

BOOK REVIEWS

Gille, Zsuzsa. 2007. *From the Cult of Waste to the Trash Heap of History: The Politics of Waste in Socialist and Post-socialist Hungary*. Indiana: Indiana University Press. 250 pp. Hb.: \$45.00. ISBN: 0253348382.

Gille's book is a fascinating analysis of environmental policies and the politics of waste, as well a study of socialism through its relationships with what is usually considered as a by-product of production and/or consumption. She starts with questioning stereotypical Western assumptions of socialism as a 'wasteful' system and proceeds towards a social theory of waste – an issue that is not often on the agenda of the academics. Gille introduces a concept of 'waste regimes', of the ways different societies struggle with waste's liminality (spatial and conceptual position between different classifications), hybridity (mutually constitutive process of materiality of waste and its social aspects) and temporality (different ways of tampering with time).

Armed with this conceptual framework, Gille continues with her analysis of socialism and its waste production, management and disposal. She is in her forte when analysing the period of early socialism (1945–1974) when 'waste' was considered as an important industrial resource because of the shortages inherited from the war, and those inherent in a socialist economic system that also imposed very strict production plans and consequences for those who did not fulfil them. Consequently, 'waste' had become a cause for massive collection movements and an area of intensive political battles.

In this period, it was believed that all 'waste' was akin to malleable metals like iron and steel which could be reused all over again. This understanding corresponded to the notion of the socialist 'New man' as strong, yet perpetually malleable. Among other consequences, like hoarding of such waste on factories' yards, such an understanding prevented finding a more suitable solution for intangible types of waste; for example, that from the chemical industry, which employed better educated and ideologically less reliable management.

Gille loses some of her passion when describing the next two periods of material culture of waste. The next phase, between 1975 and 1984, was a shift from accumulating and dumping metal waste to reducing it. The main metaphor had become chemical waste, also because the consequences of storing chemical waste without proper disposal had become evident, and because of the cultural shift from production – the body which participated in the industrial production – to consumption, the body which consumed industrial products and by-products, for example toxic fumes.

Gille places the last phase from 1985 onwards. The main feature of this is overarching influence of the neo-liberal paradigm, also discernible in EU policy and expansion plans towards Eastern Europe. On one hand, to change production process to become less wasteful was considered as an unacceptable attempt to intervene in the autonomy of economic actors on the market, while on the other hand this would also challenge the flourishing international incineration industry. Gille therefore concludes by challenging not only the starting premise about the inherent wastefulness of socialism, but also convincingly argues that late socialist preventative environmental policies had been abandoned because of ideological reasons, the adherence to neo-liberalism.

Gille's work has several weaknesses. For example, she claims that the main method employed in this study was ethnography, but that as a sociologist she had a less sanctified view of this particular approach. Indeed, as her methods were primarily documentary and policy analyses combined with in-depth interviewing rather than (participant) observations, it would be useful if she explained why she calls this particular approach 'ethnography'. This is because participant observation is equated with ethnography only in a narrow sense, and many of us anthropologists use a multitude of methods besides (participant) observation. She also makes very limited use of anthropological theory.

Gille herself successfully traces the changes in what Hungarian society considered as 'waste' and which type of 'waste' was seen as 'useful' or 'harmful'. While her argument on the embeddedness of 'waste' into moral discourse is fascinating, she does not pay enough attention to the positive understandings of 'waste', even though she does mention and hint at them. The reviewer suggests that the tension between the positive and negative understandings of 'waste' is discernible in her use of the terms 'waste' and 'by-product' in which 'waste' tends to be associated with negative meanings, while 'by-products' have more positive associations, but this area is currently seriously under-researched. Nevertheless, Gille's study of (ideological) changes in socialist Hungary through the study of 'waste' is innovative and fascinating, and reading this book certainly is no waste of time.

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Hallam, Elizabeth and Tim Ingold (eds.). 2007. *Creativity and Cultural Improvisation*. Oxford, New York: Berg (ASA Monographs 44). 327 pp. Pb.: \$34.95. ISBN: 9781845205270.

'There is no script for social and cultural life. People have to work it out as they go along' (p. 1) are the introductory words to the volume *Creativity and Cultural Improvisation*, an outcome of the Conference of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth, held at King's College in Aberdeen, in April 2005. The book is edited by Elizabeth Hallam and Tim Ingold, both working at the Department of Anthropology at the University of Aberdeen. It consists of fifteen essays divided into a *preface*, four thematic parts or sections and an *epilogue*. The *preface* consists of two essays: an introduction to the theme from the editors and an opening article on social improvisation with the title *Improvisation and the Art of Making Things Stick*. Both are excellent and reader friendly theoretical introductory to both concepts on a more general level. Four thematic sections, on modes of creativity in life and art, on creative appropriations connected to institutional contexts, on creativity and improvisation in the temporal aspect (the passage of time in history, tradition and the life-course) and the fourth on creativity of the anthropological scholarship, are the core of this book. Each of four sections has its own introduction, followed by three diverse, yet closely linked essays. Some of them are illustrated well.

Creativity and Cultural Improvisation brings forward fresh views on social and cultural sites of creativity. The main idea of the book is that improvisation and creativity are 'intrinsic to the very processes of social and cultural life' (p. 19). By emphasizing the collaborative and political dimensions of creativity, the contributors challenge the idea 'that the capacity for creative improvisation is exercised by individuals against the convention of culture and society' (p. 19). They explore the ways in which creative agency and improvisational action emerge in art, politics, narrative, commercial industry, media, and in the practice of anthropology. Fifteen chapters present also a variety of ethnographic research conducted in diverse regions of the world: Asia, Western Europe, Africa and Oceania.

All chapters highlight the creative dynamics of cultural processes and focus on the creative processes that continually bring created objects into being, along with the persons in whose lives they are intertwined. The 'creativity explosion' in this book includes the issues of how form is generated from precedent in the case of pattern-drawing and calligraphic writing, exploring the relationships between repetition and deviation and between replication and variation. Further chapters are dealing with creativity in 'realm' of tradition and take under scrutiny oppositions as invention versus convention and innovation versus tradition. Many essays discuss processes of creativity in relation to definitions of personhood, patterns of ownership, sources of agency, and perception of authorship.

Creativity is also configured, narrated and reflected upon in discourse. Such a reflexive dimension of the process can be integral to performances, as one of the contributors tries to show. Further chapters deal with relations of power and authority as two important factors in determining what and who is considered to be creative. One of the

contributors deals with the issues of cross-cultural dynamics connected to creativity, whereby the stability of categories and the location of creativity are questioned. The essays in the fourth section of the book are especially concerned with improvisational quality and creativity of anthropological research and teaching.

Contributors emphasise the extent of production and reproduction of cultural forms, rather than the processes of replication and transmission. One of them argues that creativity is shaped by models of social being (pp. 25–38). Contributors claim that creativity is ‘better approached as socially embedded and culturally diffuse than as clearly defined act or bounded product’ (p. 20) and they use terms of fluidity and flows to describe these qualities of creativity. As they are moving away from the conventional portrayal of creativity as an ability of gifted individuals, they are clearly advocating the denaturalisation of creativity.

Another important feature of this volume on creativity is that contributors are not trying to give any answers to the question: What is creativity? With so many issues to deal with, they simply impose more questions and give the reader material to think about.

Each section, if not each essay, tackles the relationship between anthropology and creativity by reviewing the creativity and improvisational quality of anthropological study. Moreover, in the *epilogue*, Clara Mafra ‘creatively’ elaborates the discipline’s ‘mission’ in this world in the form of an imagined dialogue in which she takes up her own subject position as author and then responds with the words of a sceptical reader. Nevertheless, none of the contributors finds necessary to elaborate the place of the subject, i.e. creativity, inside anthropology or within the field of anthropology of art. An interdisciplinary approach would also bring forward different aspects and broad perception of the creativity and improvisation processes. Yet, this anthropological volume on creativity and cultural improvisation is an excellent, fresh and innovative work. Foremost, it is a warmly welcomed volume, since most of the recent literature on creativity is in the fields of business or organizational management and in education. There creativity is understood as the key to commercial success or as a tool for succeeding in a knowledge-based economy.

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Stef Jansen and Staffan Lövving (ed.). 2009. *Struggles for Home. Violence, Hope and the Movement of People*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn. 192 pp. Pb: \$70.00 / £35.00. ISBN: 9781845455231.

This volume focuses on the ambiguities that people face when struggling for a home while being on the move. It questions the notion of home as a territorially bounded place and argues that struggles for home involve competition over how places are linked to the hope to control one's life and to create a secure future.

The wide range of ethnographic case studies from various parts of the world, raging from Palestine (Tobias Kelly), Bosnia-Herzegovina (Stef Jansen), Cyprus (Peter Loizos), the Angolan-Zambian borderland (Michael Barrett), southern Spain (Swanie Potot), Sri Lanka (Sharika Thirnanagama) and Guatemala (Staffan Lövving), offers an important comparative contribution to the understanding of home making of people on the move and gives intimate accounts of the continuing struggles for home which people face after experiences of violence and displacement.

The introduction by Stef Jansen and Staffan Lövving does a good job of theoretically linking the concepts of movement, violence and homemaking – major issues of social anthropology in itself – and by creating an analytical frame that brings together the theoretical findings of the ethnographically rich chapters. In the postscript written by Finn Stepputat, these theoretical findings are again drawn together and discussed in order to stimulate future research. By empirically investigating the relationship between political discourses of localized belonging and the personal experiences of loss of home, the volume questions political and scholarly debates that assume that identity and place are essentially interlinked and that the best way of healing the wounds of war and expulsion is by enabling the return to the pre-war homes (or by creating similar territorialised belongings). In the contribution of Sharika Thirnanagama on the experience of violence and flight in Sri Lanka, for example, the author stresses that home is regarded as a peaceful place, giving security, but that this does not hold true when home is related to the home of the past, as this is linked to memories of violence.

The article by Peter Loizos, who focuses on Greek Cypriots who left their home village in 1974 following the forceful Turkish occupation of the northern part of the island, deals with the transformation of the notion of home over 30 years of exile in a chronological and generational perspective up to the failure of the UN peace plan to reunite the island. While the elder generation, who had lived a considerable part of their life in the place they had to leave, still suffered, they did not necessarily want to return to their home village, as they realized that their home could never be restored – in the sense of the network of social relations that made them feel home – but had been left in another time. The younger generation, in contrast, had even fewer aspirations to return 'home' and to take the risk of starting a new livelihood under politically insecure conditions. Theorizing on the interrelation of violence and conceptions of homemaking, the volume convincingly pleads for a broader notion of violence that includes not just bodily harm, but also structural violence, which can continue or even start after the end of war. This broad definition of violence allows examining forces such as new borders and legal regimes, liberalized

market mechanisms and territorial definitions of citizenship, which regulate the relation between people and places, and through which victims of physical violence can become new victims of discrimination and downgrading, which again restricts their capacity to establish a new home.

The illuminating chapter of Tobias Kelly, for example, focuses on return to Palestine on the example of Subhi, a young Palestinian man whose family has fled its home village in 1967 to Jordan when the Israeli army invaded the West Bank and who “returned” in the mid-1990s with a tourist visa. However, without legalizing his status and by being restricted in his movement by the newly established wall which divides the West Bank from Israel, his “return” did not mean security. Kelly writes that ‘people such as Subhi are caught in the often violent space in between, unable to feel secure in any given place, but too afraid to move on, as their sense of “being at home” or in “exile” is constantly made and unmade’ (p. 26).

Taking up the notion of the subjects’ limited capacity of home making, the article by Stef Jansen highlights the one-dimensionality of international intervention in facilitating return by stressing the reconstruction and repossession of private property, while the recreation of various other social and economic dimensions of life have remained largely disregarded. This international approach to return shaped the relation of refugees to their homes and limited their capacity to build a livelihood in their former homes.

Staffan Löfving, who deals in his contribution with the experiences of violence and notions of home in Central America, stresses that while state violence could be restricted in the Guatemalan peace process in the 1990s, liberalisation of the economic sphere made citizens less powerful to influence and control this sphere so that they were exposed to greater inequality and exploitation. Illegal emigration was often the only way to regain capacity over one’s own life and secure the family ‘back home’.

The volume *Struggles for Home* shows, with sophistication, the process in which people who have been disembedded and distanced from their acquaintances and localized homes use their capacities to re-embed themselves in social relations and to create a place in which they feel safe and secure. However, it also shows that these capacities are unequally distributed, based on legal and economic power relations. The authors of this volume, therefore, appeal for investigating the way in which these power relations obstruct the capacities of home making or foster them – an approach which should find entry not only in further ethnographic research, but also in political situations.

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Ježernik, Božidar, Rajko Muršič and Alenka Bartulovič (eds.). 2007. *Europe and its Other: Notes on the Balkans*. Ljubljana: Zupaničeva knjižnica. 226 pp. Pb.: 16.00 EUR. ISBN: 9789612372940.

The violent dissolution of Yugoslavia resulted in an onslaught of scholarly and not-so-scholarly accounts of the causes and repercussions of the once venerated country's gruesome demise. Notoriously, works such as journalist Robert Kaplan's 1993 *Balkan Ghosts* popularised a crude notion of ancient ethnic hatreds as the ultimate explanation of the Yugoslav wars. As the 'ancient hatreds' hypothesis gained credence in American and Western European analyses of the conflicts, old stereotypes of Balkan incivility were resuscitated and they converged with a new multiculturalist agitation against intolerance to doubly other Yugoslavia and the Balkans writ large as the antithesis of the emergent post-Cold War era. Uncivil and intolerant, the image of the Balkans that arose at this time became the perfect foil for an 'integrating Europe'.

In opposition to such depictions of the Balkans, a seeming cottage industry developed that produced analyses and critiques of 'Western' outsiders' (mis)representations of the region across various historical moments. Informed by postcolonial and poststructuralist theory, especially Said's *Orientalism*, this movement was, significantly, spearheaded by scholars from the region. The works to mention here are numerous, but noteworthy among them are Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* (1997), Vesna Goldworthy's *Inventing Ruritania* (1998), Dušan Bjelić and Obrad Savić's edited collection *Balkan as Metaphor* (2002), Božidar Ježernik's *Wild Europe* (2004) and Andrew Hammond's *The Debated Lands* (2007) in addition to earlier, seminal articles by Milica Bakič-Hayden (occasionally with Robert Hayden).

Europe and its Other: Notes on the Balkans, a collection of diverse essays, falls squarely among this lineage of scholarship. As presented in Rajko Muršič and Božidar Ježernik's introduction, the volume is focused on exploding European stereotypes of the Balkans while also documenting these stereotypes' role in various European self-understandings. Many of the contributions to this edited collection succeed in doing just this, whether focusing on post-Yugoslav developments, uncovering untold or marginalised Balkan histories or comparing Yugoslavia to other European contexts. For example, several essays undo simplistic equations of ethnicity with a cultural or religious ideology and foreground how ethnic reductionism is contested in a variety of Balkan contexts. Thus, Alenka Bartulovič's contribution, while making a broader theoretical argument about the fluidity of identity and the scholarly necessity of challenging totalizing concepts of nation and nationality, shows how the figure of Bruce Lee arose in post-war Bosnia as a powerful symbol of shared history and popular culture inappropriable by nationalist logics.

Rajko Muršič's essay, in developing a quasi-Lacanian theory of stereotyping, also illustrates how youth in newly independent Slovenia embraced 'Balkan music', i.e. Yugoslav rock-and-roll, as both a pleasurable other and a political symbol against nationalist entrenchment associated with the older generation. In different ways, Frank Kressing's

chapter on Bektashism in Albania and Narcisa Ştiucă's chapter on Italian-Romanians also challenge totalizing conceptions of national identity by documenting intra-ethnic heterogeneity and its legacies. Risto Pekka Pennanen's piece on early gramophone recordings of popular music in Bosnia presents a fascinating glimpse into urban life and popular entertainment of a bygone era.

Another critical vein present in this collection counters claims of Balkan exceptionalism that are often used to other or exoticise the region. Bojan Baskar compares Hapsburg nostalgia in Friuli to Yugo-nostalgia, demonstrating that each significantly represents a commitment to supranational forms of identity. Petra Stefanović explores contemporary reactions to Franco in Spain and Tito in Slovenia, showing how both regimes produced sentiments of 'not quite' being European despite their leaders being remembered in contrasting fashions. Cathie Carmichael examines violence against religious groups in the Balkans, Anatolia, and Russia around the turn of the 20th century, arguing that, in each case, violence played a role in differentiating social groups in new contexts of state power and changing transnational economic dependencies.

Finally, the essays by Božidar Jezernik and Saša Nedeljković address how shifting valences attached to 'Europe' and 'the Balkans' have played out at moments in Balkan history. Jezernik illustrates how the drive to 'Europeanise' has long existed in the Balkans, motivating profound shifts in the built environment of the Balkan cities, although Jezernik argues that these practices nonetheless contributed to Western stereotypes of Balkan inferiority. Nedeljković analyses how Serbian reactions to the 1999 NATO bombings emerged through tropes of a Serbian spiritual essence contrasted to depictions of crass 'Western' inauthenticity and venality.

Taken individually, the contributions to this collection are often novel and insightful. However, the volume never coheres as a sustained, multi-party dialogue on the practice of othering the Balkans and its relation to the production of unmarked 'European' identities. Rather, from chapter to chapter, the scope and ambition of the research and argumentation varies wildly and, the already broadly defined rubrics of the collection are often strained. Thus, as a work that addresses stereotypes about the Balkans and their consequences for European self-understandings, the book stands in the long shadows cast by the many works on the topic mentioned above. However, the fact that this book still traffics in a paradigm centred on Orientalism or Balkanism raises an interesting question as to why this problem continues to attract so much intellectual energy within contemporary social scientific studies of ex-Yugoslavia and the Balkans. What present ideological and political work is done by foregrounding and yet again criticizing distorted depictions of the Balkans and their uptake in various political and social projects within and without the region?

As they tack between the deconstruction of orientalist stereotypes on the Balkans and studies of life-worlds that counter such stereotypes, the chapters of this collection each has a contribution to make. Individual chapters demonstrate how social actors struggle in and with the discursive space of the Balkans, rejecting, embracing, transforming, overcoming, and deploying notions of Balkan identity for different ends.

Other chapters show how alternative histories provide grounds for rethinking the Balkans. However, both the provocations and redundancies of this volume pose a deeper question: whither Balkan studies?

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Loizos, Peter. 2008. *Iron in the Soul. Displacement, Livelihood and Health in Cyprus*. Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books. 210 pp. Pb.: \$29.95 / £16.00. ISBN: 9781845454845.

Iron in the Soul is an important book on forced migration, presenting a unique long-term perspective on Cypriots who have been (internally) displaced for more than thirty years. Together with Loizos' two earlier monographs, *The Greek Gift: Politics in a Cypriot Village* (based on fieldwork carried out in 1968) and *The Heart Grown Bitter: A Chronicle of Cypriot War Refugees* (based on fieldwork conducted after the 1974 displacement), it provides deep insights into the lives of Greek Cypriot refugees over a time-span of forty years.

In this book, anthropologist Peter Loizos refines the overused and often vague concept of 'generations' in the field of forced migration by emphasizing the importance of age and social status, rather than the broad and unclear usage of 'first- and second-generation' refugees. At the heart of this book is a solid analysis of several intersecting themes: experiences of forced migration, the loss and the regaining of a livelihood and the consequences of displacement on the refugees' health. The book includes twelve chapters, three appendices, a gold-mine of a bibliography and a well-constructed index.

The larger framework against which the book is set is the relationships between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. In the second chapter, Loizos outlines the ambivalent relations between these two communities in the village of Argaki and in the whole of Cyprus. The short rhymes that Greek and Turkish Cypriot children chanted in the early 1960s in Morphou (p.18) and Loizos' subtle summary of Argaki Turkish Cypriot memories (pp. 23–24) are real ethnographic jewels. The next chapter describes the experiences of a handful of Argaki villagers as they fled from their village and the following difficult year. Next, the author discusses the considerable losses that two out of five Greek Cypriots suffered and offers a review of the Greek Cypriot economic recovery. Loizos focuses on how these refugees responded to their loss of property and livelihood with improvisation and hard work. The next short chapter outlines how Cypriots dealt with the division of their island, the repeatedly failing negotiations and the rise of the bi-communal movement. Chapter Six focuses on the refugees' visits to their former homes, as guests, when the checkpoints opened in April 2003. The ethnography in this chapter is exceptionally rich and captures very well the experiences of Cypriot refugees in those times of social upheaval. A good example is the story of how Turkish Cypriot Vasfié visited her former Greek Cypriot co-villager Thomas Diakou, who had undergone cardiac surgery (pp. 68–69).

Chapter Seven focuses on the 2004 referendum on the United Nation's reunification plan for Cyprus, which was rejected by seventy-five per cent of the Greek Cypriots and supported by sixty-five per cent of the Turkish Cypriots. The section where Loizos analyses how the Argaki refugees reacted to the so-called 'Annan Plan' is particularly insightful (pp. 91–93). Chapters Eight, Nine and Ten revolve around issues of health, ageing and refugeehood. Loizos makes a comparative study between refugees and non-refugees focusing on illness, both physical as well as mental. The focus on individuals

and how they coped emotionally with their displacement and its consequences (pp. 119–134) provides a very solid base for further research on this theme.

Chapter Eleven includes six extracts in which refugees talk themselves about their experiences. Their ‘own words’ come in the form of letters, a song and an excerpt from a book written by an Argaki refugee. Loizos concludes that two specific issues, the identity label *prosfyghas* (refugee) and the submerged sense of grievance, still mark the lives of Greek Cypriot refugees. However, Loizos adds that both this identity and the sense of grievance are covered over by the everyday routines and the concerns about the future.

What makes this book an ethnographic gem is the fact that Loizos can rely on data collected during a period of forty years. This produces an extraordinary ethnography and insights that can only be acquired when the ethnographer has established deep, trusting long-term relationships with his informants. One of his key informants is Sophia Paphitena, an Argaki baker, a refugee whose life we can follow throughout all of Loizos’ work. She is also the main character in one of his documentaries on Cyprus and who, in this book, appears in several chapters. The nineteen photographs included in the book, taken by the author, enliven the story of the Argaki refugees.

This book reads on different levels. It is rare to find a book that manages to engage several audiences, but Loizos skillfully blends scientific analysis with ethnographic story-telling. As a result, *Iron in the Soul* would appeal to well-informed academics from a range of disciplines. Also, and more importantly, Loizos’ vivid writing and his fine grained ethnography would be accessible to non-academic readers who wish to learn about forced migration, with the island of Cyprus as a case study. This is an important book and it is already an essential document for anybody who is in some way involved with Cyprus, the island’s recent history and its refugee predicament.

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Però, Davide. 2007. *Inclusionary Rhetoric Exclusionary Practices: Left-wing Politics and Migrants in Italy*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. ix+168pp. Hb.: \$70.00 / £35.00. ISBN: 9781845451578.

For much of its history, Italy has been a country characterised by considerable out-migration accompanied by substantial interregional movements, especially from the south to the north. Since the late 1980s, however, Italy has rapidly become a host country and the issue of foreign immigration has quickly become a hot-button of sociopolitical concern and debate. The mass media has played no small part in hyping the visibility of foreign migrants, despite their still relatively modest presence – by the mid-1990s immigrants made up only 1.5% of the total population (p. 28), rising to about 5% in 2008. Discourse surrounding immigration often reflects national anxieties toward foreign ‘others’, preoccupations over national unity, and a grappling with issues such as multiculturalism and integration. The European Union similarly wrestles with the social and political integration of immigrants, their access to social services, and impact on demographic dynamics and the labour market, as it strives to formulate a common strategy for all of its member countries despite profound national differences and local particularities.

David Però’s ethnographic study of left-wing organizations and institutions governing the political participation and integration of immigrants in Bologna provides a much needed examination of changing political rhetoric and practices at the local level. The originality of Però’s intervention lies in his endeavour to touch not only upon immigrant’s experiences per se, but – through a ‘thick’ analysis of socio-historical patterns and an extensive multi-sited project – to use immigration as a lens into the Left’s ideology and policy implementation. Framing his approach within the latter’s construction of immigration since the mid-1950s, Però argues that post socialism has seen a retreat from the class-based politics and struggle for socioeconomic equality inherent in Italian communist ideology of the 1950s and ‘60s. Today, the Left espouses identity-based politics, centring on ethnicity and cultural recognition.

The choice of Bologna as his primary location, a city famous for its leftist views and proud of its inclusionary and multicultural politics, allows Però to delve deeply into the complexities of past and present political constructions of migration. In doing so, Però discovers the profound disjuncture between the contemporary Left’s official discourse, or that of serious engagement with the life conditions of immigrants, recognition of cultural diversity, and socio-political rights, as well as, deeply rooted exclusionary practices towards foreign immigrants. In order to document the disparity between party rhetoric and actual political practices, Però adeptly weaves his ethnography with encounters and case studies drawn from a variety of political formations, ranging from the city council and housing authorities, civil committees and cooperatives, an NGO (for which he worked), and immigrants themselves. One blatant example of the Left’s failure to put into practice discourses of inclusion is that exemplified by Però’s description (ch. 5) of ‘temporary’ residential structures for immigrants set up in response to Bologna’s housing crisis. Rather than distribute such centres across the city, the structures were concentrated

according to specific ethno-cultural criteria, with migrants forced to live in abysmal conditions and subjected to chaotic management practices. Italians living in the surrounding area often hold false impressions of the centres and their inhabitants, while the latter have little contact with the outside world. To add to such marginalization, the migratory projects of the residents differ significantly, such that they have little desire to conform to the city's labelling of the centres as 'communities'. When the Left moves from an initial stance of paternalism and authoritarianism to one of 'self-management', conditions in the centres only worsen. The disillusionment among the Moroccan residents, documented by Però, reveals the profound mismatch between official party rhetoric and policy practices (p. 86). Però's overarching goal is to show the shift in leftist practices from a past of economic reductionism to a present of ethno-cultural reductionism, characterised by an official rhetoric that is not matched at the grassroots levels of practice and discourse.

The structure of the book begins with a clear theoretical nuancing of culturalist and materialist framings of migrants (Chapter One) followed by a historical backdrop to current migratory phenomenon (Chapter Two). Però then compares the ways the Italian Left of the 1960s constructed the meaning of internal migration (Chapter Three), as opposed to its present 'postsocialist' approach to foreign immigration (Chapter Four). Però also carefully incorporates and describes his 'transformative' methodological approach, which combines participant observation with action research through his employment with an NGO (described explicitly in ch. 8). His twofold goal of making his fieldwork and research useful to both academics and disadvantaged migrants is apparent throughout the book, from his work on housing issues (ch. 5), on politics aimed at fostering immigrant political participation (ch. 6), and on the practices of 'progressive' civil societal organizations (ch. 7). Però might also have raised the issue of the growing number of minors and the relatively new phenomenon of second generation immigrants in Italy, especially as this relates to immigrants' (limited) political participation. Indeed, the rapidly growing presence of the latter may potentially change the face of future Italian politics. Relatedly, as the number of 'ethnic'-Italians increases, the very notion of 'social citizenship' referred to in Left's party charter, may be remoulded to incorporate more nuanced notions of political participation and citizenship.

Inclusionary Rhetoric, Exclusionary Practices effectively begins a much needed conversation about the 'new' Left's construction of immigration, and more broadly the array of forces that have reshaped the Italian Left. Italy's struggle to fully integrate its foreign population and to benefit from the cultural variety and richness that immigrants bring to society raises a number of important questions. Will Italy opt for a multicultural laissez-faire approach? Will the future see more proactive integration policies, a 'mosaic' method, or a 'melting pot' approach? Will budding neo-assimilationist movements become increasingly consolidated? Però's work will doubtlessly be of interest not only to scholars of immigration and Europeanists but also to anyone concerned with shifting political ideologies, identity politics, and neoliberalism.

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Toplak, Kristina. 2008. 'Buenas artes'. *Ustvarjalnost Slovencev in njihovih potomcev v Buenos Airesu*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za slovensko izseljinstvo ZRC SAZU (Collection: Migracije). 220 pp. Pb.: 13.90 EUR. ISBN: 9789612540845.

In her doctoral thesis published as a book entitled *Buenas Artes. The Creativity of Slovenians and Their Descendants in Buenos Aires* Kristina Toplak has engaged with a topic derived from merging two different fields – migration and creativity. This intertwining represents the essence of this monograph and places her work among more interesting contributions towards migration studies in Slovenia. Although connecting migration and art is quite a new and innovative practice in the Slovenian research context, greater interest has been expressed abroad. According to the author, this can be observed on at least four levels: 'Displacement and exile have become 'fashionable' subjects in art; creative works have become a more important source in the migration process research and consequently researchers are more interested in the lives of the artists – migrants. Researchers in the humanities started to emphasize the meaning of qualitative, visual, literary and other sources in the migration studies' (p. 13).

An interesting selection of items related to the theme would not be adequate if it was not in concordance with or grounded on ethnographic research material. A close reading reveals the author's consistency in this sense – her analysis of the influence of the migration process on creativity unfolds itself through the study of five visual artists of Slovene origin living in Buenos Aires. Five stories presented in the book demonstrate a completely different perception of the migration experience (their own emigration or their parents' emigration from Slovenia) that are reflected in the diverse perceptions of their own creativity and public display of their artistic productions within and outside of their milieu.

Besides a methodological account on the research which took place between 2002 and 2006 in Argentina, Australia and Slovenia, Kristina Toplak presents some crucial theoretical concepts and analyzes some contemporary approaches in the research of migration and creativity in the introduction. Although her analysis of theoretical approaches that deal with migration can be considered relatively fragmentary, she demonstrates great accuracy in examining specific concepts and is also critical towards some contributions of previous authors.

The second chapter entitled *The history of political, social and cultural affairs in Argentina* deals with a short outline of Argentinean history, its past immigration politics and the development of modern visual art from the beginning of 20th century onward. Despite the importance of this chapter for understanding the Argentinean context in which the wartime and post-war generations of Slovenian emigrants settled, the author sometimes tends to be somewhat superficial when presenting numerous crucial events in the Argentinean history, citing scarce authors and, for example, uncritically relying on the data about the size of the indigenous population in Argentina. In her opinion, this number should be around 100,000 although numerous other sources (also indigenous ones) confirm different statistics, according to which there is from 600,000 to 900,000 aboriginal people living in the Argentinean territory.

The third chapter – *The artistic world of Buenos Aires* – is a description of activity of art schools and other institutions, systems of financial support, the role of producers, the distribution of artistic products, public and critics. There is also an interesting comparison made between the number of visitors at the contemporary art fairs in Buenos Aires, Belgium and Germany. Buenos Aires fair proves to attract up to four times more visitors than similar fairs in Europe.

In the following chapter, the author presents specific characteristics of wartime and post-war communities of Slovene emigrants in Argentina and notes: ‘In the extensive bibliography that praises the achievements of Slovene community in Argentina regarding the preservation of national consciousness and above all the language, describes institutional forms of its preservation and offers a positive general image of cultural activity developed by the aforementioned community, little is said about the rare critical voices of so called members of the community. They were either concealed or marginalized’ (p. 77).

The author offers a radical departure from such representation of the Slovenian community. Furthermore, she takes into consideration precisely those critical voices, suppressed facts and conflicts between institutional levels and personal position, as well as contradictions members of this community experienced in the form of numerous pressures (religious, political, linguistic etc.). Sensitivity towards the aforementioned aspects of ‘Slovenes’ in Argentina is one of the major contributions to this book. At the same time, her inclination toward multi-contextual interpretation is expressed through an analysis of post-war activity of the Slovenian community in Argentina in which she unfolds some aspects of its programme policy less known to the wider Slovenian public. Toplak reveals that in the period of Videl’s military regime (1976–1983) the representatives of this community publicly announced solidarity with the dictator and his brutal methods by which the violent death of nearly 30,000 disappeared ones – *desaparecidos* was caused.

An in-depth narrative of the dynamics and relations within this community is exposed through the artistic section of the organization named *Slovenian Cultural Action* (Slovenska kulturna akcija – SKA), established in 1954 as an alternative to the previous *Association of Slovenes in Argentina* (Društvo Slovencev v Argentini). This organization operated as a support of community’s artistic talent and productivity in terms of founding an art school, holding exhibitions and publishing magazines. However, the author exposes its inhospitable position towards creativity expressed through the suppression of innovative approaches, an anachronistic unwillingness to connect with the wider Argentinean environment, a fixation on its own elite role accentuated by exclusive membership etc. As noted by the author, SKA operated through series of exclusive practices towards its own environment: ‘The distinction between “Us” and “Them” was established on three levels: within the community of newly settled Slovenes, on the intraethnic level between old and newly settled Slovenes in Argentina and on the interethnic level between Slovenes and the majority of society represented by Argentineans’ (p. 94).

Through the valuable testimonies of five established visual artists, the chapter *Creative world of individuals* unveils the heterogeneity of their creative ways and artistic approaches as well as their relationship towards the Slovene community and Argentinean society. Often the testimonies touch upon ideological and political topics such as the

Slovenian Home Guard (*domobranstvo*), anticommunism and religious dimensions. Their stories follow in a logical order from the oldest Ivan who is firmly placed in the ethnic community to the youngest Fabiàn who has no contacts with it. While Toplak mostly summarizes their stories, it is the parts in which their direct speech comes to the fore that are exceptionally interesting, also for the linguistic analysis as interlocutors often intertwine Slovenian and Castellan syntax and expressions. The testimonies are also an important document of the migration experience, not just of the first but also of the second generation of migrants and should be considered in the contemporary migration studies. For example, Adriana, who belongs to the second generation of immigrants, describes her state of 'in-betweenness', liminality that she calls *ambiguo*: 'I took psychotherapy for myself, to understand why I don't feel integrated, included into Argentinean society. I was included, but I felt different. It's hard to live in your town, Buenos Aires and feel that it is not your place. And when you go to that other place, Slovenia, you also feel that it is not your space. Slovenia and Argentina are both your places, you feel at home in both spaces. To understand this and feel this duality was a hard thing for me' (p. 136).

In the last two chapters, the author offers a theoretic analysis of the ethnographic research through Makaroviè's theory of six Ps and at the same time examines the structure, formation and changes of artistic worlds. Among others, she discovers that artists are more inclined to integrate in the society they have immigrated to and at the same time are more subject to the global cultural influences and, as she concludes: 'Actors in the ethnic art world moved on to larger, multiethnic, national or international art worlds and have become involved in them as artists, audience and critics. The local ethnic art world changed to become a part of a larger (national and global) art world surrounding it' (p. 193).

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