

AND AFTER YUGOSLAVIA,
YUGOSLAVIA!

NEW HISTORIES, NEW
APPROACHES

call for
papers

Please send 500 word abstracts to
Marina Antić: antic@pitt.edu
Deadline: November 30, 2013.

Call for Papers: “And after Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia! New Histories & Approaches”

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The last twenty years of scholarship on former Yugoslavia and its successor states have undergone significant shifts, not least of which has been the introduction of new theoretical positions and paradigms (Bakić-Hayden and Hayden, Wolff, Todorova). However, the vast majority of this new scholarship has struggled to escape the resurgence of nationalist quasi-historical narratives or the transformation(s) of the Cold War totalitarian historical paradigm into postsocialist “transitology.” The latter has served as the ideological correlate of neo-liberal reforms in Eastern Europe, providing interpretive frames (justifications) for the rise of the free market economy, electoral democracy, and the construction of “civil societies,” the three hallmarks of postsocialism. In this context, transitology has primarily focused on EU accession as the final conceptual and political frontier of these now liberalizing societies. In reality, the transition itself has been not into Europe proper but into a periphery of global capital (Shields). Moreover, in the wake of the global financial crisis, the Arab Spring and the radical “left turn” of Latin America, the “transitology” discourse has increasingly appeared vacuous, fetishized, a totem of a global order fundamentally premised on what David Harvey has called “accumulation through dispossession.”

From history to art, economy to literature, political science to anthropology, scholars have been preoccupied with explaining the violent end of Yugoslavia and its aftermath via the nationalist and totalitarian models (Glenny, Kaplan, Malcolm, Alcock, Meier, Wachtel, Bieber, and others); they have struggled to explain Yugonostalgia and the Yugoslav legacy that seems not to wane in the region (Todorova and Gille, Djokić, Wachtel); and many have continued to treat the Yugoslav past as an aberration and the post-Yugoslav reality as the “natural” state of affairs. Despite challenges to the “Orientalist” or “Balkanist” discourse of the region and despite attempts to situate the rise of nationalism into global realities and socio-economic developments (Woodward, Gowan, Petras and Vieux), Yugoslav history and the post-Yugoslav reality have been codified within the old confines of Cold War history-cum-transitology and nationalist historiography.

At the same time, post-Yugoslav cultural production, social movements, and cultural and ideological shifts in the region have been telling a different story. Social opposition to nationalist regimes has only increased with time in the most troubled post-Yugoslav state – Bosnia and Herzegovina (JMBG protests, Dosta!) as well as in the most “Europeanized” one – Slovenia (2012-2013 Maribor protests, ongoing nation-wide). Film, literature, art, and alternative media productions have continually challenged simplistic nationalist narratives as well as the dire, postsocialist realities (Tanović, Žbanić, Stanišić, Rudan, Veličković, Studio LuDež); and everyday life in the post-Yugoslav states has challenged “transitology” and its lessons of civil society, political culture, and free market economics. In the process, the Yugoslav past remains a central preoccupation of both the nationalist regimes and its former citizens: from neo-nazi revivals to Yugonostalgia, the legacy of this common and shared cultural, socio-economic, and political space continues to influence all spheres of life in many different ways.

This volume addresses this disjuncture between post-Yugoslav realities and nationalist historiography and/or the neo-liberal transitology. What sets this volume apart from a myriad of collections about former Yugoslavia is a commitment to critically engage, challenge, and advance beyond nationalist historiography and transitology while reassessing the Yugoslav legacy and reexamining the Yugoslav past as phenomena fundamentally relevant to our understanding of the present and, indeed, our future. In short, this volume (re)considers “Yugoslavia” as a relevant *contemporary* political and social phenomenon, rather than merely a tragic and/or utopian historical moment. Moreover, our intervention seeks to deliberately reposition the post-Yugoslav space in the context of the unraveling of the global neo-liberal order. We explicitly reject the narrative that the only “realistic” (or ideal) future for (the former) Yugoslavia is membership in a dissolving neo-liberal monetary and political union—the only facsimile of a political program advanced by the “transitional” local elites and their international partners. Our conception of Yugoslavia emerges as *against* the EU’s preferred “Western Balkans” and/or “South-East Europe” monikers and in line with more than a decade of democratic, alter-globalist eruptions in Latin America, North Africa and the Middle East.

The volume consists of three sections:

1. *Post-Yugoslav Realities*

This section is devoted to assessment of the current situation in post-Yugoslav states, analysis of the effects of postsocialist “transition,” new social movements, as well as the wider, global context for the social changes that have taken place since the fall of socialism.

2. *Post-Yugoslav Culture*

This section is devoted to critique and presentation of post-Yugoslav cultural production in context, including but not limited to new literature, film, art, popular culture, and other media productions. We are especially interested in approaches that address the continuities and discontinuities between the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav cultural production in the region.

3. *Yugoslav History and Legacy*

While the question of Yugoslav legacy is a common thread for the entire volume, this particular section is devoted specifically to new topics, contexts, and theories regarding the common history and heritage. From the origins of the Yugoslav idea in the 19th century to the legacy of the Non-Aligned Movement in Yugoslavia to an exploration of Yugonostalgia today, this concluding section seeks to raise new research questions and suggest new points of departure for studying the region and its history.

We invite proposals for contributions to any of the above mentioned topics, while especially encouraging new methodological and theoretical orientations, interdisciplinary work, and research from across the humanities and social sciences.

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