

Austrian support for some Serbian demands can be found alongside examples of unrelenting and vigorous Hungarian opposition to the *Sabor's* work. A veritable stream of communications to the assembly poured forth from Serbian and Rumanian residents in Budapest, Rijeka, Zagreb, Arad, Oradea Mare, and Vojvodina. Ostensibly, views expressed represented a cross-section of the clerical and secular strata of the Orthodox community in the Habsburg Empire.

As Petrović suggests in his introductory remarks, one topic which has considerable potential for producing groundbreaking scholarly investigation is that of Serbo-Rumanian relations. Various documents attest to Serbo-Rumanian collaboration in pursuit of similar objectives while faced with a common political foe, namely, the Hungarians. Religious affinity and shared political goals apparently overcame any ethnic animosity. How each partner in this alliance perceived this relationship is one of many questions which have yet to be answered.

The overall value of this compilation of primary sources, volume nine in the prestigious series entitled *Materials for the History of Vojvodina*, is not difficult to appreciate. In an introduction, Petrović convincingly argues that historians can now determine with greater precision and clarity the historical significance of the Temišvar *Sabor*. Because of the complex nature of the Habsburg Empire, he asserts, the fulfillment of that task will not be easy. The coeditor further warns against the employment of metaphysical explanations, simplistic models, and anachronistic conceptualizations in reaching a conclusion about the *Sabor's* rightful place in history.

The only shortcoming of this splendid work, albeit an unavoidable one because of the choice of subject matter, lies in the editors' decision to focus upon the interplay of forces and events associated with the brief life span of the assembly. It is to their credit that they acknowledge the desirability of publishing additional materials relating to post-1790 developments which would put the Temišvar *Sabor* in a broader historical context, thereby giving historians an opportunity to arrive at more meaningful judgments. Hopefully, Gavrilović and Petrović will produce a companion volume which will be worthy of their initial outstanding effort.

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NARODNI OBIČAJI, VEROVANJA I POSLOVICE KOD SRBA. Edited by  
*Milan T. Vuković*. Belgrade: Milan T. Vuković (Fah 27-160, 11071 Belgrade),  
1972. 288 pp.

This book is in its entirety Vuković's work, since the material for it was "collected, reworked, arranged, . . . written up," and even printed by the author himself. The author describes it as a popular "small anthology of folk customs, beliefs, and proverbs . . . compiled for the widest circle of readers" (p. 6). The major sections cover birth, marriage, death, kinship, Christmas and other holidays, Patron Saint's Day, man's fate, evil spirits, customs and beliefs connected with everyday life, witch doctoring, magic, and proverbs.

The book contains a wealth of information. Especially valuable are the sections on marriage, death, and Christmas and the Saint's Day celebrations. In addition to the major entries, minor ones are included that give mere definitions in a sentence or two. The encyclopedic nature of the book is underscored by the inclusion of such extraneous materials as a long list of personal names current in Serbia and the table of dates of Easter from 1850 to 1950. It is unfortunate that the mythological beings (devils, vilas, vampires, serpents, and others) that constitute the most fascinating aspect of Serbian mythology are discussed only very briefly. A trait characteristic of vampires—their attacking and destroying close relatives first and causing harm to others afterward—has been attributed here to witches (p. 161).

Vuković's book is a useful source of information for the folk customs and beliefs of the Serbs. Its use is somewhat hampered by the lack of an index and even of a table of contents.

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**SOCIAL CHANGE IN A PERIPHERAL SOCIETY: THE CREATION OF A BALKAN COLONY.** By *Daniel Chirot*. New York: Academic Press, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976. xx, 178 pp. Tables. \$12.50. £7.25.

This is a solid if undramatic analysis of the political economy of Wallachia from 1250 to 1917, tracing its evolution from pastoral/agricultural communalism with a distinct transit trade, on which the first political structure was based, through its emergence as an essentially colonial exporting economy (and, very incidentally, a politically independent nation) by the late nineteenth century. Professor Chirot is not sure that his subject is terribly important. Wallachia interests him, but he grants that it was small, unlucky, and negligible on any large scale. The subject of a peripheral society, incapable of autonomous development because it is attached to a larger power system, interests him more. Wallachia here serves to illustrate a kind of society that became common with nineteenth-century imperialism, for it was preconditioned by subordination to the Ottoman system before it became a neocolony of West European capitalism. The peripheral society is itself interesting as a type, and a good bit of attention is devoted to relevant typology into which Wallachian history fits, but it is also interesting because it refutes any idea of grand, overweening laws or stages governing social evolution.

All this is developed a bit apologetically, though firmly, because Professor Chirot seems a bit uncertain, as a sociologist, about what could possibly be as important as the search, illusory though it has proved, for a grand scheme. The slightly defensive tone—Here it is but I wish it were more sweeping—may annoy some readers. It does lead to undue rhetoric and, particularly in the introduction, to the search for a large number of organizing subjects, as if quantity can replace a convincing single justification. Some topics (for example, the attempt to show why Western capitalism proved so much more vital than world systems such as the Ottoman), are virtually stillborn, for the real subject of the book does not permit an answer. But the book is to a substantial extent justified by the author's intellectual honesty, his desire to explain what aspects of his study are important and why.

Clearly written and based on extensive secondary sources, comparative as well as Rumanian, the book outlines the main structural features of Wallachian history. Periodization is based on changes in economic form and class control of the economy, which were guided, because Wallachia was a peripheral society, by the relationship to outside powers. Demographic and political patterns are merely sketched, and there are only a few dips into narrative history. The structural approach, plus extensive reliance on Rumanian social historians such as Henri Stahl, allows Professor Chirot to deal incisively with a number of historiographical controversies and confusions, notably the recurrent effort to place Rumanian society into a misleading feudal/manorial context. Comparative references, for example, to the Sudan, usefully startle a more conventional reader. Treatment of Wallachia in terms of ideal types, such as that of a colonial society, are serviceable, if sometimes wordy and repetitious, but rarely exciting.

This is a barebones approach. The essentials of a society rest in economic relationships, captured in the Wallachian case primarily through the rise and evolution of the *boieri*, and more broadly in the way a society fits into the relevant international economic structure. The book does well what it sets out to do. Wallachian history and a modest theory about peripheral societies are both related in an informative manner.