

The author's most useful contribution —an account of the events over the last quarter century in Bulgaria— is unfortunately marred by his apparent lack of direct experience in the country and is nothing more than a superficial report. For example, by repeatedly labelling the Bulgarian National Agrarian Union a "puppet" party (pp. 29, 69, 214), he misleads the reader from any insight into the real power that this group has. Also in his description of the still vague events of the spring of 1965 (pp. 173-189), when there was an apparent attempt to overthrow Zhivkov, he does no more than scratch the surface. Perhaps the rumors surrounding this event (such as those implicating Chervenkov) cannot be definitively ascertained, but their analysis could have been useful, especially as the author previously had shown no distaste at engaging in speculation.

Finally Brown's assessment that "Bulgarian relations with the United States have never progressed to an extent that promised any real improvement" (p. 283) seem to me to be the grossest misstatement. The increased contacts between the countries since Mrs. Anderson represented Washington there, the many cultural exchanges, the increasing number of American tourists visiting the country as well as increasing number of Bulgarians visiting the United States, the growing number of personal friendships between Bulgarians and Americans, the reestablishment of ambassadorial status between the governments in 1966, and the increasing trade agreements between the two countries even including a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Sofia all contradict this mistaken conclusion.

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Paul Lendvai, *Eagles in Cobwebs: Nationalism and Communism in the Balkans*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969. Pp. XII + 396.

*Eagles in Cobwebs* is a new member of a long tradition of many journalistic books which all English-speaking students of the Balkans have read in their careers. Mr. Lendvai states as his object "a work midway between journalism and history" (p. xii). The work indeed has many of the advantages of journalism, but also suffers from many of the defects to which this kind of account is prone. The author's superb stylistic capabilities make the book very enjoyable both for the general

reader and the scholar. Furthermore, in his introductory remarks he justly promotes the advantage of his first-hand personal contact in analyzing the current situations in the Balkans. His travels and residence in the region and his interviews with many leaders in fact give the book much of its value.

On the other hand Lendvai's subject matter —Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Yugoslavia during the past quarter century— is in large part history, and more than a knowledge of current events is needed to discuss this history, even as recent as it is, in a scholarly fashion. The author is forced to rely on common secondary works for almost all of his background material and a good part of his substance. He does not demonstrate an ability to discriminate among these and repeats many overworked clichés and discarded notions about the Balkan countries. In general, his historical survey will provide little new information for the scholarly reader. In addition, the book contains many minor errors of fact which, while not serious enough to damage the worth of the book irreparably, will be noticed by the discerning reader. For example, he suggests that both Tito and Dimitrov were present in Moscow at the famous showdown with Stalin over Balkan unification in February, 1948 (p. 84), when in fact Tito did not attend. The minority population of Bulgaria between the wars was 20%, not 10% (p. 212). Christian Rakovsky was not born in Bulgaria (p. 280), but in territory which was part of the Ottoman Empire and ceded to Rumania, not Bulgaria, in 1878. His family became Rumanian citizens while he was a boy.

Although the author attempts to steer clear of patently anti-Communist bias, his reliance on many books written at the height of the "Cold War" is obvious in some of his statements and conclusions. (A more significant political bias in light of some of the author's conclusions is his favoritism towards Tito's brand of socialism rather than Moscow's, although Lendvai certainly seems to like neither).

Lendvai also engages at times in therapeutic breast-beating by attributing the course of the post-war Balkans in large part to Western "mistakes." For example he attributes the success of Hoxha in Albania to the "incredibly inept" British policy of supplying him rather than the Zogists with arms (p. 184-185).

The most serious criticism which can be lodged against Lendvai involves the general nature of his theme in the book and the resulting conclusion. The title comes from a statement by J. L. Talmon (apparently a paraphrasing of remarks made by Wilhelm Jordan a Berlin re-

presentative to the Frankfort Assembly in 1848): "To try to bind nations to precepts of international morality was like trying to catch eagles in cobwebs." For Lendvai the parallel phenomenon is the attempt to catch the eagle of Balkan nationalism in the cobweb of international socialism. His major premise therefore appears to be that nationalism is solid, fixed, and natural whereas socialism is transitory and at least presently unstable and non-instinctive. This neglects the essential ideological nature of both movements and particularly the evolutionary development of nationalism as well as socialism. While it is true that nationalism is the older ideology and that the socialist leaders of all countries in the Balkans have used national cohesion for both immediate and long term advantages, it does not follow that grouping according to nation is somehow more permanent or natural than grouping according to class, and that the socialist ideology must of necessity be overshadowed by the nationalist. The author assumes this point and makes no effort to prove it. The *de facto* evidence that each of the four socialist countries under consideration has followed a different development is insufficient to support such a monumental *a priori* hypothesis.

Structurally, the author devotes most space to Yugoslavia with which he is most familiar. This section is a third larger than the one on Rumania and more than twice the size of the others. In addition a good deal of the analysis in the Bulgarian, Rumanian, and Albanian chapters concentrates on the relations between those countries and Yugoslavia. While the author devotes considerable space to new economic developments in Yugoslavia and the question of decentralization, his most important contribution is a discussion of the Rankovic affair.

Since Lendvai prefers to champion Tito's socialism as opposed to Moscow's and also relies on Western works for background, he has an understandable tendency to view independence from and defiance of Moscow by the Balkan (and presumably other Eastern bloc) countries as a beneficial attitude. This inference is not commensurate with the author's more plausible conclusion that the relationship of each country to the Soviet Union is determined by the individual historical and existing forces. Disagreement with Moscow is not necessarily a desirable end in itself from a purely local point of view. What may be beneficial for Yugoslavia or Albania is not necessarily desirable for Bulgaria.

Nevertheless despite scholarly shortcomings all students of mod-

ern Eastern Europe will enjoy reading Mr. Lendvai's book and profit from the first-hand information he brings to the problems of this area.

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Nissan Oren. *Bulgarian Communism: The Road to Power 1934-1944*. ("East Central European Studies of Columbia University and Research Institute on Communist Affairs, Columbia University") New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1971. Pp. XIV+294.

Nissan Oren was born in Bulgaria, but educated in Israel and the United States. At present he is a member of the Departments of International Politics and Russian Studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Although he is a political scientist, *Bulgarian Communism* is a history book—a worthy successor to another Columbia Press history by a political scientist, Joseph Rothschild's *The Communist Party of Bulgaria*. Furthermore, because the author never uses obscure jargon, *Bulgarian Communism* is readily understandable to the non-specialist.

Oren's monograph is one of impressive research and at times even investigation worthy of a detective into a subject whose secrets are not always the easiest to discover. An excellent example of the author's forthright uncovering of hitherto "unsolved mysteries" of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP) is his explanation of Traicho Kostov's reprieve from a capital sentence by the Bulgarian government in 1942 (pp. 183-4). The party secretary was saved on the intervention of Stanislav Balan, the king's secretary, whose son went to school with Kostov. Furthermore, much of the book is not solely about the Bulgarian Communist Party *per se* but is as well a chronicle of the events in Bulgaria during the period (a similarity with Rothschild). This is essential with material that is so little known by the English reading scholarly community.

Using as his sources party-member memoirs, collected works, surveys of the communist periodical literature, important secondary works, and personal interviews, Oren discusses the re-emergence of Georgi Dimitrov in the party leadership, the purge of the sectarians, the attempt of the party to establish a popular front in Bulgaria, the party's leadership of the partisan movement during the war, and the success of the Fatherland Front in gaining control of the country in 1944. Al-