This most welcome new edition of Radoslavov's *Bălgarska Literatura* reveals the scholarly tradition on which Svetozar Igov must have depended. At the same time, it opens up new pathways which Bulgarian scholarship and criticism, enriched by modern methods and research, will surely wish to investigate.

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Meto Jovanovski. *Faceless Men and Other Macedonian Stories.* Edited with an introduction by Jeffrey Folks. Translated by Jeffrey Folks, Milne Holton and Charles Simic. London and Boston: Forest Books, 1993. 77 pp., $15.95 (paper).

In "The Balkans are an Ocean," one of the strongest stories in this collection, we follow the adventures of two peasants from the village of Braychino, as they are swept by the turmoil of the Balkan wars and World War I. The two men are soldiers, who are conscripted repeatedly by whatever army happens to pass by. The Balkan wars were fought over the division of Macedonia, which was not recognized as a separate nation by any of the warring parties. Therefore, one's 'legal' nationality changed according to the battle fronts. The aim of the two peasant soldiers is to escape and eventually reach America or Australia. When they reach Greece, they are provided Greek identification cards. "So we became Greeks too. That is the Macedonian destiny. Well, if it helps, it doesn't matter for a while," says one to the other.

The village of Braychino, which is also Meto Jovanovski's birthplace, figures in most of the stories in this collection. Through the eyes of simple peasants Jovanovski portrays individuals who attempt to make sense out of the historical, political, social and personal turmoil in their lives. The background against which these changes take place is the idyllic village community, where the world view is rooted deeply in tradition.

Political and social changes, especially after the second World War, bring about the rise of a new individual, one who is far removed from the traditional mold. In "A Completely Loyal Citizen," the first person narrator, filled with the new communist collective ideology, declares that he no longer has any qualms about slaughtering. The story tells of an order by the secretary of the party to exterminate all dogs from the village so that their skins can be used "for the industry which then started to work against capitalism and imperialism." The narrator, a completely loyal citizen, volunteers for the job of dog executioner, and actually finds pleasure in his work. "And while Tome was hesitating, Mitre hung the dog on the branch and, as soon as the dog started to struggle, I struck its head. You should have seen how its head exploded and its brains all in blood flowed out. I don't know how I did it, but I was covered in blood. Over the aprons, the face and since I had my mouth opened, even my mouth was full with blood and brains. Warm, very warm." The narrator views himself as the new, progressive village man, one who follows all 'instructions' handed down by bureaucrats and government officials, and who can disregard the consequences of his actions.

In the stories "Man in the Blue Suit" and "The Red Bus," the underlying subject is people's blind following of authoritarian individuals. In the first story, a man in a blue suit manages to convince a group of citizens waiting at a bus stop to behave in an orderly fashion, not an easy undertaking in this part of the Balkans, where people seem to have a natural instinct to rush into a bus even when it is half empty. The man's personal conduct and his manner of addressing the citizens gives everyone the impression that they are dealing with a very important person. When the last passenger gets on the bus, the man in the blue suit is taken away by two men in white uniforms. At the end of the story the reader discovers that the man is an escapee from a nearby insane asylum. In "The Red Bus," a well dressed man in a black suit gets on a bus that transports officials from the commune to the city and back. Inadvertently, he sits on

the seat reserved for the president of the commune. When the president gets on the bus, the entire seating order is disrupted because everyone else must move from their designated seat. None of the passengers doubts that the man in the black is an important official: "Everyone was impressed and wanted to be his subordinate." The passengers are reassured of the man's importance when he tells the bus driver that he needs to get off at the building of the People's Assembly. However, after he gets off the bus, he begins walking in the opposite direction.

Psychological and emotional conflicts are recurrent themes in several of the stories in this collection. In "Journey," for example, an old woman describes, in "skaz" narrative, a trip she took to America to visit her daughter. This is her first exposure to modern technology and such conveniences as airplanes, telephones and indoor bathrooms. When she is offered a coke on the plane, she describes it as "a glass of black liquid filled with gas." America, and the new modern world, offer the old peasant woman from Braychino "too many tricks for a human being to guess." She prefers the familiar world of the village, where it is not too complicated to figure out how to use the facilities to relieve oneself. The story "Flight to Eternity" provides a lyrical description of a man making love to his dying lover. Because she is ill, he must do everything slowly and gently, and this prolongs the excitement of the sexual experience for both of them: "He was so careful that he could himself feel how much more gentle and delicate he was with her. He loved her gently and slowly, rapturously in this long, lingering film which they had never known. They felt like they had been hurled into space and left to float there eternally in infinity. It was like an endless coma from which there is no return." When he comes out of the dream he realizes that she is dead. At the end of the story, the reader discovers that each episode in the narrative was only a dream within a dream of a dying man. In "Event," a man has an imaginary fight with an invisible enemy "with no bones." At the end of the battle, he realizes that the episode was only a dream. He continuously wakes up from one dream into another, and is unable to tell in which dream he is at any particular time. Since it is impossible to distinguish dream from reality, at the end of the story he concludes that everything must be reality.

Meto Jovanovski is a significant figure in postwar Macedonian literature primarily on account of his stories which chronicle changes in the lives of Macedonian village characters from the Balkan wars to the present, stories which lack the didacticism and political commentary often found in the Socialist Realism of this period. Although history is always present in the stories, it is not the driving theme. Jovanovski succeeds both in creating a variety of vivid peasant characters and in immersing the reader in their world.

Other stories included in this collection are "The President of the Central Committee," "Marriage is a Need for Man," and "Road to the Sky." The translators of these stories, Milne Holton, Charles Simic and Jeffrey Folks, have done a superb job in conveying the intricacies of the folk narrative and dialogue of the Prespa region in Macedonia.

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Markéta Goetz-Stankiewicz, ed. *Good-bye, Samizdat: Twenty Years of Czechoslovak Underground Writing*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1992. 309 pp. $42.95/$19.95.

John Updike gives the hero of "Bech in Czech" "an elemental sheaf, bound together by love and daring" that returns him to an "archetypal sense of what a book was." H. Gordon Skilling makes the reference more explicit in his ground-breaking study, "Samizdat: A Return to the Pre-Gutenberg Era" (*Cross Currents*, 1982). Much of the excitement of this "old-new" form of publication—a defamiliarization of the book, so to speak—comes through vicariously in the texts presented in the current volume.