

Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, London, Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. xviii + 361, 80s. net, \$ 13.00.

Although available for four years, this scientific analysis of Romania's petroleum treasure and the roles it has played in a century of Romanian politics is now very timely. What OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) is currently undertaking, namely the exploitation of their petroleum resources for personal advantages, is markedly similar to the policies formulated and implemented by a variety of political regimes within Romania since the beginning of the 20th century. As is typical of the Middle East oil potentates today, Romanian politicians once thought of their nation's oil as a source of wealth rather than as a part of the world oil industry (p. 325). This history of Romania's most valuable natural resource could serve as a text for petroleum potentates since the latter are presently pursuing a similarly narrow and futile course in attempting to influence world politics.

When Romania's president Ceaușescu visited Washington during the summer of 1974 he was asked whether the oilfields of his nation could somehow compensate for the piracy engaged in by the Middle East oil producers. The Romanian communist leader lamented the diminishing quantity of his high-octane oil and confirmed what all knew, namely that Romania no longer produces sufficient petroleum for her own needs. Why Romania has depleted her major resource is the chief topic of the Pearton study. This excellent analysis candidly reveals the greed of the industrialized powers who, lacking petroleum deposits in their European territories, plotted to interfere in Romanian politics so that their oil-powered industries could secure cheap fuel. When Romania's politicians awoke to the real value of oil, a very significant factor in the political maneuverings of the First and Second World Wars, that small nation became and remained an extremely vital force in international politics and economics. Alas, today Romania, whose energy resources are probably the first to be depleted—an inevitable fate for other energy resources in other nations—finds herself more than ever before a have-not nation in the growing interdependent group of industrialized states.

Mr. Pearton has produced the best possible study of Romanian oil and its related politics. His analysis and conclusions cannot be revised unless and until confidential archives in Romania are accessible to alien scholars. Until such halcyon days arrive, readers must be satisfied with Pearton's findings, among which is the ironic view that even a decline in foreign investments and an associated nationalization of the petroleum industry failed to promote nationalism or increase the national wealth. This British volume might prove quite instructive for those who contemplate similar moves from similar motives.

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Andrei Simic, *The Peasant Urbanities. A Study of Rural-Urban Mobility in Serbia*, New York, Seminar Press, 1973, pp. 180, appendix, glossary, bibliography, index, illustrations, \$ 9.50.

This is a unique volume, an anthropological case study approach to urbanization in Yugoslavia. In the preface E. A. Hammel describes the author as bringing to the research, «a childhood bilingualism . . . and a lifetime of participant observation in the culture of

his Serbian forebears, on both sides of the Atlantic. Like Adamic's, his is a tale of a native's return. He was rightly accepted by his hosts as one of their own, in a way that few if any foreign ethnographers have ever been».

While aware of class differences, Simic's main concern is to understand ways in which rural migrants utilize their kinship networks to maintain contact with their villages of origin. In the process they establish contact and enable others to migrate subsequently. Reflecting a major preoccupation of Serbian (and more generally Yugoslav) society in the 1960's, the author focuses on how migrants establish themselves in the city, obtain jobs, meet eventual spouses and make a series of moves to improved housing. Interview materials presented in three chapters, «Rural-Urban Migration in Serbia: Motivation and Process»; «The New Urbanites: Establishing a Base in the City», and «Kinship and Rural Urban Reciprocity» are particularly useful to those seeking understanding of the social adjustments involved in the tremendous post-war population growth of Belgrade.

Other parts of the book might have undergone a degree of editing. This is particularly true with respect to the introductory chapters dealing with urbanization from a general contemporary perspective, and a summation of Yugoslav history. The book might well have begun on page 52, with its discussion of «Belgrade: Past and Present». There exists a rich literature in Serbo-Croatian, specifically on the history of Belgrade (e.g. *The Yearbook of the City of Belgrade*, in Serbian). A detailed socio-economic analysis of 19th century data would have provided background for subsequent consideration of modernization. It was not only peasants who were traditional but old urban dwellers as well.

Classic English language accounts of pre-war Yugoslavia by Louis Adamic (*The Native's Return*) and Rebecca West (*Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*) each give accounts of the situation in the 1930's. Their varying analyses of middle-class entrepreneurs depicted a series of views the remains of which can still be seen in contemporary Belgrade. For a full understanding of the 'present day socialist city a welcome addition would have been some comments on the role of Workers' Councils in conditioning attitudes toward work, as well as some notion of the ways in which people participate in the League of Communists and the Socialist Alliance on the local urban precinct level.

The author does give us some feel for the daily cycle of life on the city's streets, both in his descriptions and in the accompanying photos. He also provides insights on how tenants with variable incomes and occupational statuses share an apartment house. A complete survey of life in Belgrade should also give information on intellectuals and ruling elites, their values and life styles. We have had some hints about such matters in the writings of Milovan Djilas, as in the now somewhat dated *New Class*. There is also useable general data in Branko Horvat's *An Essay on Yugoslav Society* (1969). But, as has frequently been noted, it is difficult for a social scientist to «study 'up'», i.e. to research those of superior status.

These qualifications, however, do not detract from the essential value of this study, with its documentation of the enduring importance of kinship ties. One of Simic's informants who has lived in Belgrade for 20 years personally summarizes this view:

«My husband brought me to live in Belgrade when we got married. Shortly after this, we helped my two sisters and my widowed mother come to the city . . . We rarely go out unless it is to visit sisters and mother. I bake a young pig almost every Sunday and my family always comes . . . My mother, or one or another of my sisters, is here almost every night. We really don't need other amusements».

Without these ties Belgrade would be a very different city. This existing structure of

kinship is of immense importance to planners even if its existence is acknowledged only implicitly. It would be very interesting to have comparable studies for other Balkan cities so that we might begin to have some knowledge of how differing political systems and planning programs influence the quality of urban life.

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Nikolaus von Preradovich, *Des Kaisers Grenzer. 300 Jahre Türkenabwehr*, Wien-München-Zürich, Verlag Fritz Molden, 1970, pp. 320.

For some three hundred and fifty years (from 1535 to 1881) there existed on the frontiers of the Habsburg domains with the Ottoman Empire a military institution known as the *Militärgrenze* (= *die Confin*), or the military border, manned almost entirely by southern Slavs. While history records many cases of military border establishments, none compared in essence with the *Militärgrenze* as to origin and development, and as to the military and social organization of the troops (*Grenzer*, *graničari*, *Granitscharen*) and their particular relation to the reigning Habsburg princes in Vienna —whom alone they considered as their masters. An original creation, the main task of the *Grenze* was to seal off Croatia and Hungary, then Austria proper, and lastly the western world from the continuous imperialistic onslaughts of the Ottomans. In addition to this primary politico-military task, the military border served as a «cordon sanitaire» in the true meaning of the words, with the duty of preventing the spread of infectious diseases from the East into Austrian territories. And when the Ottoman menace receded, the *Grenzer* remained a strong loyal force against the internal and foreign enemies of the House of Austria. All this explains the title of the book *Des Kaisers Grenzer*.

It is with the origin, development, character and significance of this unique but relatively little-known institution that Dr. Nikolaus von Preradovich (a descendent of a famous *Grenzer* family) concerns himself in this very readable book. What makes his work an interesting and worthwhile contribution is that it is not a mere account of the institution but that it discusses the *Confin* in the context of the political, social and military history of the Austrian, later the Austro-Hungarian, Empire over the entire period covered by this investigation. And, in view of the author's antecedents, the book is a remarkably objective study and evaluation of the *Grenze*. It is therefore regrettable that it is lacking in documentation, without notes and references, which is likely to irritate scholars who may want to check the evidence or refer to the sources which are only casually alluded to by the author. On the other hand, the book is enriched by two specially drawn maps of the military border in different periods, by twenty-four reproductions of contemporary illustrations of the leading organizers of the border-institution and of the various types of border-troops, with scenes of their camp-life, and by indexes of names, places and subjects.

The Austrian *Militärgrenze*, it is clear from v. Preradovich's discussion of its origin, was not a carefully planned and deliberate creation. It was the product of an urgent need for defense of the Habsburg territories against the steady incursions and devastations carried out by Ottoman raiders, the so-called «Renner und Brenner», enhanced by the vastly destructive though unsuccessful siege of Vienna by Süleiman the Great in 1529. In the absence of a standing army and Austria's dependence mainly on costly and often unreliable mercenaries under chronically poor state finances, the securing of a financially tolerable and reliable