The Balkan economies c. 1800–1914

_The Balkan economies c. 1800–1914_ is a strongly revisionist book which compares the economic progress of Serbia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Montenegro and Macedonia in the century before World War I. Michael Palairet draws heavily on native language primary sources to argue that these territories probably experienced economic decline rather than growth, at least from the mid nineteenth century. This comprehensive study of the economic development of the Balkans is divided into two parts, the first covering the 1790s to 1878 when most of the Balkan area except Serbia was subject to Ottoman rule. The second deals with the period 1878 to 1914 when Bulgaria and Bosnia had been prised from Ottoman rule. Dr Palairet points out that, far from being a drag on development, Ottoman rule made possible more progress than the arrangements which accompanied self-government. Thanks to the in-depth research which he conducted during the writing of this book, it now promises to be the definitive economic history of the Balkans.
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The Balkan economies
c. 1800–1914

Evolution without development

Michael Palairet
University of Edinburgh
For Rowland, father, son
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Preface

In 1891, Belgian consular agents in the Balkans were ordered to leave their comfortable quarters in the capital cities and undertake commercial ‘voyages of exploration’ in the provinces. They did a fine job. This book seeks to emulate them by exploring the economic experience of the Balkan territories through the observations of contemporaries, and setting these within a deductive framework of economic logic. It makes minimal use of the inductive approach, the insertion of the data within a mould of (under-) development theory, because of the author’s scepticism of the validity of the typologies on offer.

There is no universally accepted definition of what ‘the Balkans’ comprise, but for the purpose of our study, we define it as the area displayed on map 1 p. 35, comprising the territories bounded by the sea to west, south and east, and by the line of the rivers Sava and Danube to the north. In terms of the jurisdictions of 1885–1912, the area included Bosnia-Hercegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria and Ottoman Europe (excluding the city of Constantinople). Romania, lying within the Carpathian zone, is not included within this study.

A number of the statistical tables are sourced to ‘Balkstat statistics’. This is because the data were drawn from numerous sources, usually with a number of adjustments, which would have taken up excessive space. The Balkstat data are held on disk by the author at the Department of Economic and Social History, University of Edinburgh, and are available on request.

Acknowledgement is owed especially for help, enlightenment, comment and criticism to Ian Blanchard, John Lampe, Joel Halpern, Danica Milić, and to Donald Quataert, who reviewed the work internally for Cambridge. Financial assistance was granted by the ESRC, and the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland.
Glossary

aba  heavy peasant woollen cloth
ayans  notables
beg  Ottoman landowner
çiftlik (çiftlik, çitlik, çiftlik)  landed estate
cizye  head-tax on non-Moslems
çorbâşija (çorbaci)  rich Christian
dan'k  tithe on crops
dünüm  0.092 hectares
gajtan (gaytan)  braid, piping
gospodar’âk  doubled tithe
Hambarya  Ottoman uniform factory, Constantinople
iltizam  tithe farming
kolibi  hill cottages
kaza  district
kmet  in Bosnia, a tenant farmer
k’rdzhalija  bandit
mirich  uncultivated and untaxed land
mulk  cultivated, taxed land
nizam  Ottoman regular army
opština (obština)  equivalent to French commune
pećalbars  migrant workers
pašaluk  province ruled by pasha, military governor
reaya  non-Moslem
shajak (şajak)  carded woollen cloth (=Austrian Loden)
spahiya (sipahi)  Ottoman feudal cavalryman, owner of a spahiluk
spahiluk (sipahiluk)  Ottoman territorial fief
Tanzimat  Ottoman reform era, 1839–56
tapija (tapu)  Ottoman cultivating lease
vak’f  untaxable property
yamaks  irregular soldiery controlled by the Janissaries
yaylak  privileged pasture rights

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Abbreviations

AAE Paris, Archive du Ministère des Affaires étrangères
ACG Cetinje, Arhiv Crne Gore
AHOI Acta Historico Oeconomica Iugoslaviae
AN Paris, Archives nationales
AS Belgrade, Archiv Srbije
BAE Brussels, Archive du Ministère des Affaires étrangères
BOUCA Austria-Hungary. Berichte der Österr.-Ung. Consular-Amter
GBC Great Britain, consular reports
GSUD Glasnik srpskog učenog društva
IAB Belgrade, Istorijski arhiv Beograda
IC Istorijski Časopis
IKKS Industrijska komora kraljevine Srbije
IUBH Bosnja Hercegovina, Izvještaj o upravi Bosne i Hercegovini, 1906-1911
JEcH Journal of Economic History
JEEcH Journal of European Economic History
LRO Preston, Lancashire Record Office
Michoff [II (1924)] La population de la Turquie et de la Bulgarie II (Sofia, 1924)
Michoff, Nicolas V. [I(1941)] Contribution à l’histoire du commerce bulgare, I, Rapports consulaires belges (Sofia, 1941)
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Michoff [III (1950)] Contribution à l’histoire du commerce de la Turquie et de la Bulgarie. III, Rapports consulaires français (Svishtov, 1950)
Michoff [II/2 (1953)] Beiträge zur Handelsgeschichte Bulgariens, II, Österreichische Konsularberichte (Part 2) (Sofia, 1953)
Michoff [V (1967)] Naselenieto na Turtsija i B’lgarija prez XVIII i XIX v V (Sofia, 1967)
MuS Smederevo, Muzej u Smederevu
NBKM Narodna biblioteka Kiril i Metodi (M/S dept.)
NiPS Naselja i Poreklo Stanovništva
List of abbreviations

NSZ Naselja srpskih zemalja
PRO London, Public Record Office
PS Periodichesko spisanie na b’lgarskoto knizhnoto družestvo
RC Belgium, Recueil consulaire
SGBTs Statisticheski godishnik na B’lgarskoto Tsarstvo
SGKS Statistički godišnjak kraljevine Srbije
SKS Statistika kraljevine Srbije
SN Srpske Novine
Sp.BID Spisanie na B’lgarskoto Ikonomichesko Družestvo
TsDIA Sofia, Tsentralen D’rzhaven Istoricheski Arhiv