the ideological issue. Until 1989 the Balkans was, together with Germany, the region most severely affected with the Cold War divisions. Before 1945, the peninsula was divided by ethnic wars and partitioned by neighbouring empires. That is why the earliest histories of the Balkans in modern times, which appeared at the beginning of the 1960's, were written and published in the United States and Britain, rather than in some of the Balkan countries.

Three syntheses of Balkans history, written in the second half of the 20th century, deserve to be mentioned as a basis for all future efforts for its redefining in the manner of Pluralism. The first was published in 1958, and its author was Leften Stavrianos, prominent professor at the North-West University (the USA).¹² The Stavrianos history is basically the survey of political history of the Balkans from the times of the Ottoman conquest until the middle of the 20th century. The synthesis presented is one dimensional and completely narrative. In spite of the strictly posed premises in the first chapters of the book, which present the Balkans in totality, Stavrianos failed to explore and to expose links and mutual influences among the states and nations of the peninsula. An even

⁹ An broader survey of the Balkans' social history has not been published yet (with exception of an monograph edited by Richard Clogg).

¹⁰ First modern historians of the Balkans were foreigners: Constantine Yireček (Jireček) who wrote histories of Bulgaria and Serbia in Middle Ages and Leften Stavrianos who as an American scholar wrote a history of the Balkans since 1453.

¹¹ E. Said, *The Orientalism*, London, 1984 ; M. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York, 1994.

¹² L. Stavrianos, *The Balkans, Since 1453*, New York, 1958.

stranger phenomenon is that, while Stavrianos was writing his book in the period when the structuralistic historical school was flourishing, he completely neglected to incorporate the subject of common structures of the Balkans in his synthesis. However, considering all those disadvantages, *The Balkans: Since 1453* in the true sense established foundations for all contemporary histories of the Balkan in modern times. Stavrianos proposed the first broadly accepted chronology and defined thematic division of the Balkans history. That was a significant advance, even if Stavrianos makes it in some degree conditional for he adopted state history as only regional unit and civil society as a distinctive phenomenon for the period.

A couple of years after Stavrianos, a structuralistic synthesis of Balkans history was written by Train Stoianovich, another naturalized American who emigrated from the Balkans.¹³ Until the late 1990's *The Balkans' Worlds* had nine editions, and as a result it presents the outcome of Stoianovich's life-long explorations. The synthesis comprises a detailed historical survey of peninsular structures. The author commences with an historical survey related to biosphere and environment and ends with analyse of 20th century economies of national states on the peninsula. In the synthesis, the author did not include important outlines from the political and military history of the Balkans' nations. That was the main feature of Stoianovich's methodology: he exposes the analyses of structures and links them with other historical processes only occasionally and in the final stages of synthesis. *The Balkans' Worlds* is broadly composed in chronological terms, too. The presented analyses commence with the Neolithic period, and especially emphasized cultural history of the Indo-European ethnicities whose migrations have permanently populated the region in the period from 1500 BC to AD1400. The economic factor is nevertheless dominant in Stoianovich's methodology of explanations of the historical processes. Presented analyses are founded on the opposition of a static developmental dynamic of the Balkans village and rapid growth of urban centres.¹⁴ Only at that stage, Stoianovich starts the comparative analysis and the synthesis. Stoianovich establishes comparison between the Balkans' structures and social and anthropological history, thus offering an extensive and complex picture of its history. The fact that all previously mentioned factors had a common influence on the course of the 19th and 20th century development suggests that existed explanations were seriously contested by Stoianovich's conclusions. Analysing the period during the course of which all societies of the Balkans tried to integrate and position themselves inside European civilization, the author contributes new explanations and significance to economic disadvantages, which

¹³ T. Stoianovich, *The Balkans' World, the First and the Last Europe*, New York 1961.

¹⁴ Especially imperial capitals from the peninsular peripheries, such as Vienna, Constantinople, and Venice

the Balkan societies objectively had. The psychological burden of frustration, which appeared as consequence, Stoianovich recognizes as a root for characteristic socio-political phenomena of the peninsular modern history: anti-modernization movements, and collectivist ideologies. Instead of the periodization based on the political history of national states, the author offers a completely changed framework established on the chronology of six unsuccessful projects of technological modernization in the period between 1800 and 1960 (or 1991 in the 9th edition). In recent editions of *The Balkans Worlds* the problem of new integration of the Balkans' societies in a post-industrial society and impact of environmental problems on the development of its contemporary states are particularly emphasized. Following the recognizable structuralistic manner, Stoianovich mostly avoids writing about events and individuals. The main methodological principle he adopts places them at the service of general analyses. Although in the 8th and 9th edition of *The Balkans Worlds*, Stoianovich like some other Structuralists¹⁵ makes one step forward, towards the pluralistic attitudes. After presenting several events (phenomena) from economic and cultural history,¹⁶ he tries to analyze them side by side with broader processes. Nevertheless, that innovation did not bring general changes to the author's basic approach. Relation between the Balkans, as European periphery, and neighbouring imperial, economic and cultural metropolis, Stoianovich explains only as strictly limited to economy and some aspects of culture. Chronological framework that covers four thousand years made advanced intertwining of political, economic and cultural aspects of the Balkans' history unmanageable.¹⁷

Stoianovich's total history neglects not only events, but also all aspects and role of individuals. The author's interests in persons in history are fully subordinated to the analyses of structures. However, the person in history, as perceived by Structuralists, is deprived of all hidden characteristics that they attribute to economic structures. The influence of ideology, state of conscience, 'image of the other' or outer world is not included in Stoianovich's synthesis.

Maria Todorova, the third historian of the modern Balkans, explores the sociological aspects and structures of the common conscience. The recent synthesis of her research, which was published under the title *Imagining the Balkans*, presents broad and skillful historical survey of the state and development of the Balkans inhabitants self-perception and their mutual perceptions with

¹⁵ Like La Roi La Dury in his study 'Carnival', see Burke, p. 234

¹⁶ e.g. Regulation of Danube question in 1858 and 1871, Stoianovich, 319.

¹⁷ For those reasons *The Balkans Worlds* did not find big audience in Serbia. The book was published four years before the first political history of the Balkans was translated and for those reason broad topic and brilliant analyses revealed as to complicated for all readers who did not have considerable pre-knowledge.

other Europeans.¹⁸ Todorova in certain degree avoided archives, during her researches, but introduced the numerous sources based on contemporary literature and art instead. By doing so, she discovered very interesting and important structures, which have influenced the course of the peninsular history, but had been neglected previously as popular or even unhistorical. The conclusions to which the author comes are outstanding: the impact of mutual perception and stereotypes on political decision-making and even creation of ideologies and development of sciences appeared as much bigger than it was assumed.¹⁹ After decades of predominantly materialist Marxist and structuralist influence on native historiography, Todorova's monograph introduced an 'ideas factor' in the Balkans' historiography again. *Imagining the Balkans* made a great influence on the contemporary generation of Balkans historians. It could be said even that the new methodology suppressed any structuralist approach.²⁰ Recent explorations of the topic also included aspects of popular culture and sports. As happened before, the original idea gradually started to be a new social science branch and strays from its original idea of critique and further development of earlier historiographic methodologies. The idea of writing 'a new history' (pluralistic) of the Balkans again ended in one of the endless disputes between native historians and sociologists.

It appears as obvious that the posing of the general framework for new history of the Balkans, presents a very complicated task, in spite of broad researches, which were already pursued, and monographs which were published. At the very beginning of the task, an historian, however well prepared, would face many obstacles. If one tries, for an example, to revive some old historical-literary genre, as a kind of pattern for a new historical synthesis,²¹ he would probably entirely fail, for there was no common genre which could be attributed to all nations of the Balkans. The first generation of educated historians from the Balkans' was raised abroad and the classical historicism that they adopted presented integration of the national historiographies into European, rather than a first step in creating a genuinely different historiography.²² Searching for common characteristics of the Balkans' national histories would be even less successful especially if it would appear as an attempt for incorporation of the historical role of gender or language research results.

¹⁸ M. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York, 1996.

¹⁹ Todorova started to work on her book after a prominent member of the US administration had highly praised and even initiated re-publishing of an propagandist pamphlet from the Second Balkans War inspired with xenophobia, Todorova, p.4 .

²⁰ V. Goldsworthy, *Inventing Rurithania*, London 1997.

²¹ Burke pp. 234, 239.

²² G.G Iggers, pp 27-29

For all those reasons, one pluralistic history of the Balkans should be established on very firm and well defined thematic and chronological frameworks. The survey of the modern peninsular history should encompass the past of the Balkan states, but also the history of the neighbouring empires of which the influences in historical processes were in many cases decisive. So, the influence of pluralistic historiography would be expressed in synthesis' subdivisions. The history of the Balkan states and societies would be then analysed through history of the structures, gender, language and ideology.²³ As another dimension of the historical events in the survey of broadly understood political history, a summary based on the patterns of total history should follow. The accepted line of analytical process' explanation would be from the general to the individual and in reverse. For an example: nation – people – citizen; and then: human (gender) – community – country; and would end with the religion/ideology – culture – science.

Only after applying this or similar methodology, one pluralistic history of the Balkans could manage to reconcile, unify and present histories of the Balkan nations, which, however different, developed in the same region and suffered similar influences. The important factor is also an almost always neglected fact that the outer world perceived and treated the Balkan nations and their countries as one totality until our times. Such proposed thematic frameworks would also enabled one hidden characteristic of the political and social history of the peninsula to be expressed. The history of smaller states and ethnical minorities, which had more important influence on the historical development of the Balkans than development of their sub-regions, was underestimated not only in national historical synthesis, but in some excellent histories of the Balkans, as well.²⁴

The exact chronological framework deserves the same significance as the thematic. The chronological borders could turn out to be the only limitations for the too generally established and too broadly defined goal. As history of the modern Balkans could be perceived (for reasons of difficult emancipation of its societies and obstacles in its economic development) as chronology of modernization projects, the process of modernization could be a distinctive factor for any firmly proposed chronological division. As the obvious lower chronological limit appears the beginning of national revolutions in the 19th century. The national liberation of the Balkans' Christians was the beginning of their first integration into modern Europe. However, the next problem is to choose the year

²³ For the example word 'constitution' ('ustav' or 'huriet') in the language of the different ethnicities of the Balkans has completely different etymological origin.

²⁴ In his recent political history of the Balkans Pavlowitch gave an example of Jewish majority in Salonika and neglected entire history of Montenegro, S. K. Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans*, London 1999.

and event, which would be generally recognized as the turning point of peninsular history. Among many possible solutions²⁵, the most appropriate seems the year of 1774 when the Balkans for the first time became the subject of international agreements and a battlefield of three neighbouring empires.²⁶ The decade that preceded the French revolution is convenient for at least one additional reason. That was a period of the highest peak of the Enlightenment and by that stage the first native, foreign-educated, intellectuals started to return to their homelands. If we take the year when the process of liberation from the yoke of foreign empires began as the lower chronological border, then the choice of the upper date will be very logical. 1989²⁷ as an end of ideological empires and fateful division not only in the Balkans, but in Europe and the World, as well, presents the solution that could hardly be contested.²⁸

Dates of the national revolutions could be proposed as an internal chronological subdivision²⁹, combined with dates decisive for relations and integration within West Europe.³⁰

This proposed chronology could be reconciled with an absence of narrative in analyses of structures or completely thematically distinctive studies of gender or of some historical aspects of language. Any of the sub-periods proposed present new and independent phases in the evolution of society and development of its structures. As perceived, every period should be examined and evaluated from the point of view of the above mentioned philosophical and methodological streams.

What would have been the effect of that kind of approach looked like, if applied to the individual case and its contribution to the history of the Balkans?

The first period of the history of modern Greece seems a good example. That period largely coincides with the reign of its first monarch, king Otto (1831-1863), and the initial stage of analysis could be established as a combination of political and prosopographic analysis. As significant cases, at this place

²⁵ e.g. 1804. the Serbian Revolution; 1821. the Greek Revolution; 1789. the French Revolution etc.

²⁶ It was Peace in Kutjuk-Kainardji by which provisions Russia gained authority to interfere in internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire as protector of the Balkans' Christians.

²⁷ 2000 in case of Serbia.

²⁸ It coincides also with Eric Hobsbawn perception of the 20th century, as the short century.

²⁹ :1804. the Serbian Revolution, 1821; the Greek evolution, 1848; the Romanian, 1876. Easter uprising in Bulgaria, 1878: The Albanian Awakening and 1908 Young Ottoman Revolution.

³⁰ Berlin Congress system from 1878, the final stage of national liberation of the Balkans 1913, integration in the Paris Peace Congress system 1919 and reintegration in politically polarized World in 1945.

could be pointed out and presented some sociological or cultural events, for example: the first coronation of a modern ruler³¹ of Greece, promulgation of the first state constitution, the 1843 coup,³² the period of English and French navies' occupation of Piraeus (Athens' harbour)³³. Then, by the already proposed schedule, would follow the history of its people. At this stage, the phenomena of particularity, regarding the other nations of the Balkans, should be emphasized. Good examples for this are relations between commerce and agriculture which were completely different in Greece, than in any other country or region of the Balkans. By analyzing the individuals, the characteristics of everyday life, customs and its heritage in politics, the mutual relations between the individual and community would be presented in the final synthesis.³⁴

The second line of the analysis would be focussed on the person, but not primarily as political individual. The most important part there could be the role of gender and especially the advantages and disadvantages of the backward society in the case of the individual emancipation.³⁵ An overview of the historical development of notions about gender and public perception of labour from the times of Ottoman rule up to the first stage of industrialization of the country could be placed on that stage as a link between individual and community. As a distinctive phenomenon of the Greek community the overpopulation of the agricultural land could be explored, process of economic emigration to the USA and the influence of it on the political history of Greece in the period since the 1850's.

The third line of the analysis could be interpreted with a case study, which would present characteristic relations between a deeply religious society, founded on traditions of the Byzantine Empire, where Church and State were united, and the liberal spirit of institutions organized after 1831. Nevertheless modern Greece was established on the patterns comparable to any contemporary German secular and Protestant principality. That phenomenon would be presented as starting point, instead as a conclusion in the analysis proposed. On the other hand, this problem is linked with an already analysed question: why the same kind of emancipation has not happened with state institutions i.e. what were the causes that state had been emancipated from spiritual power, before

³¹ Basileus, like Byzantine Emperors.

³² When strange Bavarian guardianship over Greece was abolished.

³³ As a case study on Greeks' relations with foreign countries.

³⁴ Typical example: first medical dossiers of Greece citizens; tradition and electoral abuses during Kolettis governments; traditional 'polities' as forerunners of the modern Greek state or relation between rural society and an urban and foreign monarch.

³⁵ Two examples should be confronted here: common citizen and prominent politician: for the e.g.: a significant example could be the royal couple, for queen Amelia had significant influence on king Otto and much bigger roll in public life than laws have allowed.

than citizens were emancipated through democratic institutions. The relations between agriculture and industry as an entirely structuralistic analysis could be examined on that stage. It is obvious that the mutual influence between political and economic processes present a logical circle.³⁶ The chapter would explore roots of the question: why the economy of Greece was lagging behind, and links between a shortage of cultivable soil (as a hidden motive) and the broad nationalistic programme, known as 'The Great Idea' (of 'Greece on two continents and five seas'). The section about culture and education would form part of a synthesis already summarized of all previously presented sections.

From the opposite side of the chronological line another significant model for a broader framework on a new history of the Balkans could be the case of the recent history of Serbia, which was a very interesting exception in the reintegration process in which all states of the region were involved since 1989. The isolation, or self-isolation, under which Serbia came, was partly a product of previous history as perceived by its political elite and popular culture. A proposed pluralistic approach for those reasons could be accomplished with the addition of methodological perspective, which Richard Price proposed in his 'History of Poland'.³⁷ In the last section, the exposed framework would be employed there as well, but after every phenomenon, presented and examined in the chapter, is explained with taking into account the background of processes and their direct and indirect influences during the 1990's. There were the numerous and various legacies, which encumbered Serbian society during the period. Among the most important were: the legacy of civil society decline (during the period from the 1930's to 1960's), the legacy of totalitarian ideologies (in the period from the 1930's to 1980's), the legacy of deideologization and the legacy of destratification. However, at that stage a methodological problem appears while analysing Serbian society in the 1990's. During this period society was in a state of deep crisis. For these reasons many possible examples may be considered; individuals and their influence on historical process or some typical event, as an instrument for broader conclusions; these could not be as precise indicators as they would have been during some peaceful period. This problem could be solved by introducing some sociological analysis and quantitative methods, but also by parallel analyses of known and unknown individuals, for example: lives, political and social influences of a certain politician (e.g. Slobodan Milošević) and an ordinary blue-collar citizen; or between a folk-singer and university professor.³⁸

³⁶ The entire idea of Annalists was based on that.

³⁷ Burke, p 239.

³⁸ For the workers and peasants were the formally privileged part of the previous Socialist society. The newspaper '*Naša Borba*' ('The Our Struggle') published some labours' diaries during the highest peaks of the crisis in 1993/4 and 1997/8.

In further analysis of the individual citizen's role in creation of a new dictatorship, upsurge of nationalism and wars would be presented, but it also should comprise the integration of the individual in civil society during its decline, the conditions of individual political rights and the state of parliamentarism during the dictatorship. The point of view of gender studies could be especially useful for the periods in which the legal equality of sexes was promoted as an important part of the regime's policy (1945 and 1989). The position of culture and science in Serbian society during Milosević's era would be not only the auxiliary survey that could serve as an independent method for measuring the magnitude of the decline, but also the indicator which presents the reflective influences between country's political elite and intellectuals. Almost the same methodological question arises considering the influence of religion on the progress of crisis: how it is possible to describe a modern society in which only 15% of members were religious³⁹ in which at least two interethnic wars during the 1990's were perceived as religious?

Selected models, presented above, seem at least as fragments, which could not likely be integrated in a broader synthesis, as it is a history of the Balkans. Problems of synthesis and explanation were recognized as the most sensitive aspects of the pluralistic approach by many authors.⁴⁰ Considering the problem of explanation one not so exact approach was proposed. So, in search for common features of the Balkan history a broad cultural framework could be adopted.⁴¹ That methodological approach proposed by Michael Cammen, presents cultural history as a possible base for overall pluralistic synthesis of historical processes.⁴² However, longing for a completely common historical survey of the modern Balkan history could deceive its future writers. A general history of the Balkans in modern times could be only presented as a broad conclusion or lowest common container constructed considering the real nature of the peninsular history. A pluralistic approach in any case contrives that kind of synthesis, which could present a common history of the region, without neglecting the distinctive nature of four religions and six cultural models, which flourished in the Balkans during the last two centuries. Of course the history of at least a dozen nations or ethnicities, which differences have shaped the Balkans to the form it has at present, should not stay out of sight as well. The fact is that

³⁹ Even during the late 1980's, when, after fall of the Real-Socialism, religion became some sort of fashion.

⁴⁰ Burke, pp. 19-20, Appleby, Hunt pp. 11-2.

⁴¹ Burke, p.19.

⁴² Pierre Bourdieu raised an argue that 'habitus' of a particular social ground, set by the culture, provides the framework, broad enough to comprise all aspects of history, Burke, p 19.

the Balkans are still disunited, and the everlasting problem of all synthesis of its history is not to violate the historical explanations for the sake of historical argumentation which usually appears as relatively unstable. However, as it was mentioned before, the pluralistic synthesis does not exclude any possible contribution to its final survey. Even Postmodernism, as defined by Alun Munslow, presents 'no treat to the study of the past for it offers the opportunity to redefine what we do and broaden the scope of our activities'⁴³.

At last there is an entirely local obstacle for successful synthesis of the Balkan history. National historiographies since the Enlightenment have developed and established interpretation of the peninsular history completely centred on the national state.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, history is, as Lowenthal remarked, frequently 'less than the past'⁴⁵, implying that, under the influence of some recent synthesis and common perception of the past, the historian could neglect the impact of entire states and even civilizations which have diminished until his time. Seeking for *thematic unity* of the topic, historians of the Balkans could commit another mistake by limiting their researches to the Balkans. Thus, only a few studies on the modern Balkans history include analyses of complex links and mutual influences between the peninsula and the rest of Europe.⁴⁶

A New History of the Balkans, written on the firm patterns of many different methodologies (invented or developed during the 20th century) could surpass obstacles of national historiographies and complexes of the periphery. Involved in the process of education it could, at least for a while, eliminate political and ideological influences from historical education. Illusions of national superiority and exclusiveness, or the tremendous desire of generations of Balkan inhabitants to be part or even a better part of Europe, at last returned as an influence on history. During the last years of communism in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania and Albania that process of vulgarization of popular historical

⁴³ A. Munslow, Introduction, 'History in Focus' Autumn 2001, <http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Whatishistory>, visited, 3. January 2002).

⁴⁴ For these reasons some historians, like S. K. Pavlowitch, were careful when proposed order of appearance even in chapters of acknowledgements of their books, Pavlowitch, p. 319.

⁴⁵ D. Lowenthal, *The past is Foreign Country*, Cambridge 1985, p. 214.

⁴⁶ Some of the authors, like Kaplan, (R.D., *Balkan Ghost, A Journey Through History*, New York, 1994), even were trying to detect certain roots of several world-wide process, such are World Wars in the Balkan history. While forgetting that political and intellectual development of the Balkans' states have been always highly dependent on influences from West Europe and America, V. Damodran, *Empires and Images, History of European Ideas*, Volume 27, Issue 2, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/is/informationgateway/electronicjournals/reportByTitle?searchterms=History+of+European+Ideas>, visited 2. January. 2002.

perception could even be denominated as a *general* decline of historiography.⁴⁷ Under the influence of structuralism and Postmodernism, local historians adopted new topics and in many cases lost their readership. Pluralism as an approach could contribute to a further reunification of Balkans historical topics and reestablishment of links between historians and their readership.

Чедомир Антић

Плуралистички приступ и Нова историја Балкана

Резиме

Студија *Плуралистички приступ и Нова историја Балкана* само је покушај представљања плурализма, једног од актуелних праваца у савременој историографији, примењеног код будуће синтезе новије балканске историје.

Плурализам је сасвим нов правац у историографији, који је своје теоретске основе добио током раних деведесетих година XX века у радовима Бјурка (Bruke), Аплбија (Appleby), Ханта (Hunt) и Џејкоба (Jacob), а значајног писца у личности Симона Шаме. Обзиром на чињеницу да је први превод на српски језик једне целовите монографије посвећене новијој историји Балкана објављен тек пре непуне две године, као и да се код нас под “новим приступима” често подразумевају пре другачија идеолошка стајалишта историчара или употреба већег броја извора, него ослањање на другачије методолошке основе; извесно је дошло време за нови покушај једне целовите синтезе историје Балкана. Приложени текст, само је један прилог изразу те тежње као и предлог приступа који код нас још увек није довољно познат и примењен.

LITERATURE

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