

presumptions of those who would claim to pull back the curtain to reveal what was really going on in Serbia during this time, Živković takes conspiracy theories as both object of study and analytic frame. He challenges the reader to consider whether conspiracy theories, “notwithstanding their cognitive ‘garbledness,’ and perhaps precisely in virtue of this ‘garbledness,’ aspire to a certain ‘poetic truth’” (232).

This strategy fits well with Živković notion of the dream as a productive analytic framework for Serbia under Milošević. He argues that “Dreams are . . . epistemological machines for modeling all sorts of different worlds, self-sealing paradigms, epistemes, or frames, as well as traffic between them” (8). In inviting the reader to constantly “jump frames” and “see the material . . . as a repository of dialogically entwined stories, as intertextually linked genres of speech, and, finally as a sort of national dreamwork” (8), the author positions the reader within the field of knowledge production itself. The result is a prism-like effect in which familiar details are refracted into complex, interweaving, and even contradictory social and discursive patterns. The complexity of this dreamscape makes it difficult to see where ideology ends and critique begins. In other words, the dream-as-analytic performs the very problem at the heart of Milošević-era politics in Serbia.

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*Debating the Past: Modern Bulgarian History from Stambolov to Zhivkov.* By Roumen Daskalov. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2011. vi, 370 pp. Notes. Bibliography. \$55.00, hard bound.

In this work Roumen Daskalov examines the historical debates concerning four important issues of Bulgarian history: whether the authoritarian rule of Stefan Stambolov was Russophobe, the class nature of the peasant revolution and government of Aleksandar Stamboliiski, the nature of “fascism” in 1930s Bulgaria, and Bulgarian society from 1944 to 1989 during the rule of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP), particularly under Todor Zhivkov. Daskalov naturally concentrates on Bulgarian historians and authors, but he also occasionally refers to foreign scholars. He does not examine the important question of Macedonia (Are the Macedonians Bulgarians or a separate nationality?) except for brief comments, “because there was hardly debate between the national[ist] Bulgarian historians on the issue” (1). Daskalov also includes a supplementary chapter on his personal views of the various schools and theories of history and how they apply to Bulgarian historians in the precommunist, communist, and postcommunist eras. Although he examines various sides of the debates, he clearly has an anticommunist and pro-monarchist point of view.

The debates over Stambolov, Stamboliiski, and Zhivkov extend back to the eras of their rule. The arguments about the three leaders share certain similarities. Were they dictatorial, authoritarian, or nationalistic and to what extent? For Stambolov, whose policies were designated Russophobe by his enemies, the “Russophile” party, Bulgarian revisionist historians writing both during and after the communist period attempted to resurrect his reputation by portraying him as a Bulgarian nationalist. Of Stamboliiski, Daskalov explores whether his Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU) government was truly democratic and truly revolutionary. During the communist period, the government officially emphasized the Agrarian leader’s cooperation with the BKP. In the postcommunist period, historians wrote of the conflicts between the BANU and the BKP. For Zhivkov the question was how did this politically wily but unimpressive leader maintain power for so long in the face of changes coming from Moscow and in the Balkans.

Aside from his examination of the views of older historians in the debate over Stambolov and Stamboliiski, Daskalov focuses primarily on historians of the communist era. He emphasizes how their views evolved, both during the era as well as after the fall of communism in 1989, paying particular attention to the move from an overtly pro-Soviet, indeed

a pro-Stalinist, orientation in the early days of communist rule, to a more nationalistic orientation after the 1956 April Plenum of the Central Committee introducing changes reflecting the thaw in the USSR. Daskalov especially examines the views of the noted historians Ilcho Dimitrov, the former minister of education, and the flamboyant popular Nikolai Genchev, who ventured into controversial revisionist grounds sometimes at risk to their own personal careers.

The greatest merit of the work is its summary and analysis of Bulgarian historiography in these important areas, although the book suffers from the lack of an index (apparently its omission was an error). Scholars of the Balkans and eastern Europe will indeed be pleased to have this useful tool for a survey of the research in Bulgarian history. Daskalov's study does contain one major flaw, however. He does not examine one of the most important issues that has consumed post-World War II Bulgaria reaching beyond the narrow interest of the specialists, namely King Boris III's role in protecting the Bulgarian Jewish community from the horrors of the Holocaust. Instead, while mentioning the events in his discussion of fascism and giving proper credit to Dimitar Peshev, the vice president of the Bulgarian parliament, he makes the outrageous claim that the king "was the truly decisive factor" working "behind the scenes" (167). Although Daskalov carefully documents all other books and remarks cited and, in fact provides extensive commentary in his footnotes, for his claim about King Boris he simply lists Peshev's published memoirs, which concern the representative's well-known protest and do not contain a single reference to the king. In fact, while Boris supervised all other aspects of Bulgaria's wartime policies holding regular meetings with "the four," the chief cabinet ministers, all available evidence indicates that he deliberately avoided interfering in the government's Jewish policies until April 1943, a month after the critical days for the Bulgarian Jews. Because of this, the monarch was complicit in the deportation of the Greek and Yugoslav Jews under Bulgarian control to the death camps of Poland and in their murder there.

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*A Little-Known Story about a Movement, a Magazine, and the Computer's Arrival in Art: New Tendencies and Bit International, 1961–1973.* Ed. Margit Rosen, in collaboration with Peter Weibel, Darko Fritz, and Marija Gattin. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2011. 576 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Chronology. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. Tables. \$49.95, paper.

This work documents a vibrant, yet short-lived and barely known, artistic movement called the New Tendencies, which was born in 1961 in Zagreb. The movement rapidly spread worldwide and established a reputation as the first international computer art avant-garde. It consisted of a network of hundreds of artists, critics, and scientists who organized exhibitions, symposia, and conferences to explore the potential of new computer technology in making art and in advancing various forms of "visual research." In 1968, several of the movement's leaders launched an influential, multilingual magazine, *Bit International*, which provided an additional platform for international exchanges on the aesthetics and scientific applications of computers.

Edited by Margit Rosen, curator and researcher at ZKM, Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, Germany, in collaboration with other experts in computer art, Peter Weibel, Darko Fritz, and Marija Gattin, this book painstakingly documents the development of the New Tendencies in four key essays written by this team of writers and editors. It is supplemented by an astonishing collection of documents—from translated letters and audiotapes, notes, artists' manifestos, minutes of meetings, and essays from *Bit International* to rich photographic documentation of individual works of art, group exhibitions, and gatherings of artists. This encyclopedic work focuses on the period from 1961 to 1973, when the Contemporary Art Gallery (today's Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb) organized five New Tendencies exhibitions and shows in France, Italy, and Germany that launched the movement into international visibility.