

Zitierhinweis

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Miomir GATALOVIĆ, Darovana sloboda. Partija i kultura u Srbiji 1952–1958 [Geborgte Freiheit. Partei und Kultur in Serbien 1952–1958]. Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju 2010. 350 S., Abb., ISBN 978-86-7403-145-2, RSD 2 000,–

The cultural policy of socialist Yugoslavia is not a new topic in Serbian and other post-Yugoslav historiographies. The topic, however, is far from being exhausted. In terms of both the chronological scope and the depth of this research, much remains to be done. The young Belgrade scholar Miomir Gatalović has made an important contribution to the field with his book on the development of culture in Tito's Yugoslavia during the 1950s. Although Gatalović focuses only on Serbia, similar cultural policy trends could be observed in other Yugoslav republics at the time and the author never loses sight of this broader context. Chronologically, he continues the research that his professor, Ljubodrag Dimić, started some twenty years ago.

Gatalović's book comprises a foreword, an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. It also has a summary in English, a collection of photos, a list of sources, a bibliography and an index of names. The foreword (9–13) acquaints the reader with the contents of the book and the sources that were used to write it. The Introduction (15–40) deals briefly with the period preceding the one explored in the rest of the book. It describes the first application of the Soviet cultural model on the "Serbian reality" (as the author puts it). Next, it narrates how Yugoslavia turned away from the Soviet model after Tito's split with Stalin in 1948. Although the immediate post-war period is comparatively well researched in both Serbian and other ex-Yugoslav historiographies, Gatalović does not quote from or comment on most of those works. Instead, he satisfies himself with his own brief account of Serbia's cultural policy during the first post-WWII years.

The first chapter (41–126) entitled "The cultural takeoff of Socialist Democracy in Serbia 1952–1953" deals first with the cultural infrastructure that was put in place in Serbia during the early 1950s. It treats both the ideological framework in which culture was developing, and also its material basis. The chapter is rich in statistical data about cultural institutions and their activities in this period. It describes how western influence became inevitable after Yugoslavia turned to the West for help in her clash with Stalin, but it also details the measures taken by the Communist government to mitigate this western influence and keep the population under its own ideological control.

In the second part of chapter one, Gatalović acquaints the reader with the main results of two important events that ushered in an era of more liberal cultural policy. The first was the Third Congress of Writers. It was not quite separated from the second event, the Sixth Party Congress. The author continues the chapter by describing in great detail the cultural events that followed the two congresses. He also explains the founding and the workings of cultural institutions. The facts that he adduces support the idea that cultural development was quite active at the time. The policy of sending students abroad is also examined within this context. Finally, the last part of that chapter relates the Communist elite's first doubts and critical assessments of the cultural policy agreed upon at the Sixth Congress. Due to the diversity of topics covered, one gets the impression that it would have been better if the author had divided this long chapter into several shorter ones.

The second chapter (127–198) is equally long. Its title is, “Fear of Retrograde Tendencies of the Party Cultural Policy in Serbia 1954–1955”. It deals with the backlash feared by the government following Đilas’s apostasy. As is widely known, Đilas’s case was an attempt to criticize deformations in Yugoslav socialism and to appeal for democratization. The author describes the case and the conservative reaction that threatened to narrow once again the recently expanded contours of cultural freedom. Luckily, the Third Congress of the Union of the Communists of Serbia precluded such tendencies. Most instrumental was Edvard Kardelj, the chief Party ideologue after the fall of Đilas. Like the previous chapter, this one contains a detailed survey of cultural events in Serbia. Most of the action described here took place in Belgrade. The author, however, does address neither this Belgrade-centricism nor its consequences for Serbia’s cultural development more generally.

Considerable attention is devoted also to the creation of the official “Serbo-Croat” language. Even though it was sold as the final result of a century’s worth of endeavors of Serbian and Croatian linguists and literati, the language was in actuality the fruit of the political need to bring Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians closer to each other. In a similar way, the division of writers into “modernists” and “traditionalists” also had to do with the political and ideological groups that supported them within the Party. The author records an upswing of cultural life and of exchange with the outside world beginning in 1955.

The last chapter (199–304), “Dispelling Dreams of Broader Freedom of Culture in Serbia 1956–1958”, deals with politically turbulent years that left a special mark on cultural development, too. The important facts of foreign policy that influenced culture in this period were the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR in February 1956 and the Hungarian revolt in the fall of that year. Whereas the first event augured improved bilateral relations with the USSR and increased cultural freedoms in Yugoslavia and Serbia, the second one brought Yugoslavia back into conflict with the Soviet Union. However, the cooling of the relations with the “first country of socialism” did not stop the liberal trend in Yugoslav cultural policy. This is made plain by the remainder of this chapter, which, like the previous two, pursues in detail both events in culture and decisions made on the political level. Until the end of the period in question, the liberalizing tendencies of cultural policy were not endangered. The course that had been taken out of political necessity in the early fifties would not and could not be changed.

The Conclusion (304–311) summarizes the main results of the book, which are often hidden behind a forest of details and facts. In that respect, Gatalović’s book bears resemblance to the old-fashioned socialist historiography, which indulged in lists of names, dates, events and other details. On the other hand, the book is also more “modern” in a transitional but already obsolete way. Throughout the text, traces of Serbian nationalism pop up and the author’s anti-communism is all too obvious and clearly out of place. The chapters are too long, though they could easily have been cut into shorter and handier topical chapters with some rearrangement of the materials. Despite these shortcomings, however, this is a very good and valuable book. Even the lavish outlays of data could be of use to some future researchers. Keeping in mind the author’s age (he was born in 1981), it could even be said that this book is excellent. It certainly has given us a comprehensive study of cultural policy in Serbia during the 1950s. It is to be hoped that the same author, or someone else,

will soon continue the research in this field and cover the remaining decades of socialism. Similar studies of other ex-Yugoslav republics would also be desirable, as these have appeared only sporadically so far.

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„1968“ in Jugoslawien: Studentenproteste und kulturelle Avantgarde zwischen 1960 und 1975. Gespräche und Dokumente. Hgg. Boris KANZLEITER/Krunoslav STOJAKOVIĆ. Bonn: Dietz 2008 (Archiv für Sozialgeschichte, 26). 352 S., ISBN 978-3-8012-4179-7, € 38,-

Die Studierendenproteste, aber auch die kulturelle Avantgarde um das Jahr 1968 im sozialistischen Jugoslawien waren lange Zeit von der internationalen und (post)jugoslawischen Forschung vernachlässigte Themen. Im Zuge des 40-jährigen Jubiläums von 1968 legten die Herausgeber Boris Kanzleiter und Krunoslav Stojaković einen längst überfälligen Quellenband vor, der beide Themen abdeckt. Das Konzept der Herausgeber ist insofern aufgegangen, als sich die Dokumente zu den politischen Protesten und zur Kultur der 1968er hervorragend ergänzen.

Der Band besteht aus drei Hauptteilen: einer historischen Einführung durch die Herausgeber, 17 Gesprächen der Herausgeber (einzeln oder gemeinsam) mit den zeitgenössischen Protagonistinnen und Protagonisten, und 57 mit kurzen Einleitungen versehenen Dokumenten aus den Jahren 1958 bis 1974. Die Gespräche vermitteln einen plastischen Eindruck der damaligen Atmosphäre und Ereignisse; sie decken aber auch Zusammenhänge auf, die aus den schriftlichen Dokumenten nicht ersichtlich werden. Hierbei handelt es sich überwiegend um publiziertes Quellenmaterial aus Zeitschriften, womit jedoch Schlüsseltexte zu verschiedenen Themenfeldern – teilweise erstmals in deutscher Sprache – zusammengetragen wurden. Ein Abbildungsteil (175–184) illustriert die bewegten Monate in der jugoslawischen Hauptstadt Belgrad. Abgerundet wird der Band von einer thematisch gegliederten Auswahlbibliographie, die – wohl dem dürftigen Forschungsstand geschuldet – mit nur zweieinhalb Seiten sehr knapp ausfällt. Ein Namensregister wäre wünschenswert gewesen; ein professionelles Lektorat hätte dem Band nicht geschadet. An einigen Stellen hätten geschlechtsneutralere Begriffe gewählt werden können (z. B. „Studierendenprotest“ anstelle von „Studentenprotest“).

In der historischen Einführung lokalisieren die Herausgeber die jugoslawischen Studierendenproteste im internationalen Kontext der 1968er Bewegung. In einer Reverenz an die im Mai 1968 von den Studierenden in „Karl-Marx-Universität“ umbenannte Universität in Frankfurt, proklamierten die streikenden Belgrader Studierenden im Juni 1968 die „Rote Universität Karl Marx“. Auch wenn es im Anschluss zu Studierendenprotesten in Ljubljana, Zagreb und Sarajevo kam, stellte die Besetzung der Universität im Zentrum von Belgrad den Kern der Ereignisse dar – diese Einschätzung wird dem Rezipierenden zumindest