

nomie, of the Rumanian People's Republic. It is also clear that the Rumanian communist leadership, headed by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, sought to avenge itself of the Kremlin's abusive treatment of the Rumanian Party as soon as the "objective conditions," national and international, permitted such retaliation. Nevertheless, the Rumanians' motivations transcended mere "nationalist reaction" to foreign interference and their political maneuvers were infinitely more sophisticated than presumed by Floyd. Still, the author's political intelligence has allowed him to prepare a readable if somewhat popular monograph. It may not provide much food for thought but as an *apéritif*, a "Rumanian course," it is unsurpassed.

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Milovan Djilas, *Montenegro*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1963. Pp. 367.

It is a far cry from the books and articles written by Milovan Djilas during his career as a communist leader to the present work. In rejecting Marxism, Djilas has clearly turned back to something closer to him: the spirit and traditions of his native Montenegro. This small nation of tribes, unique in Europe, seems to involve its sons in a particularly poignant and conscious form of human dichotomy. Djilas says: "For I myself am from Montenegro, torn between ideal and reality." Unlike Bulatović, whose works represent a protest against ideals in the name of humanity or, rather, a total rejection of humanity's power to possess ideals save a mask for corruption, and a disguise of its lowest passions, Djilas accepts the enormous influence and importance of ideals in the life of the individual while remaining fully aware that they are unrealisable, that when realised they become something involving evil and suffering. One imagines that Djilas speaks with rueful experience when he says of one character: "Although he had passed through prisons... and had learned there that every ideal, once realised, loses its ideal quality and is usually transformed into a monstrosity and a tyranny...." Yet the word *although* is important. Another character exclaims: "Kosovo, Kosovo! Destiny of the Serbs and their terrible place of judgement. If there had been no battle at Kosovo, the Serbs would have invented it for its suffering and heroism." Ideals with their suffering and heroism are, therefore, something essential to human existence.

In *Land without Justice*, Djilas wrote of Montenegro from a perso-

nal point of view. In the present work he comes very close to his countryman, the Prince-Bishop Njegoš who, in his *The Mountain Wreath*, examined the tragic nature of man's existence against the background of history, tradition and heroism. Montenegro is based on a historical framework, but its real reference is to individuals, to the relation between tradition and duty, and to the ideals of a nation and the single human existence. Thus *Montenegro* bears a reference to human life in general.

The book is in three parts. The first deals with the battle at Mojkovac in 1916, the second with three men, Captain Draško, the student Miloš and the old peasant Vuk, awaiting their execution by the Austrian occupation government. The final part contains an episode from the post-1918 Montenegro, when joined to the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, it was engaged in the painful transition from tribal ethos to a modern nation. As in the *The Mountain Wreath*, the book as a whole deals with a single historical process: the passing of the old Montenegro. At Mojkovac on the Orthodox Christmas Eve (coincidentally strangely enough, with the events presented in the "Mountain Wreath"), a nation chooses to suffer in order better to live. A hopeless battle is fought to prove that Montenegrins are still capable of dying for their beliefs. Yet these events are seen through individuals. Many of the characters, especially the women, are clearly derived from folk ballads. Miloš's mother entreats him by the most sacred oath of traditions, the mother's breasts, not to compromise his honour even to save his life. The wives, mothers, and sisters in the book represent the unconscious, existential embodiment of a nation's ethos.

The real theme, however, is neither tradition nor history. The choice of death in order to live is shown in individual behaviour. Different characters expose their innermost feelings on the eve of the battle at Mojkovac, just as Miloš and Captain Draško resist all attempts to make them compromise with the Austrian government. In the final part, Bosko leaves his mistress and his estates to risk his life for the sake of honour.

It is the second part of the book that is perhaps the most revealing. Here Djilas examines the existential meaning of death and principle by confronting three men with certain execution in a clear-cut moral dilemma. Draško is told that if he refuses to repent on the scaffold his family will be persecuted. Miloš knows that if he refuses to save himself by co-operating, no one will know of his heroism. These men are thus cut off from the outside world, the world of society, politics and history. The death sentence has ended all meaning of ideals in the world. "As

Miloš had observed, it had severed at a blow and beyond repair, the outer world from their own inner existence." The human personality is faced with a new mode of being: utter annihilation. Ideals no longer have their usual meaning. Men are stripped down to their naked selves. Yet Djilas shows that this isolation from the external world does not free a man from his ideals. In the elderly peasant Vuk we see the deep-rooted unconscious nature of principle and its intimate linkage with being itself. "A man," he says, "is bound to save both his life and his good name, and if it comes to choosing — there is no choice." In Miloš the situation is portrayed more consciously and intellectually.

Deprive ideals of their external meaning and there is still their existential being as part of the individual's being. Man is several beings at once: the person with his love for women, for family and for life itself; the man of pure, passionless awareness of self; the observer who stands aside, and the being rooted in national consciousness and traditions that have shaped his view of life. Certain death is both an unknown that paralyzes with fear and an existential force that attracts. Yet its annihilation cannot occur if the person to be annihilated is lost. The situation is one of constant interaction between the various planes of being. "Yet even now the two Milošes — the one who longed to live and the one who observed that longing dispassionately and as if from a height — remained separate." To Miloš it is clear that the ideals for which he stands lead nowhere and that his sacrifice will change nothing. Yet the moral principle is an imperative, the very being that resists extinction, and to betray this principle would be to find death in life. "Every man will yield to compulsion in anything except that which changes his immutable personality. All men are born into some area of responsibility. The actual form this takes is secondary. The Serb idea is perhaps no more than an expression of this other human stubbornness." To remove all practical significance from ideals is not to be free from them. The ideal is an essential part of being. To betray it is to lose the very being that is about to be extinguished. If all that remains is annihilation, this too is a form of being. Yet if being is lost before annihilation, then even annihilation becomes absurd. Abstraction will not absolve us from duty, because duty and the ideals on which it is based are essentially ourselves. Thus, in the end, national ideals, history and politics are perhaps in reality not concrete entities in themselves, but rather an expression of what is vital to human individual and personal existence.

This is the conclusion of what is clearly the work of a deep-thinking man who has meditated long on the human predicament. It can hard-

ly be called a novel. Rather it is a poetic expression of human tragic existence in epic form. The voice is always the author's. It is description rather than creation yet, at its best, it is perceptive and engaging. At its worst, in the long monologues and the somewhat loosely constructed erotic reminiscences, its impact is lost. It is as difficult to "place" as Njegoš's *The Mountain Wraath*, to which it owes so much. Perhaps Djilas, in the end, says little that Njegoš did not express, but he speaks with the sincerity and freshness of a man who is himself close to the predicament he portrays. Despite its very local atmosphere, which will be immediately striking to the Western reader, this is a book of universal reference and indeed its sincerity stands as a proof that, in wisdom and honesty, Djilas is the superior of many of his detractors.

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Jiri Kolaja, *Workers' Councils; The Yugoslav experience*. New York: Praeger 1966. Pp. xii + 84.

In this monograph Professor Kolaja reports on some data he collected on attitudes and decision making in two Yugoslav factories during the summer of 1959. A number of workers and managerial personnel were interviewed, over a period of two months, minutes of meetings of key committees during the previous year were analysed and a number of committee meetings were attended by Professor Kolaja. A questionnaire was administered to a sample of the employees of one of the factories; some of the results have been published previously.

The two factories, called "A" and "B" in the text, are fairly large, having 1620 and 503 employees respectively. "A", a textile factory, had 80 per cent women employees and relatively low education and skill levels throughout. "B", which produced dyes and colors, had a predominantly male work force, 12 per cent of whom had had at least a high school education and a number of whom were graduate engineers and chemists.

A majority of the sampled workers thought that the workers' council was more influential within the enterprise than either the director, the League of Communists or the union. The latter appeared to be relatively weak despite the large membership it had in both factories. The League appeared to be more interested in the union than in the workers' council. The enterprise showed some autonomy with respect to the local government, refusing in one instance a request to make a grant from the