

5, in so far as partly humorous and sarcastic, spontaneous protest questioned the need for “progressive” leisure (225). The last chapter concludes with an analysis of how criticism of dominant sexual norms invaded left-wing collective reflection in the 1980s by means of which the relationship between sexuality, gender, and leisure could slowly become redefined (252).

While the volume tends at times to present slightly too much detail on the very many and differently-profiled youth organizations and overwhelms the reader with too many acronyms, the author offers a very unconventional insight into the complex power struggles over and among the Greek youth. He masterfully switches between the institutional perspective of the former youth organizations, speaking through an extensive body of written sources, and the perspectives of their formerly young members, voiced through over 50 oral testimonies, recorded in Athens and Thessaloniki. At times, it would have been valuable to introduce a bit more biographical background as well as longer narrations of the interviewees to get a better grasp of the biographical origins of their political orientation and leisure activities. Yet, only due to the author’s ambitious attempt to interweave normative-collective discourses with narrations of individual experiences does the reader slowly comprehend how “leisure pursuits” could turn into “a ‘serious fun,’” that is, an individual yet collective experience of leisure and pleasure in post-dictatorial Greece (278).

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Meanings of Jazz in State Socialism. Ed. Gertrud Pickhan and Rüdiger Ritter. Frankfurt am Mein: Peter Lang, 2016. 227 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Tables. \$60.95, hard bound.

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This is the fourth volume in the “Jazz under State Socialism” series edited by Gertrud Pickhan and Rüdiger Ritter and published by Peter Lang. It consists of two theoretical chapters and seven articles dealing with specific countries (Poland, GDR, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union).

“Jazz has never been just music” is the book’s memorable opening sentence, and it conveys the authors’ ambition: to explore the various dimensions of jazz as an aesthetic, cultural, social and political phenomenon, and to examine the multifaceted significances it acquired under state socialism. In their introduction, the editors offer a general analysis of the impact of jazz as a distinct musical idiom: “For admirers, jazz represented freedom” (7), whereas among its opponents, it elicited relentless hostility because it was “associated with sexuality” (7); it antagonized “intellectuals and composers active in the already established fields of music” (8); it “was seen as an American art form and a symbol of American dominance” (9); and it was “an aesthetic phenomenon” that deviated from established cultural norms (9). In the following chapter, Rüdiger Ritter describes the Cold War as the background against which jazz came to be perceived both as a domain of politicized cultural confrontations and also as an element of “cultural diplomacy” (in which, readers are reminded, Willis Conover was by far the most important participant). The bulk of the chapter is devoted to “the players” who shaped “the playing field of jazz” (17). The *authorities* never relinquished their determination to keep all artistic activities under firm control, but the strategies they deployed varied over time: periods when coercion was routinely used and punishments were meted out alternated with periods when efforts were made to placate and co-opt jazz fans. The *musicians* found

themselves in a hybrid situation: obviously, they disdained the cultural dogmas underpinning “socialist realism,” but they also had to constantly collaborate with the communist establishment on which their careers depended. The *listeners* constituted an “imagined community” that embraced Conover’s broadcasts as “part of their habitus” (34) and cultivated “the feeling of belonging” to “a global network” (35). While not ipso facto a dissident activity, the listening of jazz music was invariably linked to the effort to create “spaces of freedom which were beyond any kind of control” (36) and therefore contained an element of defiance in the face of a reigning ideological orthodoxy.

The two introductory chapters are informative, but the quality of the case studies that follow is uneven. Most chapters contain historical narratives from which readers will learn a lot about the arrival of jazz music in Europe in the 1920s–1930s, the ongoing interactions between jazz subcultures and the official cultural institutions of Marxist regimes in the post-war period, the impact of the concert tours undertaken by famous American musicians, the launching of jazz festivals and clubs in the “second world,” and the tension-prone ways in which jazz coexisted with musical genres like classical music, Estrada and rock amidst evolving local musical landscapes. Particularly interesting are the detailed analyses of jazz magazines—such as *Jazz* in Poland (Chapter 4), the bulletin of the *Jazz Section* of Czechoslovakia (Chapter 7), and *Swing Club* in Soviet Estonia (Chapter 9), which demonstrate that interactions within the jazz community were characterized by intellectual vibrancy and fervor.

At the same time, many of the case studies leave much to be desired. One problem is the quality of the English language: the volume is badly edited and contains numerous confusing passages and clumsy phrases. In terms of content, there is considerable overlap between the chapters: several of them cover the same empirical ground (Conover’s radio program and Krzysztof Komeda’s career) without adding anything new. Important questions are asked but never answered (why, in 1956, did the GDR communist authorities decide to put jazz activists on trial whereas their counterparts in Poland opted to launch an international jazz festival?). Finally, the authors seldom deal with the music itself. While it is true that jazz is not “just music,” it is first and foremost a musical idiom, and readers who approach this book with the expectation that they will find in it ample information about genres, musicians, recordings, discographies, and performances will be disappointed.

But perhaps the most troubling aspect of the case studies is that they rarely offer insights into the political meaning of jazz in state socialism. All authors agree that jazz had a political dimension, but their efforts to illuminate it yield results that are either trivial (the repeated observation that the relationship between jazz and politics was “complex”), or perplexing (as in the chapter on Hungary, where the dubious statement that “jazz lacked direct political significance” [114], is followed by the baffling claim that “the mythology of jazz” presents this music as grounded in “democratic values and socialist ideals” [115], and the puzzling contention that “modern jazz . . . embraces . . . the leftist critique of society” [123]).

The best case study is Peter Motička’s chapter on Czechoslovakia. It focuses on the destruction of the Jazz Section of the Czechoslovak Musicians’ Union in the mid-1980s and reminds us that many jazz activists—like Tomáš Petřivý, Josef Kupka, Miloš Drda, and Pavel Wonka—lost their lives when a vicious attack on the subculture to which they belonged was unleashed. One of Motička’s respondents points out that “Under the Bolshevik regime everything was ultimately politics” (167), which means that, “the complexity” of the jazz-politics nexus notwithstanding, the realities of state socialism were such that at any point in time the jazz community could be assaulted by the one-party dictatorship it lived under. As Motička demonstrates, jazz may have had many meanings under state socialism, but an essential truth about it

was that people who loved this music found themselves in a precarious situation and were routinely made to suffer.

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Partisans in Yugoslavia: Literature, Film and Visual Culture. Ed. Miranda Jakiša and Nikica Gilić. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2015. 382 pp. Bibliography. Illustrations. Photographs. €34.99, paper.
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The people living in the Yugoslav Successor States today show an intensely strong interest in Yugoslav-era artistic production about the Yugoslav Partisan resistance during World War II. At almost 400 pages and with fifteen chapters, this volume provides a fine scholarly companion to this popular interest by offering a multi-sided critical insight into the vast Yugoslav and some post-Yugoslav Partisan-themed art—literature, visual arts, and above all films, particularly those with a record number of viewers.

In her effective Introduction, Miranda Jakiša writes that, far from being just a convenient founding “myth” of socialist Yugoslavia, World War II “was the crude reality and experience of the people living on Yugoslav territory between 1941 and 1945” (15). Atrocities and policies by occupying fascist forces and domestic collaborators, such as those ordering the summary execution of fifty to a hundred civilians for each German soldier killed, turned large numbers of Yugoslavs into Partisans. “By the end of war,” Gal Kirn notes, “there were more than 800,000 Partisans organized in four Yugoslav armies, which made it the largest resistance movement” in all of Europe (205).

Although the title puts literature in first place, the volume deals mostly with cinematic production. The officially promoted view of the post- and anti-Yugoslav era has reduced the whole Partisan film genre with its over 200 films to a straightforward tool of simplification and glorification of the World War II Partisan struggle in the service of the post-war socialist state ideology. However, as Ivan Velisavljević puts it, the “‘mainstream’ partisan films are wrongly viewed only as coherent works made to support dominant narratives of the Communist Party” (266). This approach neglects these films’ complexities as well as their aesthetic form and that form’s own immanent ways of functioning. Therefore, aside from including chapters that focus on genealogies, genre characteristics, or gender issues in Yugoslav Partisan films, this volume gives much space to discussing a number of films—or individual films’ aspects—that refute this dominant view. Within even supposedly the most ideologically monochromatic works, by paying close attention to the film language of specific scenes—for instance, Velisavljević’s enlightening chapter on disability and typhus sufferers in Partisan films foregrounds the inclusion—the irreducible suffering, death, and oblivion are not mitigated or diminished by any final victory.

Of fifteen chapters, four deal with literature. This imbalance may be due to the fact that film had broader audiences and thus a more widespread popular influence on the politics of memory in socialist Yugoslavia. Yet, it is a pity that there is no discussion of some of the Partisan literature that belongs to the best and most beloved writings of the Yugoslav period, such as Mihailo Lalić’s novel *The Wailing Mountain* or the novels of Branko Ćopić. Readers less familiar with the field would also have appreciated more space dedicated to major Partisan films such as Veljko Bulajić’s *Kozara* and *The Battle of Neretva* or Stipe Delić’s *The Battle of Sutjeska*. Repeatedly