

Modernization and Political Elites in the Balkans, 1870-1914

Diana Mishkova
University of Sofia
June 1994
Working Paper 94-1

© 1997 by the Center for Austrian Studies. Permission to reproduce must generally be obtained from the [Center for Austrian Studies](#). Copying is permitted in accordance with the fair use guidelines of the US Copyright Act of 1976. The the Center for Austrian Studies permits the following additional educational uses without permission or payment of fees: academic libraries may place copies of the Center's Working Papers on reserve (in multiple photocopied or electronically retrievable form) for students enrolled in specific courses: teachers may reproduce or have reproduced multiple copies (in photocopied or electronic form) for students in their courses. Those wishing to reproduce Center for Austrian Studies Working Papers for any other purpose (general distribution, advertising or promotion, creating new collective works, resale, etc.) must obtain permission from the [Center](#).

I approach my topic as pertaining to the big issue of politics and underdevelopment that is, the nature, operation, and functions of the political sphere in backward societies, particularly those functions related to social and economic transformations.

As used here, political modernization should not be conceptually associated with modernization theory or, since "modernization theory" is a shorthand for a variety of perspectives, with the neo-evolutionist perspective commonly equated with it. Rather, my empirical study of modernization seeks to explain the historical conditions that emphasize the non-unilinear nature of modernization and, indeed, the strictly context-bound definition of its forms and functions.⁽¹⁾

Thus, my usage of the term political modernization to denote the adoption of the dominant European model of organization the modern state, with its legislature, popular commitment, centralized bureaucracy, and mobilization capacity tries to avoid an a priori association with any of the conflicting paradigms. For, while pointing to a model to be followed, it carries no indication of either the form of government to be adopted or the functions these are meant to perform.⁽²⁾

By confronting the established interpretations and some of their theoretical premises, this essay (as a part of my longer-term research) pursues two major purposes:

i) to identify the processes of modernization, state-building, and nation-building in the Balkans (as opposed to the northern part of East Central Europe) in other words, to integrate social and economic modernization with political history; this approach contrasts with their explicit or implicit treatment as opposing forces, whereby state- and

nation-building (a.k.a. "virulent Balkan nationalisms") are seen as hindering successful modernization;

ii) to outline the limitations inherent in any comparison to the present-day third world countries precisely because it is the practical contemporary implications of such comparisons that have stimulated large amounts of research on the Balkans.

The Standard Views on Political Modernization in the Balkans

I will attempt to demonstrate my approach relative to these goals by challenging two widely shared and interlocking interpretive views of the Balkans: the first characterizes patterns of social and political development in terms of an East-West dichotomy; the second, more extensively and contentiously, maintains a negative perspective on the operation of Balkan politics and on Balkan nationalism in particular. Both were originally developed to explain the nature of social change in the contemporary third world and have been later expanded to the historically underdeveloped regions of Eastern Europe, the Balkans in particular. The separate treatment of these two concepts in the following discussion is a matter of convenience, since they are fused in the historical discourse and represent basically overlapping variants of the standard view on political modernization in the Balkans.

The East-West dichotomy. On an ideal-typical level, it has long been assumed that underlying the Western type of development was a self-generated dynamism of social transformation which, although unique, became of universal significance and validity. Underdeveloped societies, on the other hand, are seen as societies with a non-dynamic, traditional social order in which dynamic aspirations have been aroused by its clash with the outside world.

The nationalist intelligentsia in those societies conceived the creation a new "political superstructure" as instrumental in transforming the non-dynamic "social basis." In other words, they assigned a creative, revolutionary function to political action and to state power fundamentally different from the role played by these factors in the development of the dynamic Western societies.

What was at stake, therefore, was an attempt to replace some of the missing social conditions for Western-type dynamism with corresponding political institutions, and to develop others. In this respect, most authors would claim, there were more political similarities between the two aforementioned categories (the contemporary third world and the follower countries of the European "periphery" in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) than between any of them and the "West."⁽³⁾

There is certainly something in this ideal-typical distinction between "Western" and "non-Western" patterns of social transformation and political development. Yet, even on

this level alone, one should beware of exaggeration and the unwarranted assumption that matters had developed very differently in the West.

In particular, *did* political action and state power in underdeveloped societies differ fundamentally from the role they played in the development of the dynamic societies of the West? A common "deficiency" of underdeveloped societies, emerging from the distinction drawn above, is that the state was created before the economy, the "reversal" of the "normal" procedure in the West. But even England, in the hundred years prior to its industrial revolution, had not developed on a liberal market basis but on that of mercantilism. In the other less developed ("catching-up") societies of Western Europe, protective measures abounded during the first six decades of the nineteenth century and were not completely abandoned afterwards, as D. Senghaas has amply demonstrated (Switzerland and the Netherlands being the only notable exceptions).⁽⁴⁾ Recent scholarship has shown, moreover, that there was a reorganization of industrial management and structure throughout Europe in the late nineteenth century; West European governments were far from indifferent to the kind of state measures that Gerschenkron postulated were restricted to relatively backward areas. And, as Alan Sked remarks (in a critique of A. Janos's characterization of nineteenth-century Hungary in terms of present-day third-world countries), "Might it not be argued that the French state was essentially the creation of Napoleon I, whereas the French economy as such did not emerge until the rule of Napoleon III?"⁽⁵⁾ Similarly, everywhere in the West, the state was instrumental in providing funds for creating infrastructure especially railroad-building, education systems, and sanitation. E. Weber's study on rural France between 1870 and 1914, to be referred to again below, is the best-documented survey of this crucial state role in a "classical" Western society.

Generally speaking, historical evidence about state and politics points to a chronological, not a typological, distinction between "East" and "West." Political modernization and the functions pinned on it are undoubtedly related to 1) the developmental stage of the society initiating a wholesale (and not just political) transformation, 2) the timing of its political independence and the respective needs modernization is meant to meet, and 3) the historical context. These considerations already set the time and functional limits of comparisons between different forms of government or modes of political action. The differences in the respective traditional, pre-modern, pre-industrial social structures do not account for the variations that materialized; a modern political establishment, whether evolved "from below" (the paradigmatic interpretation of the "Western" model) or imposed "from above" (the distinct case of the follower countries), must confront the formidable task of "transforming" pre-modern social structures (which everywhere shared essential similarities). To the extent, however, that the functions attributed to the political sphere differed in the most developed Western countries, in their "catching-up" contemporaries, and in the present-day developing countries, respectively, these variations were primarily due to the growing development *differentials* between societies and to their overall socio-structural condition. Not until the emergence of the modern (industrial) society were these differentials translated into awareness of backwardness, overlaid by a sense of cultural and moral inferiority, and hence into self-conscious policies for overcoming it.

In most cases this awareness implies differences of degree, not of kind. As relative backwardness and the tasks imposed on government (some stemming from the very nature of the modern state) continuously increase, and as pressure towards ever-more-accelerated catching-up becomes cumulative, the relative weight of the political sphere or the state, as the driving force behind development, tends to increase too. Although the political sphere was everywhere a factor in development, its importance was greater in late-developing societies or where a conducive environment was missing (a conducive environment might have a tradition of self-government, higher literacy rates, and an entrepreneurial class). Thus in Scandinavia despite the much lower levels of general economic indicators by the end of the nineteenth century the state was less active in education than in France because by that time Scandinavian societies were culturally much more homogeneous than the French and because literacy there, a major vehicle of nation-building, was traditionally higher than in most other West European societies.

In the West, moreover, as in the East and in the non-European world, political elites worked hard to create a sense of belonging to a common political unit, an identification with the state, and the will to participate in its affairs in short, to build up the nation. But time, again, mattered enormously. Some societies (including the Scandinavian, English, Dutch, French, Spanish, and Portuguese) had been moving in this direction for centuries, since the establishment of their centralized monarchies. The rest of Europe, however, was more like the "non-Western" world, following the principle of "We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians."

In short, for at least two reasons, timing is what should concern us when attempting to explain the forms and operation of political systems, especially the state, in conditions of underdevelopment. First, the small present-day role of the political sphere or state in Western Europe should be judged against its tradition of strength in the early modern period, rather than against its greater importance in contemporary Eastern Europe. It is not the case, therefore, that the state in the West has always been weak while that in the East has traditionally been strong. Second, with the advent of "modernity," the tasks of state-building and nation-building in conditions of economic and social backwardness ushered in political actions and interference by new governments much more intensive than those of the early modern centralized monarchies, which had for centuries "unintentionally" performed these same functions. The late emergence of the centralized (bureaucratized, rationalized) state in the East, in other words, should be held responsible for the disproportionately great importance of modern state institutions there.

The negative view of Balkan politics and nationalism. A large, influential group of scholars both neo-Marxist and non-Marxist, usually arguing in the context of the East-West dichotomy sees political modernization in late-developing societies as superficial Westernization, a blind emulation inherent in the dependency-syndrome, a smoke-screen for the structures of traditional society and/or underdevelopment.⁽⁶⁾ Thus, the early adoption of Western liberal ideas and parliamentary institutions by nineteenth-century pre-industrial Balkan societies is often seen as a mere facade that had very little impact on the profoundly status-based, undemocratic, authoritarian structures of domination

prevailing in these societies. Likewise, the efforts at building up nation-states, and nationalism itself, are often regarded not only as failing to solve social and economic problems, but indeed as directing national resources away from these problems and, as such, detrimental to the "genuine" modernization. Thus, commenting on the adoption of Western political organization, Jowitt states:

Dependency is a consequence of the premature but imperative adoption of a political format for which the appropriate social base is lacking. . . . Just as in societies characterized by invidious status inequalities "small boys" must gain the attention of "big men" or patrons in order to survive, so the adoption of a particular ideological and institutional facade by a small nation may be seen not so much as a choice by which to define its internal social organization, but rather as an effort to make a special claim on a great power patron in an effort to survive as a political unit.⁽⁷⁾

In a similar vein, Gale Stokes points to the detrimental effects that imposing the idea of the nation-state had upon the Balkan societies:

Perhaps some, or even many, of the Balkan politicians that espoused national justifications and ideas hoped that by adopting these Western notions before the social and economic changes that had produced them in the West had occurred in their own countries they could pull their lands into the modern world. But this did not happen. The ideas that justified the creation of the nation state were not appropriate for understanding Balkan social realities.... While the political norms of class society were being imposed in the Balkans through the creation of the nation state, hierarchical society had barely begun to be questioned there. . . . Since this *mentalite* [of the status society] remained strong, the creation of centralized nation states in the Balkans permitted the committed few simply to substitute themselves for the departed upper classes of Ottoman times. . . . Little or no social change accompanied the introduction of new political forms.⁽⁸⁾

One of the major purposes of my research is to re-examine critically this particular interpretation of political modernization, overtly or implicitly supported as it is by an impressive number of scholars. I focus first on the social background of the Balkan elites (who they were and what they were up to), then on the long-term effects of parliamentary institutions in the late-industrializing Balkan societies, and finally on the state-building and nation-building experiences in the Balkans as compared to those in contemporary Western Europe.

The Social Background: The Origins and Goals of the Political Elites

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, political power in the Balkans was effectively kept in the hands of narrow modernizing elites who were bent on

implementing the organizational structure that dominated the European state system and promised admission into the advanced world. This organization was, of course, the modern state, with its instruments for generating commitment and effecting mass mobilization of resources and people. The Balkan political systems were restrictive in practice (if not by constitution) in order to subdue or use the peasant majorities and ensure the modernizing elites' control of the state. Despite this restrictiveness and the general political corruption, the Balkan political systems were geared to broader national needs, above all, to the need for material progress. For, as political classes, these elites were dependent on the power and prestige of the state, which in turn required a steadily expanding economic base. Thus, from the very inception of statehood, political classes responded to the exigencies of development by a set of neo-liberal policies. Constitutional rule, sovereignty of the people, a responsible government, civil liberties guaranteed by the law, and education for all these were the basic instruments through which they hoped to bring about the desired economic and social changes, and in particular national integration and popular support.

In all Balkan states, these liberally- and nationalistically-minded elites dominated politics; though economically weaker than the traditional elites, they were "over-represented" on all political levels, thereby promoting middle-class interests and national consolidation.

The Romanian social structure with its landowning elite, the boyars, in possession of huge estates, and a peasantry of subjugated small-holding sharecroppers had much more in common with that of Hungary or Russia than with the other Balkan countries, where independent small-holders overwhelmingly predominated.

Yet, until World War I, the Romanian state was not dominated by the great landlords but by liberal nationalists who emerged from the gentry boyars. In order to upgrade their social position, they undertook to reform Romania into a modern state. Professional bureaucrats and politicians, whose status depended solely on that of the state, dominated the centralized state bureaucracy. Their avowed cause was urban modernization by forced industrialization under state protection, by encouraging the growth of a Romanian middle class, by building-up an efficient state machinery, and by faithfully upholding liberal policies.⁽⁹⁾ The Romanian political system was consequently geared to these ends. Since the Romanian nationalist-liberal elite (much like Italian and German but unlike Balkan counterparts) managed to enact a purely diplomatic unification "from above," without the need for support "from below," it was the last Balkan state to consider radical economic concessions to and enfranchisement of the mass of peasant producers. Understandably, therefore, this nationalist-liberal elite sought, and got, its electoral support from the new middle urban class it was trying to create.

A major difference in the respective social structures of nineteenth-century Romania and the other Balkan states lies precisely in the position of the landlord classes. In the other cases, relatively undifferentiated societies of free peasant owners were not under the control of economically dominant landlord classes. Still, there too, the political elites whether brought to prominence and leadership during the national struggles or by virtue

of their superior education at foreign universities strove to enhance the state's power, wealth, and ability to act. Highly centralized state apparatuses, ruled by professional politicians in control of responsive bureaucracies, were able to raise ever-increasing resources, allowing them to pursue the expensive projects of state-building, national integration, and economic and social reforms. Everywhere, political parties and parliaments however intermittent their consolidation and however erratic their practices became essential ingredients of the political system.

In Serbia, after 1881, the most formidable political force vying for control of the state was the Serbian Radical Party. "The Radicals were the first in Serbia to create local clubs linked together by a national organization, the first to enroll peasants with party cards, and the first to mobilize a sizable electorate on the basis of a program rather than on the basis of police interference."⁽¹⁰⁾ They sought the political support of the peasantry through a program of self-administration, reduction of bureaucracy, alleviation of peasants' taxation, universal manhood suffrage, conscript army, and free public education. But the Radical Party, although presenting itself as defender of the peasants' interests and relegating the leadership of local committees to lower-rank priests and teachers, was not a peasant party. It was created and administered by intellectuals and professional politicians whose ideology centered on achieving national consolidation and whose ultimate goals were state-oriented.⁽¹¹⁾

In Bulgaria, despite the weakness of the urban middle classes and the absence of stable influence among the electorate, the modernizing political establishment as a whole felt quite secure, whichever party governed. The two left parties at the time were embroiled in arguments over their social identification and had insignificant influence among the electorate, since they were too doctrinaire to grasp the utility of mobilizing the peasantry.

On the other hand, the "governmental" parties, which monopolized politics, did not fall into the classical division of left, right, and center. The declared domestic policy hardly differed from one party to another; at the core of all parties' platforms was rapid modernization through state efficiency. In all these parties, the most ambitious pro-modernization group the economically weak middle class enjoyed representation that far exceeded its real weight in the economy. Their policy was implemented in the absence of opposition either by "conservative" elements or by autonomous political organizations of those social strata affected by that policy. This policy was not originally a shortcoming. The considerable progress the country made in all spheres of national life during the first decade of the twentieth century, which prevented widespread social (mainly peasant) discontent, was the result of the various governments' policies, that shared these major developmental objectives. As the rates of agricultural improvement and population growth slowed down, and especially between 1912 and 1918, these policies became liabilities. This latter period catalyzed large-scale mobilization of the peasantry and the emergence of the Agrarian Party as a major political force. Because landlords were non-existent and the established parties had no strong links to the countryside, these parties could not prevent the large-scale mobilization of the peasantry by radical intellectuals nor the emergence of agrarian-populist movements, which seized the opportunity to attempt the creation of a peasant state.

Greece's agrarian structure was quite similar to the Serbian and Bulgarian ones, but in terms of state management of the peasantry, the Greek political arrangement was closer to that in Serbia. The Greek state apparatus was appropriated by the mainly Peloponnesian notable families after Thessaly, southern Epirus, and Aegean Macedonia were annexed. Their political hegemony was based on the role they had played during the War of Independence and, later, on state patronage rather than on land ownership.

In Greece, political organizations based on powerful local oligarchies had been set up when the country first attained independence. The stronger and more centralized the state became, the more these oligarchies endeavored to offset their loss of local autonomy by acquiring control of the state from within. This situation gave rise early on to political factions with strong and extensive links in the countryside. The introduction of parliamentary politics in Greece (1864) in no way impeded these political factions: they continued to thrive as pressure groups and patronage agencies, successfully controlling and incorporating the peasantry into the central state institutions.

Its peculiar agrarian-economic situation prevented large-scale populist mobilization in Greece and instead perpetuated a political system based on powerful clientage networks. Of all the Balkan countries, Greece faced the severest natural limitations for grain cultivation and subsistence agriculture (including livestock). This limited cultivation goes a long way toward explaining why among the Balkan states, Greece has the lowest rate of population growth, the highest emigration, and relatively high levels of urbanization.⁽¹²⁾

The Political and Social Effects of Parliamentary Institutions in the Late-Developing Balkan Societies

The argument pursued in this section confronts the standard one that sees the adoption of Western parliamentary institutions in the nineteenth-century Balkans as a mere facade, meant to either please prospective patrons or to compensate for an inferiority complex. The very evidence of long-term change in the forms of political mobilization suggests a different reading of the effects of these institutions. It clearly challenges the one quoted above that the imposition of the "political norms of class society" did little to dislodge traditional ideas, that it had no impact on and was, in fact, molded by the structures and values of hierarchical status-based society, and that it only helped to substitute new native bureaucracies for the previous imperial rulers. Electoral competition, however intermittent or distorted by fraud and coercion, contributed greatly to the early weakening of restrictive structures of domination. Moreover, on the ideological level, democratic/liberal ideals and themes posed a serious obstacle to the institutionalization and legitimacy of long-term dictatorial rule.

To be sure, the heritage of the centuries of patrimonial rule in the Balkans was a powerful molding factor once these countries acquired their political independence in the nineteenth century and set about implementing Western parliamentary forms of political rule. Indeed, as it has been already pointed out, the nineteenth-century parliamentary regimes in these countries were based on restricted popular participation and on a

strongly centralized state controlled by a handful of notable families and professional politicians. This is what Nicos Mouzelis calls "oligarchic parliamentary rule "a system dominated by only a few people who manage to maintain a liberal, pluralistic system of representation (with the usual civil liberties), while at the same time excluding the bulk of the lower classes from the political arena.⁽¹³⁾ The means for achieving the latter in the case of the Balkans where, except in Romania, male suffrage became universal in the second half of the nineteenth century resided in the capacity of either local potentates or civil servants to control lower-class votes through fraud, coercion, or other forms of political manipulation.

This restrictive form of parliamentary government, however, began to weaken in all these countries toward the end of the nineteenth century; its actual breakdown and the opening up of the representative system to new political elites occurred during the first three decades of the twentieth century (1903 in Serbia; 1909 in Greece; 1919 in Bulgaria; 1928 in Romania).

I will now address a crucial consideration in understanding the shape and functions that political institutions took in these semi-peripheral societies, in contrast to those in the highly industrialized states and the later third-world countries.

On a macro-historical level above and beyond the differences in the West European patterns of sociopolitical developments it can be generalized that in Western Europe industrialization was one of the main factors leading to the transition from a restrictive system of government to one based on broadly-organized political parties. Exactly the reverse is true for the countries of the "parliamentary semi-periphery." There, the demise of restrictive politics and the transition to mass parties occurred before these countries experienced large-scale industrialization.⁽¹⁴⁾

It is at this point that a revision of the "emulative" interpretation gains solid ground. As Mouzelis demonstrates, the fact that parliamentary institutions in the semi-periphery did not function as they did in Western Europe does not mean that their role was merely decorative. Party competition and the early introduction of universal suffrage (or at least a relatively broad franchise) in these societies created a base for the early organization of national party-political structures and for the gradual imposition of the rule of law. They provided the framework within which it became possible to contest the monopoly of personal parties and their client networks by appealing to the involvement of much broader social strata in politics. This appeal explains the emergence and rise to power of the BANU in Bulgaria, the Liberal Party in Greece, the Radical Party in Serbia, and the National Peasant Party in Romania. True, these states were not model democracies, but in this they were hardly an exception in Europe.

There were also non-political stimuli, resulting from these societies' relatively early integration in the world economy, that worked to broaden political participation: the commercialization and monetisation of at least certain sectors of their national economies, the rapid growth of their export sectors and the development of national markets, and the growth of social overhead capital (roads and railroads). The effects of

these changes can hardly be overestimated, for, while the late nineteenth-century Balkan societies had pre-industrial economies, their integration into the world market resulted in their acquiring social structures which, in a variety of ways, were more differentiated and "modernized" than those of pre-industrial Western European societies. Mouzelis illustrates this fundamental point by assessing the levels of urbanization and state expansion in the highly industrialized and the semi-peripheral societies at comparable stages of industrialization.⁽¹⁵⁾

Both commercialization and urbanization, like all concomitants of world-market integration and the "modernized" social structures, were directly related to politics more specifically, to the central role of the state. This brings us to the other controversial aspect of political modernization in late developing societies the interrelated processes of state-building and nation-building.

State-Building and Nation-Building

As stated above, critical observers frequently define institutionally-reared national consciousness (and the concomitant resources spent on it) in opposition to the "generic" technological and social pre-requisites of successful modernization, which would be the same for these states as for any other late-developers. In this view, conditions for an "organic" evolution of nation-states similar to that in the West (for example, "class" and legalistic societies) were missing in the Balkans, and the modernizing Balkan elites failed to effect sufficient economic and social changes. Consequently, their efforts at national integration through the state, judged from a development perspective, were basically a subservient, misplaced, costly, and ultimately inefficient emulation of Western institutions and political formats, aimed at compensating for an "inferiority complex" rather than at transforming these societies' social condition. If anything, it continues, the elites were largely responsible for turning national energies away from social and economic problems and into nationalist, irredentist, non-productive, and ruinous projects.

My basic argument here springs from an utterly different premise namely, that *political modernization* (and national integration) in relatively backward societies, such as the Balkans in the nineteenth and much of the twentieth centuries, can be best understood in the terms already outlined in relation to *economic modernization* in Europe, in the sense that they enjoyed the "advantages of backwardness." It is my conviction that an understanding of the nature and effects of nation-building in the Balkans will not come about if the process is invariably conceived as the *product* of "modernity," denying it any autonomous capacity to stimulate, let alone *cause*, a movement to modernity.⁽¹⁶⁾

I argue that in underdeveloped societies, where economic integration was slower to develop, state-promoted political and cultural integration (acculturation) through schools, military service, and political participation was consigned the mission of building-up a modern sense of national identity and indeed of achieving national integration as the indispensable prerequisite for accelerated development.

Several different analytical techniques can be employed to test this view; I prefer to use France as a comparative case, basing my method on Eugen Weber's celebrated work *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford Univ. Press, 1976). This comparison is useful in at least two ways: a) France presents a case "Western" enough to be conveniently employed as a model of what on ideal-typical level is referred to as "dynamic," "class," "modern" in a word "classic" West European society in contrast to the East- and non-European societies; France was, moreover, the birthplace of the modern concept of the nation and the nation-state; b) at the same time, in terms of national integration and modernization of its countryside, France of the last quarter of the nineteenth century faced conditions quite similar to the ones Balkan governments had to deal with.⁽¹⁷⁾

The French experience, therefore, allows for a constructive comparison of nation-building and modernization strategies designed to undo underdevelopment and of the transformations achieved in these two contrasted contexts the "Western" and the "non-Western." Hence, one can measure in concrete historical terms to what extent political action and state involvement differed between contemporary economically developed and underdeveloped societies.

One important qualification has to be made, though. National integration (and social/economic modernization) implies, analytically, two things: i) the transition from many small societies to one large society, nation-building properly speaking; and ii) the growing ability of the government to exert its authority throughout the realm. In this second aspect, national integration in a country such as France and that in newly emergent states such as the Balkans differs significantly. France, as with a number of other West European societies, had been gradually overcoming its lack of integration throughout its long transition from feudal diversity to dynastic state to modern industrial state. At any rate, as E. Weber points out, by the nineteenth century France was integrated in a political and administrative whole a political entity, devoid of cultural but not of administrative integration.

In this respect the Balkan states faced an obvious disadvantage: all of them had to implement their nation-building strategies simultaneously with the building of the state that is, with the administrative and political integration of their societies. The long-term financial and economic implications of this situation seem obvious. What needs to be stressed is another cumulative aspect of this divergence. The newly emergent states of the nineteenth century, which did not build upon previously established political institutions but were instead legitimized in opposition to them, had to achieve political and administrative integration at a time when the tasks imposed on government were rapidly increasing. In other words, the later the establishment of the state, the more effort and resources it required to do so, due to the increasingly elaborate and costly machinery of government.

Secondly, in catching-up societies, statesmen and peoples alike are quite aware of what an integrated modern state should be. In most cases, this awareness results in conscious

attempts by the leading strata to reach this goal quickly by taking shortcuts, mainly by utilizing the legislative and organizational techniques of much more advanced states. In many respects, the Balkan states and a number of Latin American ones illustrate this latter phenomenon.

Thus, comparing the proportion of the labor force employed in public administration in the major West European states to that in the "semi-peripheral" ones just before or around World War I, Mouzelis shows that state apparatuses in the latter had reached or even surpassed in size the public bureaucracies of the already-industrialized Western societies. Similarly, a comparison of state tax-raising capacities that is, the state's ability to extract resources for self-maintenance, expansion, and goal achievement indicates that the semi-peripheral states had comparable capacities to those of the industrialized center. Whatever the scarcity of precise data about pre-industrial Europe, it is clear that the differences between the eighteenth- or early nineteenth- century Western European states and the early twentieth-century Balkan states (the timing of industrialization respectively) were considerable, both in terms of revenue extracted and in terms of personnel employed.⁽¹⁸⁾ Given the relatively late inception of the Balkan states as independent political units, the "short-cut" tendency is obvious. This difference is also reflected by, and related to, the nation-building emphases in the two sets of states.

It would be illuminating to compare the intrusion of national politics, if only during election campaigns, in the French and the Balkan countryside,⁽¹⁹⁾ but the data from the Balkans is not sufficient for this purpose. However, statistics for electoral participation, a relatively sound criterion, are available. It needs to be noted that prior to World War I, the number of eligible voters as a percentage of the total population was over 20 percent only in France, Germany, Spain, and Switzerland (in the most other cases it was below 10 percent). With respect to total voter turnout as a percentage of the electorate, the Bulgarian figures are not unfavorable in comparison to other European states having universal male suffrage and the secret ballot before World War I. Moreover, by the end of the 1880s, politics had officially appeared in the villages of all Balkan countries except Romania, through the elections of mayors and municipal councils by all males over twenty-one; the respective law in France was passed as late as 1877.

Table 1: Electoral Participation in General Elections in Bulgaria.⁽²⁰⁾

Year of Election	Year of Eligible Voter	Voter Turnout	Voter Turnout
		Election % of Total in Rural Communities Per 100 Eligible	
		Population Per 100 Eligible in Rural and Urban Communities	
1899	23.6	49.6	49.5

1901 21.5 41.2 42.7

1902 21.7 49.6 49.8

1903 22.4 40.4 41.2

1908 23.1 51.3 50.2

1911 (Grand Assembly) 23.8 56.5 54.0

1911 24.6 49.3 47.2

(Note: The change enacted in France in 1871, establishing polling places throughout each district rather than only in its chief town, was introduced in Bulgaria in 1897.)

Table 2: Total Voter Turnout in Selected European Countries under Universal Male Suffrage Electoral System.⁽²¹⁾

Germany Finland France

Year of Voter Turnout Year of Voter Turnout Year of Voter Turnout

Election Per 100 Eligible Election Per 100 Eligible Election Per 100 Eligible

1871 53.8 1907 70.7 1910 75.4

1877 60.6 1908 64.4 1914 75.4

1884 60.6 1909 65.3

1890 71.6 1910 60.1

1903 76.1 1911 59.8

1912 84.9 1913 51.1

Some other evidence fills in the picture. A French traveler in the mid-1880s noted the tendency of each Greek village to have a "Tricoupian" and a "Delignianian" inn.⁽²²⁾ In the early 1880s, the Serbian Radical Party began to build a nation-wide network of local party clubs in the countryside. In 1883 the Radicals provided leadership for a peasant

rebellion in Eastern Serbia in support of well-understood peasant interests economic complaints and demands for self-government. The rebels clearly saw a direct relationship between their problems and the total society and brought political pressure to bear on the government of the day. In Bulgaria, the upheavals of the 1870s and 1880s (for example, the Russo-Turkish war, the wide-ranging liberal propaganda in defense of the Constitution between 1881 and 1883, the Unification of 1885, the political crisis of 1886-1887) introduced politics to the villages the only place where contesting politicians could look for popular support and made political subjects part of life in the countryside.

One can also compare what E. Weber notes about the French countryside with the initial politicization of the Bulgarian countryside: "the Republic won peasant support in the 1870s on a purely political level, with no reference to socioeconomic measures or state aid, concerns that developed only in the (later) 1880s."⁽²³⁾ This comparison makes good sense, especially where the relationship between politics and the market was late to be appreciated, so that political awareness developed first. But already by the turn of the century, as records of election campaigns and peasant political activities suggest, consciousness of social or economic interests and even conflicts had developed further advancing national unity by reflecting the disintegration of traditional consensus and addressing much broader strata. Peasants realized that laws and national politics affected them; they talked about and called for laws on taxes, credit, protection, and public administration. For example, when discussing the state of agriculture in the Bulgarian National Assembly, ministers and deputies alike commonly emphasized, and frequently complained of, the peasants pinning all their expectations for protection and improvement on the state.

All this leads us to conclude that despite the substantial difference in the levels of economic modernization (shown by indicators of economic growth), political modernization (mobilization) in the French and the Balkan countryside among the overwhelming mass of the population proceeded contemporaneously, had similar logic and mechanisms, and similarly promoted national unity. This conclusion coincides with the one drawn above regarding the effects of the early introduction of parliamentarism in the "semi-periphery." Both point to the fact that, in political terms, the late-developing societies under examination were as "modern" as the developed ones. It is inadmissible, therefore, to brand political institutions and practices in these countries as merely emulative, socially irrelevant, and counterproductive. No one forced on the Balkan political leaders, and no "Western" model, or "international legitimation" required the acceptance of, say, universal suffrage (introduced at the time only in Germany, France, and Spain). Universal suffrage was desirable, however, if national unity was to be forged quickly under conditions of tenuous and slowly progressing economic integration through roads, railroads, and the circulation of money and goods.

The same was true in relation to educational politics. How did the Balkans perform in education? Let's look at the Bulgarian case, for which I have sufficiently reliable data.⁽²⁴⁾

i) Between 1879 and 1911, the budget for public instruction increased by 650 percent (from 1.5 percent in 1879, to 7.2 in 1900, to 11.2 in 1911) the biggest increase in state

expenditure throughout the period. During the same time, the proportion of military expenditures fell from 40.6 percent in 1879 to 33.2 in 1887 to 21.7 in 1911; thus, in 1911, the proportion of education expenditures was more than half that of military expenditures. Only the military fund, the loan service, and the public works consumed bigger proportions of the budget.

ii) The number of pupils per 100 inhabitants for the period 1892-1902, if internationally compared, gives the following results (Table 3):

Table 3: Number of Pupils per 100 Inhabitants, 1892-1902.

Country	% of pupils	Country	% of pupils	Country	% of pupils
England	14.5	Belgium	12.0	Italy	8.2
France	14.3	Spain	10.5	Greece	8.1
Russia	16.4	Japan	10.0	Portugal	4.7
Austria	14.1	Bulgaria	9.3	Serbia	4.6

iii) Literacy rates:

Table 4: Literacy Figures for Different Groups of Bulgarian Population, 1880-1910:

Group of population	Year	Percentage of literate
Whole population	1880	3.3
	1910	33.7
Over six years of age	1910	42.0
10-15 year-old generation	1880	33.4
Military recruits	1910	
all nationalities		75.0

Bulgarian speakers only 89.0

Table 5: International Comparison of Literacy Rates of Military Recruits in 1910. ⁽²⁵⁾

Country % literate Country % literate Country % literate Country % literate

Germany 99.9 Belgium 91.5 Greece 70.0 Romania 35.5

England 99.0 Austria 76.8 Italy 69.4

France 96.8 Bulgaria 75.0 Serbia 50.4

The data submitted here are sufficient to illustrate the point that at the beginning of the twentieth century the levels of primary and secondary education in the Balkans (Romania presenting a notable exception) were much higher than those of West European societies fifty or sixty years before that; in fact, in some cases they were approaching the contemporary West European levels.

Military service also contributed to national integration insofar as the conscript army was undoubtedly an agency of social mobility, acculturation and in the final analysis, civilization an agency as potent in its way as the schools. In the Balkans, again, universal military conscription was adopted relatively early, contemporaneous with its adoption in France or even earlier, as in Bulgaria and Serbia.

In one condition vitally important for national integration and broader modernization, however, the Balkan states compare less favorably with the "West" communication infrastructure and circulation of money and goods. This is what cemented national unity everywhere. The transport and communications boom, though, especially in land-locked countries and those with few navigable rivers, required not only enormous finances but direct state intervention. In France, the notorious Freycinet Plan of 1879 ultimately set loose the forces of political and cultural transformation in the French countryside. Not quite in line with liberal principles, and even less with the thesis of the state's "insignificant" economic role in the "West," the Freycinet Plan was an economic program undertaken for economic ends: to get a sluggish economy going, by pouring funds into it. Over nine billion francs were used under the plan, half of it for railroad-building.

It goes without saying that none of the Balkan states had the financial power to launch a plan as sweeping as this. Yet, compared to their general level of industrialization, they were relatively well endowed with social and economic infrastructure, which had been

financed through foreign loans;⁽²⁶⁾ the market, at least, was a force that left no one in isolation.

What can be positively asserted, therefore, is that the Balkan states did achieve a degree of political and cultural "modernity" far exceeding their economic underdevelopment. As we have seen, in terms of state expansion, commercialization, educational policies, and political mobilization (state-building and nation-building), these states were not only much more "modern" than the advanced states at the beginning of their industrialization, but in some spheres on par with them even in the late nineteenth century.

French educators preached that the four essential obligations of a good citizen were: to get an education when young, and later to make sure that the children got one; to carry out military duty zealously and always be ready to defend the fatherland; to pay taxes regularly; and to vote and elect the most honest and capable candidates. My point so far has been to demonstrate that there was much to do on every score and that by the turn of the nineteenth century enough had been done in the Balkans to produce majorities of fairly "good citizens." This is what I called above "the advantages of backwardness" in the political and social realm, that is, in state-building and nation-building: substituting other factors for the missing economic conditions of national integration in a situation of relative underdevelopment and scarce resources. Some wrongly claim that the hopes were dashed for "pulling lands into the modern world" through the creation of a nation-states: there was no other way, and the order was not reversible.

Developing a strong and efficient state and national integration had to be the priorities; speeded economic modernization could successfully be pursued only after these had been achieved. To argue to the contrary, in the case of catching-up societies, is to argue from effect to cause. With this in mind, to criticize preoccupations with "national spirit" and "national greatness" is simply to miss the point. As D. Chirot has it: "At first the strength of the Western European states was based purely on their economic development. . . . But later, politics, the effort to build strong state structures, became the basis for economic growth. It was, however, economic limitations that had set boundaries for political action, not vice versa."⁽²⁷⁾

Therefore, one should bear in mind that unlike the rest of contemporary "peripheral Europe," the formidable tasks of state-building and nation-building in the Balkans had to be carried out simultaneously with economic modernization. Why these took precedence over the efforts to counter economic backwardness seems logical: the nation-state had to create the preconditions for the transformation, not vice versa; moreover, embarking on economic modernization in a situation of rapidly increasing gap between forerunners and laggards was unthinkable in a pre-modern framework, before the establishment of a conducive institutional and psychological setting and even without the modern state's direct economic activity. Hence the crucial role of the state in catching-up societies.⁽²⁸⁾

In its practical implications, the argument directly highlights a crucial difference between the Balkans and the other European "peripheries" resulting from the costly measures entailed in state-building and nation-building: training and sustaining effective

administration, providing for mass education and foreign representation, building-up the state apparatus, bearing the full burden of the costs of defense, especially training and equipping an army, and so on. Although the other peripheral states were mobilizing resources for such measures, they did not have to do so from scratch while engaged in a catching-up effort.

All the Scandinavian countries present an obvious contrast: unbroken state tradition from the Middle Ages, greatly fostered by the centuries of absolutist rule; remarkably high literacy rates since the late seventeenth century (the effect of Lutheranism); long-established and gradually reformed political and social institutions; international prestige and security. As a result of all this, the Scandinavian states had emerged as cohesive nation-states already at the beginning of the nineteenth century, long before they launched into rapid economic transformation. Although less impressive in social and educational terms, Spain and Portugal could boast of an equally strong state (imperial) tradition, cultural achievements, and international prominence.

The future small or medium states under Habsburg rule in the northern belt of East Central Europe Bohemia-Slovakia, Hungary, Polish Galicia could face the first major challenge of the industrial age with the benefits of imperial market and financment resources but without the burdens of their own state apparatus (most importantly, an army, the largest single drain on all Balkan state budgets). Moreover, all these Habsburg areas had lived through unbroken peace since the middle of the 1860s. In this respect too, the Central European small and medium countries can be legitimately compared to the Balkans only after World War I.⁽²⁹⁾

The economic repercussions of this specifically Balkan situation seem obvious. It is strange, then, that it has been largely neglected. Worse still, whenever economic historians evaluate the way Balkan state budgets and loans had been used, they invariably emphasize the damaging effects of the "disproportionate" drain on these funds for "state bureaucracies and military establishments" and, in general, for non-productive purposes. Thus I. Berend and Gy. Ranki conclude that "the growth . . . was mostly wasted on `symbolic modernization,'" that is, "build[ing] up the new armies and state apparatuses."⁽³⁰⁾ But in the context of what has been said so far, one wonders what actually distinguishes "real" from "symbolic" modernization. The economic success, perhaps? Or the less than proportionate size (measured say, by civil servants per capita)? The former claim tends ahistorically to reverse causality and implies a strict mono-dimensional or anachronistic approach; the latter seems unavoidable in conditions of underdevelopment anyway.

One final quotation will help round out the argument. R. H. Markham, the staff correspondent in the Balkan Peninsula for *The Christian Science Monitor* after World War I, wrote in the early 1930s:

The realization of this liberating ideal [the redemption of Macedonia] constituted one of the chief motives stimulating Bulgaria toward the very rapid progress it made during the

quarter of a century [following its independence]. Indeed, the Bulgarians are also attached to progress for its own sake and ... are eager to make up for the lost time. Yet, behind the construction of railroads and roads, the improvement of agricultural methods, the opening up of a large number of schools, the creation of a press, literature, art, drama, and history, the elevation of the church, the formation of a strong, well governed state and the training and equipping of the best army in the Balkans was the conviction that the nation must move forward to a position where it would be able to fulfill its national mission, namely the freeing of all the Bulgarians and the uniting of them in a single, self-governing kingdom.⁽³¹⁾

D. Landes reiterates this view: "To understand the role of ideas in breaking the 'cake of custom,' in mobilizing effort and in generating commitment, one need sentiments of wider resonance. Of these, the most powerful was nationalism."⁽³²⁾ We know now that this kind of nationalist commitment is not enough, indeed is not even a necessary condition of industrialization. But it helps if properly managed. Did the "inherently nationalistic" Balkans lose control and sense of proportion? Could it, and should it have been prevented? In the words of Markham again, "The Balkans at the beginning of the present century made one think of a prospective gold rush. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that they resembled communities living on the edge of a large tract of very desirable public land that was about to be opened up and given to whomsoever managed to put their stakes down first."⁽³³⁾

The "tract" was indeed there and everybody, not only in the Balkans, knew it. So was the irrefutable logic the rationality of Balkan nationalism.

This essay is a revised version of a paper presented at a workshop sponsored by the Center for European Studies and the Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota, November 4, 1993, outlining my current research. I would like to thank Prof. David F. Good (Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota) for his helpful comments on my original paper.

Endnotes

1. Since my research covers a field coveted by several disciplines, it is necessarily and beneficially related to an identifiable theoretical tradition. In the study of modernization, this tradition is most authoritatively associated with the work of Reinhard Bendix, whose ascription to the ranks of modernization theorists is only conceivable within the frame of the taxonomic opposition between 1) modernization theory and 2) dependency and world-system theories. See, for example, "Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9, no. 3, 1967, 293-346. Bendix believes, in particular, that "In studies of modernization in complex societies it is more useful to consider social structure and government, or society and state, as interdependent, but also relatively autonomous, spheres of thought and action" (333).

For my functionalist approach to nationalism and modernity, I am clearly indebted to Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983).

2. I am quite aware of the implicit teleological, if not strictly evolutionist bent that the term "modernization" suggests, and this already puts me in the midst of the long-standing debate between the various Marxist and non-Marxist schools. For once, however, I do not find the two perspectives necessarily incommensurate, as the works of Reinhard Bendix, Barrington Moore, Ernest Gellner, and Bill Warren, for example, maintain. Nor do I agree that either school should have a monopoly on terms describing important elements of social reality (for example, the modernization theorists on "tradition," "modernity," "diffusion," "adoption," "development"; underdevelopment theorists on "dependency," "core-periphery," "imperialism," "unequal exchange"). Finally, the degree to which the analytical terms we use to describe modernity bear a teleological imprint is the degree to which modernity itself is essentially teleological. Modernization is what is actually happening; regardless of whether we view it as positive, negative, or neutral, there is no argument about what is happening. The debate is over how changes should be evaluated. Few people these days would condemn, say, the electrification of a village; the cultural products of this electrification, though, are certainly less indisputable and are open to evaluation from different standpoints. Cf. D. Harrison, *The Sociology of Modernization and Development* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988.)

3. The East-West dichotomy underlies many sociological studies of third-world societies undertaken from different theoretical perspectives. It has been directly replicated in analyses of the European underdeveloped societies, especially those of Eastern Europe. See, for example, Andrew Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary, 1825-1945* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1982); Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society: The Creation of a Balkan Colony* (New York: Academic Press, 1976); and Kenneth Jowitt, "The Sociocultural Bases of National Dependency in Peasant Countries," in *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940*, ed. Daniel Chirot (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1978), 1-30.

4. Dieter Senghaas, *The European Experience: A Historical Critique of Development Theory* (Leamington Spa-Dover, NH: Berg, 1985).

5. Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918* (London-New York: Longman, 1989), 209.

6. See, for example, Keith Legg, *Politics in Modern Greece* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1969); Kenneth Jowitt, *op. cit.*; G. Stokes, "Dependency and the Rise of Nationalism in Southeast Europe," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1980): 54-67; A. Janos, *op. cit.*; idem, "The Politics of Backwardness in Continental Europe, 1780-1945," *World Politics* 41, No. 3 (April 1989): 325-358; idem, "Mobilization and Decay in Historical Perspective: The Case of Romania," in *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940*, ed. K. Jowitt (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1978), 72-116; I. T. Berend and Gy. Ranki, *The European Periphery and Industrialization 1780-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983); P. Sugar, "Continuity and Change in Eastern European

Authoritarianism: Autocracy, Fascism and Communism," *East European Quarterly* 18, No. 1, (March 1984): 1-23. More often than not, though, this view is implicitly conveyed in contemporary pronouncements and through a long-standing historiographic tradition.

7. Jowitt, *op. cit.*, 20-21. Drawing a parallel between "the Romanian experience and the experience of non-European, ex-colonial peasant countries" in the light of Max Weber's distinction between status and class, Jowitt comes to the following conclusions: "The picture drawn is of a society vertically integrated along village and familial lines rather than horizontally along class lines ... The social organization of Romanian society during the period under study is paralleled by status differentiation in traditional Akan and contemporary Ghanaian society. In both one finds a 'big-man small-boy' syndrome.... During the inter-war period in Romania and the rest of Eastern Europe, this pattern of 'big man' and corporate status was institutionalized in the form of a political-bureaucratic ruling class clearly distinguished from the mass of the population" (14-15).

8. Stokes, *op. cit.*, 64-66. "In the Balkans the committed few [to the national cause] [had] a sense of inferiority, bred by political and economic subservience and fostered by the complacent pride of the northern Europeans... Because they accepted the European view of themselves as backward, the Balkan elite sought to prove their own worth in what they could think of as a more important area, the area of national spirit.... Externally, the dependency position of the Balkan states ... pushed local nationalists to define the nation in spiritual terms as a counterweight to actual powerlessness. Internally, the nationalist ideology thus produced served to legitimize the authority of the bureaucracy, but did not assist it in solving social and economic problems," *loc. cit.*

9. Gale Stokes, "Social Origins of East European Politics," in *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe*, ed. Daniel Chirot (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 230-31. Cf. Victoria Brown, "The Adaptation of a Western Political Theory in a Peripheral State: The Case of Romanian Nationalism," in *Romania Between East and West*, ed. Stephen Fischer-Galati et al. (Boulder: East European Monographs; New York: Distr. by Columbia UP, 1982), 269-301.

10. Stokes, "Social origins," 236. Although much of what Stokes, in this recent study, points out about the goals and rationales behind Balkan politics does not in my view really fit into his previous thesis, Stokes believes otherwise, since he reiterates these earlier verdicts albeit in a somewhat milder form (see esp. 245).

11. See Milan Protic, "The Ideology of the Serbian Radical Movement 1881-1903," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1987).

12. N. Mouzelis claims in *Politics in the Semi-Periphery* (London-New York: Macmillan-St Martin's Press, 1986), 30-31, that Greece's levels of industrialization were higher than Bulgaria's (and, therefore, that its industrial bourgeoisie was stronger), and that this partially explains the difference between the Greek and Bulgarian political patterns; this claim cannot be sustained. It is derived partly from Berend and Ranki's *Economic Development of East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth*

Centuries, based on questionable data (in this case), and partly on outdated statistics (see n. 78, 231-32). As some other more reliable sources indicate (see J. Lampe and M. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950* [Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1983], 334-336), the difference between the percentages of the agricultural labor forces in Greece and Bulgaria was much larger than between the percentages of industrial labor. This difference cannot be explained by significant industrialization differentials, but can be by the much higher employment in the Greek service sector. This sector's expansion largely accounts for the higher levels of urbanization in Greece (see B. R. Mitchell, *European Historical Statistics, 1750-1970* [New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1975], 76, 78; and J. Lampe and M. Jackson, *op. cit.*, 240).

13. Mouzelis, *op. cit.*, 3.

14. *Ibid.*, 4-5.

15. *Ibid.*, 9-13.

16. Instead, as I wish to demonstrate, the history of political modernization and national integration in the Balkans, far from being ineffective, points to a situation similar to the one Alexander Gerschenkron perceives in the industrialization of Europe: it should be seen "not as a series of mere repetitions ... but as an orderly system of graduated deviations."

17. See E. Weber, *op. cit.*, Part I; 112-13, 485-86.

18. N. Mouzelis, *op. cit.*, 11-13.

19. It is also instructive to consider just how much French peasant society (over 60 percent of the French population at the turn of the century) was "integrated horizontally along class lines" and whether "impersonal rules came to determine social position" in contrast to the status differentiation, "big-man small-boy" syndrome in the "vertically integrated" Balkan (and ex-colonial) peasant societies precisely because this distinction underlies the description of both Balkan political institutions and the imposition of the political norms of nation-states as basically emulative, unfitting, and even counter-productive.

In the words of E. Weber, "Peasants saw (and see) themselves as participating less in a class than in a condition, a way of life with its own hierarchies of the old-fashioned sort.... The very use of the word class tends to be misleading, because it suggests real social oppositions and solidarities that go beyond specific instances. The fact is that tensions arose mostly between groups engaged in different activities, or between rival villages, or between rival sections of one village." Politics in rural France "remained in an archaic stage local and personal into at least the 1880s.... Sociopolitical interests expressed themselves by gravitating around a man or family.... National themes, adopted for local consumption, enabled one power group to oppose another.... Work, crops, and land were what mattered; access to them, to cash, to help in need; and all these were tight

to personal relations. So was the general welfare of the community.... In any case, selling one's vote or giving it to one's master was seen as the trade of an empty right for concrete advantage" (*op. cit.*, 245-47; 257-58). Despite the close resemblances between this description and any standard text on Balkan politics of that time, many students of the Balkans ascribe this pattern of political participation almost exclusively to the "unfitting" political formats imposed from above on a socially backward population ("socially completely unprepared for a state on the European model" Stokes, "Social Origins," 245). They see this pattern as typically Balkan or third-world in nature, while emphasizing its contrast to the incomparably higher standards of political behavior in the "West."

20. *Statisticheski Godishnik na Bulgarskoto Tsarstvo* (Sofia, 1910, 1911, 1912).

21. Thomas Mackie and Richard Rose, eds., *The International Almanac of Electoral History*. 3rd edition (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1991), 115, 145, 165, 169.

22. Cit. in R. Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1987).

23. Weber, *op. cit.*, 274.

24. For a discussion of sources, see D. Mishkova, "Literacy and Nation-Building in Bulgaria, 1878-1912," *East European Quarterly* (forthcoming, 1994).

25. This picture, not unfavorable in itself, looks even better if one notes E. Weber's remark that "in 1881, 16 departments, representing a population of 6.5 million souls, showed a higher than 20 percent rate of illiteracy among conscripts" (*op. cit.*, 309).

26. See I. Berend and Gy. Ranki, *European Periphery*, 96-97.

27. Chirot, *Origins of Backwardness*, 11.

28. The close linkage between state-building/nation-building and modernity/industrialism is extensively corroborated elsewhere, most forcefully by K. Deutsch in *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1966) and E. Gellner (*op. cit.*). A. Gerschenkron's thesis in *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1962) of the state's economic role in backward societies can be qualified but not dismissed. On the other hand, Austria-Hungary gives an unambiguous example of the "reverse" connection between economic growth and "ethnic politics" the Hungarians and the Czechs, the richest ethnic groups, had the most assertive national demands and posed the gravest threat to the political stability of the Empire.

29. The "bellicosity" of the Balkan states is a recurrent theme in writings on their past (and present). But the question should be raised: compared to which states were (are) their standards of international behavior particularly militant? The (colonial) great

powers? The Empires? We have no comparable cases of successor states in Europe during this period in order to measure the validity of such judgments. In general, the Balkan experience would receive much less dismal commentary if it had been put in a historically appropriate comparative perspective.

30. Berend and Ranki, *European Periphery*, 71, 125.

31. R. H. Markham, *Meet Bulgaria* (Sofia, 1931), 63.

32. D. Landes, "Does it pay to be late?" in *Economy and Society: European Industrialization and Its Consequences*, ed. C. Holmes and A. Booth (Leicester: Leicester Univ. Press, 1991), 7.

33. *Op. cit.*, 65.