

BULGARIAN COMMUNISM: THE ROAD TO POWER, 1934–1944. By *Nissan Oren*. East Central European Studies of Columbia University and Research Institute on Communist Affairs, Columbia University. New York: Columbia University Press, 1971. xii, 288 pp. \$12.50.

In recent years, three books have appeared in English on different periods of the history of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP). This volume treats the period from the Zveno-Military League coup in 1934 to the Communist seizure of the Bulgarian government on September 9, 1944. In presenting the party's history within the context of more general political developments in Bulgaria, it illuminates certain themes important to Bulgarian history as a whole.

The author devotes considerable attention to the Bulgarian Communists' internecine quarrels over personalities and tactics, and in general he has given an adequate treatment to the major developments in the party during the interwar years. In particular, the complicated conflicts between Communist ideology and national interests in Southern Dobrudja, Western Thrace, and Macedonia are presented in a manner that is both succinct and clearly understandable, even though the author adds little that is new.

In the opinion of this reviewer, however, the treatment of the party's activities during the war years is not as thorough as the reader might expect from his reading of the earlier chapters. Thus the author fails to analyze in any detail the BCP's stand on the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939, and subsequently slights both the party's activities during its period of disgrace (1939–41) and the organization of the Fatherland Front (1942). Even though official accounts have always exaggerated the extent and effectiveness of the Bulgarian resistance, the party's wartime activities were significant and deserve greater attention than they are given in this book. Soviet-Bulgarian contacts, the relations between the Comintern and Bulgaria, the broadcasts by rebel stations "Hristo Botev" and "Naroden glas"—all these aspects of Bulgaria's experience during the Second World War are only barely noted. Much more complete treatment is given to the last few turbulent months which preceded the Soviet invasion. The author reveals a good understanding of the vicissitudes of Bulgaria's internal crisis and gives an adequate account of the quest for neutrality by the governments of Ivan Bagrianov and Konstantin Muraviev.

The author skirts some of the more controversial issues inherent to his topic without informing the reader whether this was done because of the unavailability of documentation or simply because the author did not consider these matters to be important. Thus there is no profile of the party cadre, and no analysis of the social, economic, ethnic, and geographic background of its members. Similarly the author fails to discuss the manner in which the Communists infiltrated various government agencies, ignores Communist propaganda techniques, and does not assess the wartime contacts between the Bulgarian and neighboring Communist parties. The greatest failing of the book is that it does not explain how the Soviet leaders planned and executed their objective of exporting the Communist Revolution to Bulgaria and then converting her into a Soviet enclave.

In the end such a book is of value not for advancing unfamiliar evidence or new ideas but as a synthesis of a large quantity of previously scattered and fragmentary material. This book is based almost exclusively on published materials. A definitive history of the Bulgarian Communist Party will be possible only after

Bulgarian government archives, especially police and army intelligence reports, are made accessible. These materials, coupled with German military and diplomatic reports on Bulgarian affairs during World War II, and classified Soviet and Comintern materials, will one day facilitate a reappraisal and a revision of much that has been written on the history of the Bulgarian Communist Party. In the meantime, however, this useful survey of the history of the Bulgarian Communist Party, 1934–44, is welcome both because it is the best available work in English and because it points the direction which future research on this topic must take.

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THE GREEK PHOENIX. By *Joseph Braddock*. New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1973. xii, 233 pp. \$6.95.

From its outbreak in March 1821 the Greek War of Independence has received extensive coverage in Europe and America. After the initial spate of valuable reminiscences, however, there have been few published works which contribute to an understanding of this interesting and complex conflict. Indeed, many of the books are distinguished by a romantic outlook, characteristic of the post-Napoleonic age during which the revolution took place. It is thus desirable that these numerous accounts of the Greek struggle for independence be superseded by intensive political, social, and economic studies that investigate the important primary sources available in several languages. In recent years, belatedly but fortunately, a small number of scholarly publications on the subject have appeared.

Regrettably, at least for the serious historian, Joseph Braddock's *Greek Phoenix* adds another title to the long list of readable but not informative studies of the Greek campaign to overthrow Turkish rule. The author does not pretend to investigate the subject in any depth, which in any case would have proved difficult, since he seeks to describe Greek politics and society from the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the coming of Otho, the first king of Greece, in 1833. Also, Braddock falls victim to his slim bibliography of exclusively standard English sources. His analysis, highly literary but not startlingly interpretive, tends to be shallow on the political developments in Greek society and superficial on the intricacies of European diplomacy from 1815 to 1833. A pro-British bias emerges occasionally, and in one instance results in false information. On page 56 Braddock emphatically states, in his description of the Philhellenes, that "it was from the British Isles—an impressive number from Scotland and Ireland—that most of these Philhellenes came. . . ." William St. Clair, in *That Greece Might Still Be Free* (1972), systematically proves that greater numbers of foreign volunteers arrived in Greece from Germany, France, and Italy.

The author does achieve the objective proposed in the preface of reproducing the "colour and atmosphere of the scenes chosen" and revealing the "principal characters as living men and women" (p. xi). Biographical material and entertaining anecdotes on the careers of distinguished personalities such as Ali Pasha of Yannina, Makriyannis, Karaiskakis, Kolokotronis, and Lord Byron, among others, provide lively reading. Hence the person who desires a simplistic but well-written presentation of the Greek Revolution can read this book with some profit.