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Beyond Balkanism: The Scholarly Politics of Region Making. By Diana Mishkova. New York and London: Routledge, 2018. 282 pp.

More than twenty years after the specter of balkanism was first exorcised by Maria Todorova's defiant critique of Western representations of the Balkans in her prominent book *Imagining the Balkans* (1997), the topic still merits scholarly attention. This time, however, it is not the West's orientaling gaze towards the Southeast that comes to the fore. In her latest book, the Bulgarian scholar of the Balkans Diana Mishkova focuses on the scholarly exercises in symbolic geography of the Balkans, covering both external representations and, more importantly, local regionalist visions and self-designations.

*Beyond Balkanism: The Scholarly Politics of Region Making* fills an important research gap by giving voice and restoring agency to hundreds of Balkan scholars who have actively participated in and often decisively shaped academic and political debates on the region. Mishkova analyzes regional discourses of local academic luminaries like Nicolae Iorga, Ivan Shishmanov, and Jovan Cvijić, among others, whose names have unjustly faded from European intellectual debates on region making. Instead of being passive receptors or imitators of outside concepts of the Balkans, these scholars came up with their own vision of the region's essence and place within the European and global political geography, and they often subverted existing models of modernity, modernization, Europe, and its civilization. Thus, their discourses, as Mishkova argues, deserve to be analyzed and taken seriously as partners, albeit hardly equal, in a two-way process of knowledge production and region making. It is Mishkova's goal to combine the internal and external perspectives on the Balkans as a region in order to offer "the historical reconstruction of the understandings of the Balkans that have emerged from academically embedded discursive practices and political usages." (p.3)

In terms of structure, the book is essentially chronological. It begins with the nineteenth century, when the first ideas about the Balkans as a separate geopolitical entity emerged in the works of German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, French, British, and, later, American scholars. As was the case in subsequent periods, these initial regionalist discourses frequently reflected political debates and cultural cleavages at home and buttressed specific political projects, but they still maintained some level of scholarly autonomy which gradually evolved into the establishment of an institutionalized academic field. Likewise, the first home-grown generation of scientists were not exempt from the entanglement of politics with

scholarship. Their attempts to conceptualize the Balkans/Southeastern Europe as a cultural-historical space (Chapter 2) were heavily influenced by linguistics, geography, anthropology, ethnography, and folkloristics, leading to some of the most methodologically innovative comparative approaches to the region's unique and common features. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the afterlife of these local academic projects and traces their adaptation to the dominant ideological climate of the interwar period, which prioritized research forays into national and regional mentality, the then-fashionable concepts of ethnopsychology, and autochthonism. Once again, Mishkova balances domestic perspectives with the next chapter, which analyzes external research ventures on the Balkans that were mainly in the context of Nazi economic and territorial expansion eastwards.

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with post-World War II shifts in symbolic geography, which almost led to the disappearance of the Balkans as a separate scientific object. Local scholars had to accommodate the new ideological shifts, once again readjusting concepts and discourses for diverse audiences and speaking the languages of nationalism, regionalism, and internationalism simultaneously at various academic fora. External scholars of the Balkans were also influenced by the Cold War. They had to grapple with the relocation of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe into the newly institutionalized area study of Eastern Europe and the dominant research agenda of modernization and backwardness. In the post-1989 period (covered in the last chapter), the Cold War intellectual straightjacket was gone, but research on the Balkans fell into a new epistemological trap laid by the (pseudo-)academic literature, according to which the region's supposed ontological essence was exemplified by the maelstrom of the Yugoslav Wars. This strand of engagement with the region was then strongly challenged by the spatial turn and postcolonial theory, which highlighted the constructed, arbitrary, and hierarchical nature of seemingly objective regional classifications and designations and questioned "whether the region can be a useful category of analysis given the 'invented' quality of the concept and its political uses." (p.215) In her conclusion, Mishkova once again reiterates the methodological benefits of her project, i.e. how studying "academic balkanism" reveals "the transnational flow of ideas and the communication between 'Western' and 'peripheral' concepts and definitions" (p.4) and teaches us to "appreciate the flexibility and fuzziness of our units of analysis and comparison." (p.239)

The book's strongest feature is undoubtedly the analysis of the ideas of the local purveyors of regionalist discourses. Mishkova clearly demonstrates the heuristic potential of their concepts, yet these are neither idealized nor

a-critically reproduced. The author illustrates how, despite their intellectually emancipating and deprovincializing potential, these conceptions of the region could easily function as the scholarly arm of an exclusionist project for ethnic homogenization. Their positivist methodological toolkit could counter romantic national(istic) discourse or just as well reinforce national stereotypes about uniqueness or superiority vis-à-vis neighboring peoples (in line with Milica Bakić-Hayden's *nesting orientalisms*). More often than not, the region's scholars were as enmeshed in politics as their Western counterparts, and their careers represented a constant struggle between serving the nation and maintaining scholarly standards. These professional dilemmas seem to have resulted in perennial methodological nationalism but, given the difficulties modern scholars have superseding the national framework, it is hard to fault their predecessors.

Finally, a few words must be said about the book's minor shortcomings. Despite the author's obvious expertise on Balkan scholarly production and intellectual history, there is a slight unacknowledged imbalance in the degree to which the various Balkan countries are represented in the book. Romanian, Serbian/Yugoslav, and Bulgarian regional discourses predominate over Greek, Ottoman/Turkish and particularly Albanian ones. The latter country seems to remain *terra incognita* even for specialists on the region, but Greek and Ottoman/Turkish academic output could have featured more prominently. In addition, I would have personally appreciated further elaboration on the intertwined academic and political activities of the large group of scholars of Balkan origin in the West whose expertise on their home countries and the region was in high demand during the Cold War. Notwithstanding these minor flaws and potential expansions, the book is indeed a major academic accomplishment.

Truly an example of entangled history, Mishkova's book demonstrates the benefits of combining regional and conceptual history. Constantly alternating between extra-regional and intra-regional academic perspectives, Mishkova describes how over time various national, regional, and transnational scholarly and political projects about the region emerged, influenced, and reinforced or clashed with each other. Thus, her book is a timely tribute to a long-standing local tradition of regionalist discourses which were never a mere shadow of their external counterparts. Suitable for scholars with various research interests, Diana Mishkova's richly researched book goes beyond the Balkans and balkanism in more than just the title and can provide a working model for exploring the scholarly politics of region making for other cases.

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*Coca-Cola Socialism: Americanization of Yugoslav Culture in the Sixties.* By Radina Vučetić. Translated by John K. Cox. Budapest–New York: Central European University Press, 2018. 360 pp.

Six years after its original publication, Radina Vučetić's popular study *Coca-Cola Socialism* is now available to broader audiences thanks to a new English-language edition. Viewed by Vučetić as one of the characteristic processes of the twentieth century, this detailed cultural-historical work offers an analysis of the trajectories and influence of Americanization on culture and everyday life in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s. The study is framed by the definition of Americanization as a form of cultural imperialism through which the United States left a global impact primarily in the spheres of popular culture, mass consumption, and everyday life. Moreover, as Vučetić, persuasively argues, Americanization encompassed transmission and reception of cultural influences, with popular culture used as a political tool in domestic and foreign policies both in the US and Socialist Yugoslavia. In the Yugoslav case in particular, the character of Americanization and its appropriation is conceptualized through the often used historiographical notion of the country's in-between or hybrid position in the Cold War period, which Vučetić further includes in the broader "contradictory" context of the 1960s.

In light of these guiding concepts, in the four chapters of the book, Vučetić maps various high, mass, and pop cultural phenomena which were either imported from the United States or which emerged in Yugoslavia under American influence. The first two chapters focus on cinema and music, primarily jazz and rock 'n' roll, while the third chapter offers insights into modern art movements, such as abstract expressionism and pop art, and modern and experimental theater. The final chapter overviews a range of phenomena related to the topic of everyday life, from cartoons and comics, popular literature, fashion, hippie subculture, and television to Coca-Cola and other elements of consumer culture, such as the supermarket.

In the similarly structured chapters, Vučetić analyzes the use of these cultural and consumer products in both American and Yugoslav political and diplomatic agendas during the Cold War. On the one hand, the United States actively promoted its cultural presence in Socialist Yugoslavia, for example, by setting an artificially low price for the importation of Hollywood movies into Yugoslavia, which then significantly contributed to their popularity. On the other hand,