

THE TWO CARNEGIE REPORTS:

From the Balkan Expedition of 1913 to the Albanian Trip of 1921

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Lecture written and presented by Nadine Akhund at Central European University, Department of History on April 25, 2012

In my essay, I will examine the circumstances and effects of the two Balkan expeditions of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, comparing with each other the trips of 1913 and 1921. I will give an overview of the innovative approach to international affairs of the journeys and the reports written about them.

Keywords: Balkans, Albania, internationalism, peace movement, civilian, CEIP

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In her lecture, *Nadine Akhund*, Paris-Sorbonne University research associate and member of the International Commission of Historical Slavic Studies analyzes two reports on the experiences of commissions sent to the Balkans by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Dr. Akhund talks in detail about the reports of 1913 and 1921, and compares them from different aspects, such as the circumstances of their initiation and completion, their main objectives, their influence on international relations and level of success. She draws attention to the surprisingly modern and innovative approach of the two reports to international affairs, and their unique observation of the social, economic and psychological effects of the Balkan War on the civil population.

In 1910, *Andrew Carnegie* established the United States-based *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (CEIP)¹, with the goals of encouraging the codification of international laws and the foundation of organizations to promote the institutionalization of peace movements. Among its objectives is the support of collective intervention in diplomatic forms, including the United States' engagement in international issues. Their methods include studying the effects of war on civilians and using education to shape public opinion. This is the reason why the CEIP was drawn to the Balkan question and intervened in 1913 and 1921.

The reports written about these two interventions are examples of attempts at a new kind of international cooperation. In 1913, *Nicholas Butler* of the CEIP sent a commission to the Balkans to examine the conditions of the territory and to broadcast their findings all over the world. The task of the commission was to reveal the truth about massacres and atrocities being committed in the region², look for those who could be held responsible for the tragedies and to learn the economical and ethical lessons of the war situation. Andrew Carnegie himself had not approved of the inquiry, because according to him, it could have further antagonized the nations in conflict.

¹ The association's website: <http://carnegieendowment.org/>

² "Houses and whole villages reduced to ashes, unarmed and innocent populations massacred en masse, incredible acts of violence, pillage and brutality of every kind — such were the means which were employed and are still being employed by the Serbo-Montenegrin soldiery, with a view to the entire transformation of the ethnic character of regions inhabited exclusively by Albanians." Extract from the commission's report which can be found online in full-length at <http://archive.org/stream/reportofinternat00inteuoft#page/n0/mode/2up>

Nevertheless, Butler managed to compile an international commission of eight members from neutral countries. Claiming that timing was crucial, he demanded that the report be written by September 1913, but members of the commission were held up for long periods of time, and so the trip eventually lasted from August 20 to September 28. Their work was basically “propaganda against war”. They gathered information on war atrocities from both victims and witnesses. To Butler’s outrage, publication of the report was delayed by six months because of the lengthy travels, the failure of a commission member to finish the writing of their report on deadline, and the time consumed by translating the report. When finally released in May 1914, it was received with great interest, but it was also received criticism and even triggered the protest and denial of a number of Balkan states. Because of its belatedness, the report did not receive the attention it deserved or trigger the effect that it was meant to have, but it appeared in several countries and was an exceptional document of its time³. Butler explains the need for the compilation of the report in the preface: “*The conflicting reports as to what actually occurred before and during these wars, together with the persistent rumors often supported by specific and detailed statements as to violations of the laws of war by the several combatants, made it important that an impartial and exhaustive examination should be made of this entire episode in contemporary history.*”⁴

The expedition of 1921 was a step towards continuing the work that had begun with the trip of 1913. However, its main objectives were different: it was meant to diffuse the international crisis of the status of Albania⁵, to defend it as a state, persuade the United States to recognize its existence and help resolve the border issues. *D’Estournelles de Constant*, president of the CEIP Balkan Commission sent *Justin Godart* on trips to both Northern and Southern Albania to map the conditions inflicted by war. Godart’s report was published in January 1922, but only in French and in a limited number of copies. Thus it was less influential and is not as well-known nowadays as the report of 1913.⁶

The major differences between the two reports lie in their aims and their reception. Both are largely impartial and objective, since they build on facts (they use statistics and underline the importance of economy with the assessment of economic damage inflicted by the war, and complete descriptions of bank policies and taxes throughout the war), but they also contain elements that limit the credibility of the writings (such as personal and emotional approaches). Nevertheless, both participate in providing a new definition for international affairs and contribute to laying down the foundations of modern international cooperation.

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Thank you for your kind collaboration. *Editor-in-Chief*

³ Published in 1914, Washington D.C. with the title *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*.

⁴ <http://archive.org/stream/reportofinternat00inteuoft#page/n5/mode/2up>

⁵ The Treaty of London (1913) included the recognition of Albania as a sovereign state independent of the Ottoman Empire. Serbia, Greece and Montenegro were forced to withdraw from the territory of the Principality of Albania, but Albanian minorities of great number remained outside the borders. This contributed to the growing Serbian-Albanian conflict. http://www.albanianhistory.net/texts20_1/AH1913_2.html

⁶ The original 1913 report was reprinted during the new Balkan war of the 1990s. *The Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in Retrospect*, Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment Book, 1993.