

notably his rival Tito. Perhaps worst of all, Mihailović did not grow in a professional, political, or ideological sense as his responsibilities grew... But his background, his professional training as an officer, and his average intellectual capacities prevented him from growing into his historical role, and as a result he became daily less capable of successfully handling the ever more difficult and complex problems that arose for the Chetniks. The discrepancy in this respect between Tito and Mihailović is one of the most important differences between the two leaders and goes a long way to explain the one's success and the other's failure" (p. 469). This observation agrees with Mihailović's last confession: "Destiny was merciless towards me ... I wanted much, I began much, but the whirlwind, the world whirlwind carried me and my work away" (p. 471).

Tomasevich's book is one of the best examples of true scholarship so far written on the Chetniks. It is free of official or other bias, while dealing effectively with one of the most controversial and tragic periods of Yugoslavia's history.

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BOGDAN RADITSA

Robert F. Byrnes (ed.), *Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga*, Notre Dame-London, University of Notre Dame Press, 1976, pp. 285.

This book is a collection of essays to honor a highly respected scholar, and much loved human being, Philip E. Mosely (1905-1972), late Adlai E. Stevenson Professor of International Relations at Columbia University. The book reprints Mosely's significant articles on the family as it developed in Eastern Europe, particularly its intriguing variant, the Balkan Zadruga. It also includes essays on the Zadruga by scholars from Europe and America. The introductory encomium of Mosely (an expert on East European and Balkan societies) is written by that venerated matriarch of anthropology Margaret Mead.

The Zadruga, or communal joint-family, has been the outstanding institution of peasant life in the Balkans. The student of Balkan social organization and development, as Mosely would argue, could not but carefully explore its variant forms, for modern Balkan societies grew out of this more archaic form of human organization. Mosely's classic definition of the Zadruga is "a household composed of two or more biological or small-families, closely related by blood or adoption, owning its means of production communally, producing and consuming the means of its livelihood communally". Thus the Zadruga is a variant of the extended family as found in many other peasant and pre-literate societies, but with certain unique features peculiar to the region. Although today Zadrugas are found in most of the Balkan countries, like Yugoslavia, Albania, and Bulgaria, they are very few in existence. Their disappearance was due to urbanization, modernization and political changes in the region. Yet the cultural impact of the Zadruga is significant. Even when the Zadruga disappears, states Mosely, it usually leaves a spirit of mutual help, which finds expression not only in the traditional cooperative labors of the peasantry but also in the modern cooperative organizations which are growing in the more developed regions of the Balkans. The Yugoslav variety of the Zadruga is particularly noted for its egalitarian and democratic organization that led some scholars to conclude that what distinguished the Zadruga from other forms of extended family systems is its element of democracy. "Decisions regarding all efforts in the Zadruga are made by all married men together". Perhaps, it is partly because of the cultural impact of the Zadruga that Yugoslav socialism differs from that of other Eastern European countries.

Byrnes' edited work should appeal not only to specialists in the family or those inter-

ested in Mosely himself (a long bibliography of his work is included) but to students of Balkan societies, politics and history in general. In addition to historical and anthropological essays on the Zadruga, the inclusion of autobiographical articles by scholars, former members of Zadrugas, adds to the readability of the book. But some other more specialized essays will appeal only to specialists. Mosely's article on the Russian family, the impact of the October revolution on this institution and the policies of the Soviet government toward it, is a classic.

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The Wedding of Smailagić Meho (Ženidba Smailagina Sina) as told by Avdo Medjedović, in II vols. Introduction, notes and commentary by Albert B. Lord, translator; conversations with Avdo Medjedović translated by David E. Bynum (Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs III and IV). Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1974, Vol. III: xii, 326 including appendices and glossary; vol. IV: xxii, 408 including textual notes.

To do justice to a review of this two volume publication one must consider the song, the singer and the tradition. All are intimately linked, for the verbal artistry of Avdo Medjedović, an illiterate bard from near Bijelo Polje (Montenegro), represents more than an exposition of oral composition. The singer is part of the tradition and of the culture which perpetuates it. His song has been designated as Volume III (English translations) and Volume IV (Serbo-Croatian texts) in the series Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs, based on field collecting and research in areas of Yugoslavia by the American classicist Milman Parry in the mid-1930s, and as Numbers 1 and 2 in the newer Text and Translations Series of the Publications of the Milman Parry Collection, under the general editorship of Albert B. Lord, with David E. Bynum as managing editor.

First, the song: the theme is a common one in Balkan epic tradition, but the appearance of this publication of *The Wedding of Smailagić Meho* is of landmark significance to classicists, linguists, folklorists, social scientists and students of Balkan Studies. Under the careful guidance of Lord, who was originally Parry's assistant, the extraordinary narrative has been brought to light some four decades later in a meticulous preparation of the text as recited in epic decasyllable stichs in a dialect of Serbo-Croatian and in a companion prose version in English, faithful to the structure and *zvuk* (tone, ring) of the singer's composition.

Parry's endeavor had been a pioneering one. Influenced by the field work orientation of Renan and encouraged by Murko and others, he traveled to the source of South Slav epic tradition. By means of studying *in situ* a still viable oral tradition, his goal was to understand and explicate *process* in oral creativity and transmission. He sought to determine if a 'Homer', or series of Homers, could have composed orally the epic masterpieces *Odyssey* and *Iliad* (see *The Making of Homeric Verse. The Collected Writings of Milman Parry*, A. Parry, ed., 1971). *The Wedding of Smailagić Meho* now is available as proof by analogy: not only is it approximately the same length as the *Odyssey* (well over 12,000 lines), but the structural development of the narrative, the metaphoric and emotive speech, the social institutions and value systems and, importantly, the true epic 'pulse', are all reminiscent of Homer. An outstanding feature of Avdo's virtuosity in oral composition is his catalogues of the summonses and arrivals of the wedding guests. As Lord points out in a perceptive introductory commentary (III:13-34), this *tour de force* in verbal art is no mere padding or ornamentation. It is an