

lands. This is the mountainous country intersected by the valleys of the Morava, Drina, and Bosna rivers where adverse communication links spurred the development of traditional guilds in towns built in mining areas or at the crossroads of important trade routes. For centuries these lands belonged to the Ottoman Empire, in which the Jews found their place and a relatively undisturbed life, since the Turks acknowledged confessional and ethnic tolerance.

And finally, the fifth subregion, conditionally called "Bulgaro-Macedonian" by the author, is bordered by the Danube, the Aegean and Black Seas, and lakes Ohrid and Prespa. The valleys of the Danube, Struma, and Vardar represented natural routes along which the Jews concentrated in the principal cities, and forming communities in Sofia and Skopje. Their population in these towns was augmented by the influx of refugees from the west, Thessaloniki being the most favored Jewish destination, something of a Jewish Mediterranean capital. As far as the density of the Jewish population is concerned, no other Balkan city is to be compared with Thessaloniki. Voluminous historical sources pertaining to Thessaloniki challenge the author, who will most likely make it the singular subject of his future research.

Having patiently and conscientiously gathered a vast archive of knowledge with a most extensive bibliography, M. Frejdenberg does not solely recount bare political history. He analyzes and synthesizes his collected data, phenomena, and individuals. Using the methodology of a historian, scientist, and erudite who is familiar with all the tenets of epistemology, he has produced a complete and masterful interpretation of the life of Jews in this part of Europe. The author's historical research is permeated by a strong spirit of humanism, man in his indi-

viduality being the center of all of his interests.

An interesting characteristic of Frejdenberg's is that he interweaves tradition with rigid historical inquiry, which - although dissimilar in nature and method, as well as ultimate goal - he accepts as two counterpoints, different in character, yet aiming at one common ideal: the understanding of humanity and the individual himself.

Mihaela Vekarić

Karl Kaser, *Familie und Verwandtschaft auf dem Balkan*. Wien - Köln - Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1995

The very introduction of Kaser's extensive monograph brings to the fore a question that could give rise to a most fruitful discussion, and that is the understanding of the notion of the Balkan cultural milieu. The clash of diverse cultures and civilizations in the Balkans and the turbulent historical events it witnessed, wars being an everyday reality, are the elements that contributed to the perception and prejudice of the Balkans as a culturally inferior area from the Western standpoint. Aware that public opinion is void of scientific argumentation, Kaser's design was to lay before his Austro-German readers, to whom the book was primarily intended, the knowledge that being different Balkanwise does not necessarily imply barbarism. In other words, the causes of the most recent Balkan events are to be sought in other factors than those generally accepted.

In the opening chapter Kaser puts forward the foundations of his research and the problems he encountered. His investi-

gation centers upon the mountainous areas, southeastern Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the hilly regions of Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia, northern Greece, and western Bulgaria. Apart from field research, he made ample use of the database of J. M. Halpern, filed at the University of Graz. Kaser's research consists of three levels - the historical level, founded on written sources; the anthropological level, which is resorted to in absence of the written sources; and the demographic level, which captures the structural distribution and functioning of the type of household at a specific location, and at a specific moment.

Kaser approaches the problem with the supposition that the Balkan family form springs from the autochthonous cultural model which he calls the Balkan patriarchy. The roots of this model can be traced to the early Roman period, to the nomad communities distributed in the hilly areas of the western and central Balkans. This pattern was further strengthened by the Ottoman offensives in the fourteenth century. Male dominance and age grading tended to be the rule in constituting the Balkan household model, with elders holding the dominant power position. These are the factors that distinguish the Balkan type of patriarchy from other European types.

Kaser establishes a direct link between the pastoral way of life and the Balkan patriarchal pattern, which is in his opinion explained by the fact that in hostile mountainous areas that are far from the reach of authority, a strong agnate unit develops, modeled on patrilineal and patrilocal descent systems, and organized round a common or imaginary male ancestor as the supreme authority of the hierarchical relationship (as in Africa, for example). In the Balkans, how-

ever, the Illyrian tribes were those who depended on livestock, and were exposed to Roman and Hellenic influences. The Albanians were later to be joined by the Slavic tribes and the Vlachs. The Vlachs had an enormous impact upon the development of the patriarchal cultural model. They settled throughout Thessaly, Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the hilly areas of Croatia. Their social organization was similar to that of the Balkan patriarchy. Extended family forms dominated (about 60%), one male being the head of the household, owner, and taxpayer, while females married into the father-in-law's household. However, with the Vlachs, Kaser discerns certain shifts from the standard Balkan model: a male would marry into the wife's household in the event that it was wealthier than his own, in which case the children were named after the mother's family, the wife was the ownership holder, and on the average, the family households were rather small (3-5 members).

Generally accepting what is referred to as "Heinal's line" as regards marital unions (Trieste - Petersburg), which divided pre-industrial Europe into the "universal pattern of Eastern Europe" (characterized by extended family and early marriage), and the "representative Western pattern" (characterized by nuclear family and late marriage with smaller age difference between the spouses), but fully aware of the disadvantages of any such generalization which tends to disregard the diversity of individual patterns within a system, Kaser approaches the Balkans as an exception. Although this area bears no representative form of family and household, no typical form of the Balkan family, there still exists a model discernible nowhere else in Europe but in the Balkans. Kaser calls this the "Balkan family house-

hold" (*Balkanfamiliehaushalt*), which would be the term closest to the Croatian notion of *zadruga*. Kaser, however, fails to accept the latter term, which was introduced by Vuk Karadžić, because among the Croats and Serbs it conveys the notion of an ideologically founded myth in terms of a national institution. All the possible positive features of a well-organized, democratically established rural community, conservative in its being, have been attributed to the *zadruga*, a form embodying the national core. Nevertheless, Kaser views the Balkan family household as an autonomous pattern which developed independently, with no state interference (i.e., feudal laws), and was based entirely on the pastoral way of life.

As he describes the Balkan family households by regions, Kaser begins to explore the problem more closely. He analytically approaches every region, taking into account all the disparities between the particular micro-regions. He investigates the inner structure of the households in an attempt to determine the impact of external factors upon them. Kaser elaborates various problems from household cycles to kinship relations and hierarchy. A special chapter is devoted to the analysis of family and kinship in the process of modernization. It is interesting to note that in Kaser's opinion, the process of demographic transition in the Balkans took place within the boundaries of rural society and reached its climax prior to the onset of modernization. In this aspect the Balkans differed from Western and Central Europe, where the process of demographic transition was a direct result of the social and economic development which reshaped rural societies into urban and industrialized ones. This thesis raises a number of questions; two of them, in my opinion, are key ones: Why didn't the two processes occur simultaneously in Europe? And:

What were the consequences? The answer to the first question most likely lies in the faster reception of medical knowledge by technologically and industrially developed countries in Europe. As regards the consequences and the Balkans, the effect was disastrous: while Western and Central Europe reacted to the population growth by means of postponed marriage and birth control, the rural societies of the Balkans resorted to the partition of family estates, the result of which was poverty and emigration.

The trends of modernization which occurred in Yugoslavia in the time of the communist regime led to the disintegration of the traditional Balkan family. The old patriarchal system was shattered by the equality of the sexes, the change in family relations, and inheritance law. Laws dealing with agricultural issues limited land ownership and thus led to extensive partition, and the disappearance of extended families. Increasing migration trends (from rural to urban areas, or from rural environments to foreign countries) as well as growing capital investments in non-agricultural regions further hastened the disintegration process. Being most accentuated in the 1960s, modernization annihilated the old pattern of the *zadruga*, giving way to a binuclear family as a transitional form, and to the more recent nuclear family (married couple + married son or daughter) with dominant vertical patrilineal descent (grandfather - son - grandson).

Kaser's most attentive approach to this subject matter is especially valuable because he takes into consideration the diversity of forms in the Balkans. This area embraces a variety of microregions with most distinctive features, and this is something that Kaser successfully observes. He does not infer through generalization. Kaser's book is a major contribution to the study of family in

southeastern Europe. It should be evaluated within the context of the study of family in the countries of the Balkan Peninsula. Namely, the research that has been carried out so far has two major drawbacks. Croatian scientific research and that of other Balkan states, Albanian in particular, have designed their own scientific standards, most likely due to financial insufficiency. Aside from this, the language barrier could be regarded as one of the reasons for the Balkan area being neglected in international research projects. Kaser's book represents that link between Europe and the Balkans. He produces an elaborate survey of the subject, pointing to methodological problems, and indicating the necessity for further research on the subject. There is every reason for Croatian scientific circles to receive this work with approval.

Nenad Vekarić

Dubrovčanin Benedikt Kotruljević - Hrvatski i svjetski ekonomist XV. stoljeća (Benedict Kotruljević of Dubrovnik: Croatian and World Economist of the Fifteenth Century) ed. Vladimir Stipetić. Zagreb: HAZU and Hrvatski računovođa, 1996

Spurred by the need to present newly-found data on Benedict Kotruljević systematically and comprehensively, and to establish his role in the history of economic thought, the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences in cooperation with the Croatian Accountants' Association, with the support of other Croatian economic and financial associations, organized an international

seminar on this distinguished scholar. One of the main reasons for holding this symposium and publishing papers presented there is the general view that the work of Benedict Kotruljević, from the international and Croatian perspective, has been given far less credit than it deserves as a contribution to both science and history. The objectives of the seminar on the life and work of Benedict Kotruljević determined the interdisciplinary character of the oral presentations of the 25 participants whose papers appear in the proceedings, which consists of four sections.

The first section, *Benedict Kotruljević - life and work*, contains the studies concerned with the most recent findings pertaining to Kotruljević's work, Kotruljević as a person, his family background, and the reception of his work in Croatia.

Žarko Muljačić, »U potrazi za izvornim Kotruljevićem (In Search of the Original Kotruljević)«, pp. 3-17. Being the first translator of Kotruljević's work *On Commerce and the Perfect Merchant* into Croatian, Muljačić presents several facts related to the oldest preserved transcript of this work, bearing the original title *Il libro del' arte di mercatura*, the so-called Maltese manuscript from 1475, signed by Marino de Raphaeli de Ragusa, which is of Neapolitan origin. Muljačić came to this result after a most thorough linguistic analysis of the transcripts, and owing to the comparison of different versions of the manuscript carried out by Tiziano Zanato.

Darko Novaković, »Novopronađeni rukopis Benedikta Kotruljevića (A Recent Find: the *De Navigatione Treatise* by Benedict Kotruljević)«, pp. 19-32. The author reports on the recent find of Kotruljević's incomplete manuscript treatise *De navigatione* written in 1464. It was sold at Lubrano booksellers' auction in Naples in