

The whole volume thus exhibits an ambition to push past the view of Hašek as the author of one and only one masterpiece. However, the attempts to find depths of meaning inside texts usually considered peripheral to his oeuvre fail to offer interpretations that prove that such depths are something more than our desire to find—or construct—them.

PETR A. BÍLEK

Charles University in Prague

Manele in Romania: Cultural Expression and Social Meaning in Balkan Popular Music. Ed. Margaret Beissinger, Speranța Rădulescu, and Anca Giurchescu. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016. Ethnomusicologies and Modernities. xxxv, 311 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. Maps. Musical Examples. \$100.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2017.305

Almost ever since the collapse of state socialism in eastern Europe, the contradictions of popular music genres that combine local and pan-regional forms of musical tradition with contemporary themes and technologies, and that emerged across southeastern Europe in parallel even as the symbolic boundaries of national identity were tightening across the region, have been a staple topic in southeastern European studies not just for the ethnomusicologists who were already researching these simultaneously globalized and localizing mediations of rural and urban everyday life but also for sociologists and historians making sense of the dislocations of post-socialism. A generation later, the politics of *turbo folk* (the colloquial name projected on to this music, mostly by non-listeners, in the Yugoslav region), *chalga* (its name with the same valence in Bulgaria), *manele* (the name it has acquired in Romania, as Costin Moisil explains historically in his contribution to this authoritative volume), or *pop-folk* (as scholars working in comparative mode across southeastern Europe and indeed the wider post-Ottoman space are likely to call it) are a staple theme in southeastern European media and cultural studies, far more so than equivalent post-socialist musical phenomena in central Europe. Simultaneously, the audience expectations, production contexts, and material conditions of *pop-folk* have been reshaped by far-reaching structural changes, including the socio-economic effects of many countries in the region seeking and gaining membership in the European Union, the implications of the post-2007 global financial crisis, and the transformations wrought by the internet on media infrastructure, audiovisual communication, and musicians' own careers.

Evidence from Romania, despite the rich amount of research on traditional music and dance conducted by scholars based inside Romania (like Speranța Rădulescu) and outside it (like Margaret Beissinger)—not to mention those like the book's third editor, Anca Giurchescu, who brought her research to Denmark after defecting from Nikolai Ceaușescu's Romania in 1979 and who sadly died in 2015 while the volume was being prepared—has not seemed to set the pace of transnational *pop-folk* studies to the same extent as the counterparts of *manele* in Serbia or Bulgaria. Studies from Romania, like the chapter on *muzică orientală* that Beissinger contributed to Donna Buchanan's ground-breaking 2007 volume on *Balkan Popular Culture and the Ottoman Ecumene*, nevertheless reveal broadly similar cultural dynamics: a music that sonically, visually, and kinaesthetically attaches the nation to the cultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire and the wider region it ruled, standing for the stigmatized yet desired Balkan "east" as a symbolic other to the modernity of "Europe" within

the frameworks of “nesting orientalism” (as Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert Hayden termed it) or “balkanism” (Maria Todorova’s phrase) that characterized so many narratives of identity across the region during and after the 1990s. *Manele*, originating in Romani neighborhoods in the 1960s and spreading across Romania as a mass popular music after 1989—when the ethicized and racialized politics of autochthonous Romanian identity under Ceaușescu judged them too Romani to be present in public space—have much in common with the Yugoslav “newly-composed folk music” that spread across the Serbian-Romanian border in the 1980s. They also, however, have important differences dating back to the specific historical experiences of the Romanian provinces’ relationship with the Ottoman Empire—meaning that this extensively-researched book is simultaneously in dialogue with works such as *The Ottoman Ecumene*, an important contribution to the balance between transnational analysis and country-level research in studies of this area.

Manele in Romania consists of nine chapters on the history, structure, performance, language, themes, and economy of *manele*, its social structures and networks from the postsocialist urban underworld to the business of performance at village weddings, and its parallels with other forms of post-Ottoman ethnopop. The tight editorial work of Beissinger, Rădulescu, and Giurchescu on a project that began in 2011 as a series of public lectures at the National University of Music, Bucharest has woven the work of seven contributors into a book that stands out from many other edited volumes in its thematic coherence, structure, and consistency. Every chapter is deeply rooted in an ethnographic sensibility that takes as its starting point the common sense of the many *lăutari* (professional male Romani musicians) who have participated in the contributors’ research: *manele* take their real shape in performance, not recording, and much of its artistry and social meaning is only perceptible there. Mass media, by consequence, have little presence in much of the book, with *manele* seen to be much more about performance, adaptation, and musicians’ tailoring their choices of what to play and how to play it to their audience’s requests and wallets. The music recorded for purchase on cassette or CD or broadcast on television—what most of its critics will have experienced as *manele*—is only a watered-down version of *manele* as social practice; the ability to circulate videos of live performances on the internet, in contrast, has offered vocalists and bands over the last decade more opportunity to advertise their skills.

The richness of grounded knowledge throughout *Manele in Romania* would distinguish a single-author work in popular and folk music studies, let alone an edited volume. One chapter by Beissinger follows a family band from Muntenia across two decades in their quest to keep up with the synthesizer technology that would allow them to play the most modern and popular *manele*. Victor Alexandre Stoichiță and Adrian Schiop offer detailed explanations of the social functions of lyrical expression and dedication in commissioned performance. Its juxtaposition of transnational and national, meanwhile, has wider significance for the interdisciplinary study of southeastern Europe. While the Serbian–Bulgarian *pop-folk* paradigm (with many contributions from feminist media studies) emphasizes female vocalists, *manele* performers are predominantly male, a gender difference which Beissinger traces to the history of slavery under Ottoman suzerainty. The Romani men kept by the Romanian principalities’ elites as domestic slaves until their emancipation in 1843–56 were the professional and often familial ancestors of *lăutari* today. If the transnational study of popular music in southeastern Europe is a thriving field, that of slavery and its legacies in the same region is largely still to emerge; and when it does, like every other subject of enquiry that spans past and present borders, it will need to strike the same national-transnational balance as this book. *Manele in Romania* exemplifies both how committed editors can unify multiple

authors' work into a whole and how, when they do so, questions even broader than the immediate topic can emerge.

CATHERINE BAKER
University of Hull

Microcosm of European Integration: The German-Polish Border Regions in Transformation. Ed. Elżbieta Opiłowska and Jochen Roose. German and European Studies of the Willy Brandt Center at the Wrocław University. Baden-Baden, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2015. 216 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Figures. Tables. Maps. €42.00, paper.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2017.306

Questions of European integration have been subject to considerable scholarly attention for a long time. More than ten years after Poland's EU accession, it is not only the country's booming economy and changing society in general that both politicians and researchers focus on, but also the Polish-German border region, perceived as a "Microcosm of European Integration." This interdisciplinary volume features eleven chapters written mainly by sociologists, but also by researchers from the fields of border studies, German philology, and political science.

In the introduction, the editors focus on questions of European identification in general and determine the scope of the volume. The authors deal with a fairly new border region that emerged only after the Second World War, a region that experienced forced migration and one that had a political border that cut through several cities and was closed to visa-free travel for most years after 1945. Katarzyna Stokłosa's chapter on "Border Regions as Laboratories of European Integration" is historical in scope and draws comparisons with other European regions. Elżbieta Opiłowska's contribution focuses on "the development of cross-border cooperation in Europe," analyzing the EU's instruments to overcome the disparities at its member states' peripheries. The contributions from Maria Zielińska and Anna Bachmann look at cooperation on the institutional and administrative levels, burdened by the similar experience of forced migrations but enhanced by mutual economic interests and by funding from the European Union. The subsequent four chapters by Robert Knippschild/Anja Schmotz, Kamilla Dolińska/Natalia Niedźwiedzka-Iwańczak, Beata Trzop, and Dorota Szabań/Krzysztof Lisowski are based on original surveys on the quality of life and the perception of the border by inhabitants in both Poland and Germany. Despite a relatively low level of cross-border activity in general, most people seem to perceive the border situation as an asset rather than a risk to their life prospects. As far as young people are concerned, the authors point to the phenomenon of "open borders—closed minds" (167). Paradoxically, despite frequent border crossings, Polish youth often do not get into deeper interactions with their German counterparts other than during shopping trips. The two last chapters by Tomasz Jaśków and Agnieszka Korman focus on the successes and shortcomings of Polish-German educational projects—mainly concerned with learning the neighbors' language. While in Polish Lower Silesia almost half of all pupils learn German, only a striking one-half percent do so in Saxony.

One of the few shortcomings of the volume is the lack of a coherent introduction. It fails to highlight the basics relevant to the contributions dealing with the border region, such as its recent history, relevant international treaties, its theoretical context in border studies, and the overarching questions that all authors would be committed to. Here, Bachmann's excellent chapter could have served as a guideline. As a result, the volume sometimes lacks coherence not only in terms of methodology