to govern Dunaújváros until Viktor Orbán's landslide victory in 2010. The "politics" of the book's title are limited to the Foucauldian notion of *heterotopia*, which becomes prominent in the final chapters. The documentation of recent instability in status dynamics has more depth than the discussion of the socialist decades. However, even here Fehérváry relies more heavily on media representations—TV series such as *Szomszédok* (Neighbors, 1987–99), newspaper horoscopes, and, above all, the glossy magazine *Lakáskultúra* (translated by the author as "Home Furnishings")—than on ethnography or even interviews.

Fehérváry tends to attribute to all Hungarians the moral project of the tiny dissident intelligentsia of the 1980s, for whom *home* meant refuge from the repressive state and iron-curtain gray was the dominant qualisign. But this was hardly universal and a more nuanced approach is called for. If the ethnographer had difficulty in getting people to talk to her openly (as she hints), she could have engaged with popular memories of the socialist decades via a large literature. Although she notes the problems faced by many lower-class Hungarians in the postsocialist years, her sophisticated account of the materialities of the nouveaux riches and those who aspired to raise their status under socialism comes out as partial and dehumanizing—as cold as the neoliberal world she describes, the one which her middle-class subjects ostensibly struggle to transcend. At times, the author ends up replicating stereotypes of the Cold War era (and Kornai's negative political economy) in a theoretical mode of cultural studies.

CHRIS HANN
Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany

The Tamburitza Tradition: From the Balkans to the American Midwest. By Richard March. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013. xvii, 305 pp. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. $34.95, paper.

Musical instruments are resonant objects in more than the direct and obvious sense. Several years ago, in Montenegro, I hesitated when someone offered to sell me a *gusle*. This instrument, so closely welded to the image of the legendary heroes of a distant South Slav past, seemed somehow tarnished by its association with the political pursuits of Pale in the early 1990s. At the time it seemed emblematic of a darker side of Serbian history. Of course, emblems distort as they depict; they are nothing if not reductive. But it was nonetheless hard to expel the association. Compare the tamburitza, whose symbolic resonance is as light as the gusle's is dark: all (Illyrian) peace and harmony. It is a distortion in the other direction, but it goes without saying that it plays well with Croatian self-representations. To study the gusle and the tamburitza up close is to engage with the potency of musical instruments not just as agents of collective memory (something experienced) but also as symbols of collective identity (something assigned). Ultimately, it is to explore the space between the two.

Richard March focuses here on the tamburitza, and his book tells the story of its two epic journeys: from Anatolia to the Balkans, and from there to North America. The first of these, translating *tanbûr* to *tamburitza*, was the more transformative, but the extent of the transformation hardly really emerges here. As his subtitle might lead us to expect, March's account of this journey feels like a prelude to the main business of his book. And this is a pity, for there is a fascinating story to tell. Just how do we get from an instrument that provided the principal material ground for all major attempts to theorize *makam* to one that encoded Illyrian nationalist, and even socialist, ideals? I sense that March is not really in touch with relevant research in either Byzantine

https://doi.org/10.5612/slavicreview.73.3.662 Published online by Cambridge University Press

organology, by Nikos Maliaris, or Ottoman music history, by Walter Feldman. Even the wider political and religious contexts for this major cultural transfer—the Islamization of several parts of the western Balkans—are shaded in via outdated secondary literature.

The second journey, taking us to North American tamburitza combos, is more informatively documented, but we still need to ask how any study of this subject can possibly ignore Mirjana Laušević's pioneering book, *Balkan Fascination: Creating an Alternative Music Culture in America* (2007), so enlightening on the intersecting ideologies that lay behind the Balkan music and dance scenes of North America. Here the bibliographical lacuna becomes a veritable elephant in the room, for the depth of analysis provided by Laušević is precisely what is needed to ground and enrich March's colorful foreground descriptions. And they are indeed colorful. He writes about this subject with the lively immediacy and hands-on knowledge and expertise of an insider to both Croatian and North American practices, and he knows how to tell a good story with flair and imagination. His ethnography is genuinely valuable.

These are the positive aspects. But in the end this remains a frustrating book. Part of the problem lies in its unusual history: it was written mainly back in the 1970s, but it went into extended hibernation and was only recently revisited, dusted off, and updated. It still feels like a product of that earlier era. This is not in itself an adverse criticism, of course, but the chronology does carry certain penalties. The parts of the book that work well are the ethnographic excursions, the accounts of leading actors in the dramas, and the autobiographical vignettes. It is when March is in expository mode that he lets us down, relying more often than not on synthetic presentations of yesterday's scholarship. This goes for the potted social and political histories that form an ever-present backdrop to his narrative (admittedly, something of the sort was necessary, but informed readers will find themselves skimming these passages), but it also goes for the more specific musical commentaries.

I offer one example by way of conclusion. When March was writing this book in the 1970s it was no doubt natural to take Vlado Milošević as a reliable source of knowledge on *sevdalinka*, and perhaps it was easier then to ignore this distinguished musician's distorting agenda. It was while March's manuscript was in hibernation that important documentary and ethnographic studies were undertaken by Tamara Karača-Beljak and important discographical research by Risto Pekka Pennanen. A very different story about both the history and value of sevdalinka emerges from this later research, and that includes the role of its *saz* accompaniment. We do really need to be told about these things.

JIM SAMSON
Royal Holloway, University of London

A Portrait of the Artist as a Political Dissident: The Life and Work of Aleksandar Petrović. By Vlastimir Sudar. Bristol: Intellect Books; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. xvi, 366 pp. Notes. Filmography. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. $64.50, hard bound.

Judging simply by the number of volumes recently published on the various aspects of Yugoslavia—its culture, politics, and economy—it seems that the time is finally ripe for a reassessment of the country's meanings, achievements, and faults that is relatively free of the ideological revisionism prevalent in discussions of the subject since the mid-1980s. One such cool-headed reassessment is the new volume on the filmography of Aleksandar Petrović by Vlastimir Sudar. Although this well-written book is

https://doi.org/10.5612/slavicreview.73.3.662 Published online by Cambridge University Press