After the Soviet invasion in August 1968, it seemed like Czechoslovaks and Soviets would never be friends again. Angry Czechoslovaks called Soviet tourists "occupiers" and "fascists" and vandalized their buses (161). State officials refused to show Soviet films in local theaters and authorized the screening of pre-feature shorts that supported the reforms and criticized the USSR. Membership in the Czechoslovak-Soviet friendship society collapsed; even its leaders stopped communicating with their Soviet counterparts. But the friendship project did not die. The reason, Applebaum argues, was that friendship had become essential component of Soviet-Czechoslovak relations. Normalization—the process of restoring calm and order after the upheavals of 1968—required maintaining the friendship project. On the surface, the effort worked. By 1977, membership in the Czechoslovak-Soviet friendship society had actually increased by 50%. Participation, however, was less a sign of enthusiasm than a badge of loyalty.

Unlike some accounts of socialist internationalism that stress its failures, Applebaum emphasizes the ways in which the friendship project succeeded. The friendship project, she argues, was a technique of empire, but one that altered the texture of everyday life for both sides. Czechoslovaks and Soviet citizens may not really have been friends, but Applebaum's excellent book shows us how they occupied a common socialist world, one that they built together.

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The Future of (Post)Socialism: Eastern European Perspectives. Ed. John Frederick Bailyn, Dijana Jelača, and Danijela Lugarić. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2018. xiii, 264 pp. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Tables. $90.00, hard bound; $22.95, paper.
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What is the future of socialism? And is postsocialism—as experience and concept—still relevant? These questions unite this interdisciplinary volume. Born out of a 2015 conference—and the wreckage of the 2008 financial crisis—it inverts a decades-long scholarly penchant for dissecting the demise of the Soviet system or *Ostalgie's* appeal in favor of weighing seriously socialism as an ideology and a political alternative to ailing neoliberal capitalism.

In the process, *The Future of (Post)Socialism* also raises important epistemological questions. How do intimacy or distance (geographical and emotional) affect scholarly analysis; how do generational and disciplinary lines influence perspectives and theoretical approaches? The fifteen contributors represent diverse experiences: six live and work in Serbia and Croatia, three grew up in the region but are now at American institutions, and the remaining are North American scholars. Some authors were born in late socialism and were shaped by the social and ethnic conflicts of its aftermath; others participated in the translation of ideas across the Iron Curtain, only to witness their bastardized applications after 1989.

Three decades later, have we reached postsocialism's analytical expiration date? Regardless of their background, most contributors concur, not yet. Readers, however, will find no consensus here about the concept's meaning nor predictions about its future. Cherishing the multivocality of the volume, in their introduction Dijana Jelača and Danijela Lugarić conceive postsocialism broadly "as a three-pronged process: as an unfinished business of perpetual liminality, as radiant future, and as circuits of intimacies" (2). These themes indeed permeate many of the following nine chapters.

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The volume's first part, "New Approaches to (Post)Socialism: The Theory in Transition," situates (post)socialism in three distinct analytical frameworks. Political sociologist David Ost interprets the intellectual creativity of east central Europe (Hungary, Poland, Czechia, and Yugoslavia during the Cold War) through the concept of semiperiphery. It is a region capable of originating ideas ("workers' self-management" or "civil society") but lacking the geopolitical and epistemological power to diffuse them. In a dialectical relationship with the core, the semiperiphery sees its innovations genetically altered and becomes a testing ground for the core's unpopular policies (neoliberal capitalism after 1990), resulting in newfangled creations (the populist right in Hungary and Poland). David Kotz treats socialism as part of the global history of capitalism, finding "a pattern of alternation between free-market and regulated forms of capitalism" (65). Rather than dismiss socialism as a failed system, Kotz examines the achievements and deficiencies of the Soviet model to argue for a viable socialist alternative to today's inequality-producing and environment-degrading capitalism, as long as it is "democratic, decentralized and participatory" (68). Finally, Jelisaveta Blagojević and Jovana Timotijević scrutinize the postsocialist transition through the lens of gender and queer theory. They see a limited transformation from "brotherhood and unity" (in the Yugoslav parlance) to the European Union's "brotherhood of men." Either political system is embedded in a homosexual power that privileges male actors, claims universality, and dismisses alternative visions.

The section "(Post)Socialist Space(s)" presents national, urban or communal spaces reimagined and reorganized under and after socialism. Robert A. Saunders' *tour de force* through the history of "state-branding" reminds us that it was the Soviet challenge that prompted the west to articulate its values for mass, global consumption. Ironically, after 1989 former Second World states employed commercial branding to differentiate themselves and win over Cold War-era foes as investors and tourists. Their diverse strategies, tools, and results lead Saunders to conclude that postsocialism might be outliving its analytical utility. This also seems to be the conclusion of Heather D. DeHaan, whose survey of the local identity of Baku residents reveals dramatic dislocation. Once a Russian-speaking, cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic city of tight-woven, intimate neighborhoods, Baku today is the ethnically homogenous, "neo-oriental" and rapidly modernizing capital of Azerbaijan (156). In contrast, Olga Shevchenko's ethnographic study of a dacha community transforming under the weight of privatization and wealth differentiation reveals spatial politics that are "capitalist in form but distinctly (post)socialist in content" (140). Beneath the seemingly foreign and imported neoliberal values of privacy, autonomy, and self-protection (137), she finds a Soviet-era longing to escape state intervention and public gaze.

The final section, "Memories of the Future," exposes the lasting polarizing legacy of socialism. Post-Yugoslav Croatia exhibited the same phases of the reductionist memory of socialism scholars have identified elsewhere in the region—from rejection to nostalgia. Looking at forms of popular culture (novels, film, and art), Maša Kolanović analyzes recent, nuanced efforts to come to grips with Yugoslavia's complex past. And marginalized art forms, such as graffiti or alternative music, suggest a fourth stage of memory-creation in the works: a recovery of socialism's "revolutionary political potential" and emancipatory promises (181). Sanja Potkonjak and Nevena Škrbić Alempijević also analyze today's Croatia through conflicts over Zagreb's central square named after Josip Broz Tito. In contrast to these studies of "frictional memory" (202), Iveta Silova's exploration of "literacies of childhood"—education narratives that "inscribe children and childhoods in particular space and time" (218)—reveals surprising continuities between textbooks in pre-socialist, Soviet, and contemporary Latvia. Even if Soviet-era images emphasized technology

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and modernity, in all three periods Latvian national identity remained closely tied to nature and the rural countryside.

Gary Marker's "Afterward" situates the volume's polyphony in the current global environment, dense with anxieties and conflicts. Yet he also remarks on the volume's inherent optimism; a volume born in a time without "state-defined or nation-based paradigms" (242) and authored by individuals who aspire to a "postsocialist future defined by human dignity, freedom, intellectual vivacity, and collective well-being" (243). A historian of imperial Russia, Marker praises the expanded temporalities in most essays, which point to cyclical surges in national and global preoccupations and to the unavoidable fall of sweeping narratives and grand theories.

Therefore, the "smaller theory and more contingent explanation" (249) that characterize this collection present a snapshot of the current state of the field. At the same time, the volume's theoretical and political currency will likely limit its appeal to specialists and graduate students.

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Murder Ballads and Other Legends. By Bohumil Hrabal. Trans. Timothy West. Bloomington, Ind.: Slavica Publishers. x, 109 pp. Illustrations. $19.95, paper.
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Bohumil Hrabal's entry into the English-speaking world might not have been as smooth as Milan Kundera's or Josef Škvorecký's, but since the fall of state socialism in Czechoslovakia, his work has been eliciting relatively steady interest from Anglophone translators and publishers. Timothy West's rendering of *Murder Ballads and Other Legends* (*Morytáty a legendy*) is one of the latest additions to the long—but still not comprehensive—list that started with Edith Pargeter's 1968 translation of *Closely Watched Trains* (*Ostře sledované vlaky*, 1965).

Murder Ballads and Other Legends is a collection of twelve short texts that provide a good overview of Hrabal's pre-1970s writing styles and techniques. These are intensely engaged with intertextual operations, which arguably pose the most significant challenge to the translator. Many of the pieces in the collection were appropriated and montaged from other, usually non-literary texts (these most explicitly include "A Ballad Written by My Readers," "A Legend Played on Strings Stretched between Cradle and Coffin" and "Ballad of a Public Execution") and several are earlier or later (or both) versions of other texts, as is the case with "The Legend of Cain," which was based on a short story Hrabal wrote in 1949 and was one of the texts he used to write his *Closely Watched Trains*. Intertextual deepening and layering also spring from the use of different varieties of the Czech language, including the highly colloquial Common Czech.

The strategy West adopted in dealing with intertextual operations is in coherence with the commonly-applied approaches to translating such texts—he strove for an imitation of the heterogeneity of Hrabal's writing, but also made his own interpretations of the connections between the disparate textual fragments within his translation. The method—as an inevitable effect of prototypical translation procedures in general—increases the logicality of the work and corrodes the ecosystem that Hrabal's text forms with the materials from which it was appropriated. One approach that was not investigated by the translator was the imitation of the authorial method that can be considered an experimental form of translation, or, as Douglas Robinson more boldly proposes for all literary translation, a creation of a translation as a specimen

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