ABSTRACTS

From the Balkans to Baghdad (via Baltimore): Labor Migration and the Routes of Empire

KEITH BROWN

While scholars of the Balkans have frequently emphasized the importance of nationalism in the region, labor migration has long been a critical component of economic, social, and cultural life. In this article, Keith Brown examines the connections between two well-documented cases of the risks faced by long-distance migrants from the territory of the modern Republic of Macedonia, separated by a hundred years. Putting each case into its larger context—U.S. industrial expansion in the early 1900s, and U.S. military occupation in the early 2000s—Brown argues that the study of contemporary Macedonia demands attending to imperial and colonial histories that make clear the larger systems of power in which the country and its people have long been suspended.

On the Politics of *Imidž:* European Integration and the Trials of Recognition in Post-Conflict Macedonia

ANDREW GRAAN

This article examines how a discourse on international image animated Macedonian politics following the country's 2001 conflict and how it reflected a broader cultural politics of European Union expansion. Contrasting with the continual deferral of recognition that characterized European integration in Macedonia, the Macedonian discourse on image (*imidž*) anchored a social imaginary where a national project of marketing could facilitate Macedonia's accession into the European Union and concretize its belonging to "Europe." The analysis developed here centers on the ambivalences in this discourse and the practices it authorized. By incorporating both orientalist distinctions and key concepts from the European Union's own process of integration, the discourse of imidž supported the neoliberal reform associated with Macedonia's postconflict restructuring and European integration. But the discourse on imidž also provided Macedonian political actors with an idiom in which to imagine, respond to, and capitalize on the larger political forces engendered by discursive constructs of Europe and the international community.

Consuming Ethnicity: Loss, Commodities, and Space in Macedonia

ROZITA DIMOVA

In this article, Rozita Dimova examines the rearticulation of class and ethnicity and how class distinctions produced by a free market and neoliberal economy in Macedonia have affected the interaction of Albanians and Macedonians in postsocialist Macedonia. Dimova highlights the ethnic dimensions of changing patterns of consumption by exploring the class mobility of one ethnic group (Albanians) and thus combines class,

commodities, and consumption with notions of ethnicity. The process of articulating ethnicity and class is induced by the larger neoliberal context of the post–Cold War world in which the political economy of the "free" market and privatization inform local subjectivities. The domain of consumption, therefore, offers a place from which we can understand the complex interactions of multiple actors in Macedonia and see the various economic, performative, and symbolic significance of consumption in which the social mobility of the nouveaux riches Albanians has contributed to the loss of class privileges experienced by many ethnic Macedonians.

Postsocialism, Social Value, and Identity Politics among Albanians in Macedonia

Vasiliki P. Neofotistos

In this article, Vasiliki P. Neofotistos analyzes the reappropriation of the term *Šiptar*, a derogatory Macedonian term for Albanians, by male members of the Albanian community in the Republic of Macedonia. Neofotistos shows how the reappropriation of the ethnic slur reflects constellations of social value, that is to say, larger systems of meaning and action concerning who and what is valued in life, that have emerged with Macedonian independence. Albanian men tap into familiar divisions found in the larger Macedonian society and create meaningful forms of collectivity as they deal with rapid social, economic, and political change in the context of Macedonia's postsocialist transformation of social practices and ideals. This case study of Macedonia sheds light on the dynamics of social relations within socially marginalized groups.

Political Volatility and Governance in East Central Europe

Carolyn Forestiere

In this article, Carolyn Forestiere investigates political volatility as a way to explain varying levels of governance across the new democracies of east central Europe. Specifically, legislative and executive volatility are examined. The results suggest that differences in legislative volatility help explain variations in governance, especially during the beginning of a new democracy. Once party systems begin to consolidate, however, differences in executive volatility begin to matter more. A case study of Poland confirms some of Forestiere's conclusions. While the legislative party system has shown some signs of stabilization, executive volatility remains a salient political problem, which over time has led to a steady decline in the quality of governance.

Turgenev and a Proliferating French Press: The Feuilleton and Feuilletonistic in *A Nest of the Gentry*

Melissa Frazier

Elizabeth Cheresh Allen has addressed Ivan Turgenev's strikingly ambiguous and understated narratives, arguing that Turgenev's "language of

litotes" consistently serves other than conventionally realistic ends. V. N. Toporov accounts for Turgenev's "strangeness" in more personal terms. Melissa Frazier's close reading of *A Nest of the Gentry* suggests the importance of yet another factor: Turgenev's engagement with the feuilleton and the increasingly commercialized literary environment that produced it. Ivan Goncharov's accusation that Turgenev had plagiarized elements of *A Nest of the Gentry* from his own as-yet-unpublished *The Precipice* finally also makes the point that Turgenev's "strangeness" in this novel derives from an ambiguous language best described as "not that," not the stolen words and half-truths of a feuilletonistic and largely French press, but something nonetheless not unlike.

Conversing with Stalin, Surviving the Terror: The Diaries of Aleksandra Kollontai and the Internal Life of Politics

BEATRICE FARNSWORTH

In this article, Beatrice Farnsworth suggests that Aleksandra Kollontai, Old Bolshevik, socialist-feminist, and former leader of the Workers' Opposition, survived Iosif Stalin's terror largely because in her effort to assure Stalin that she was no longer an oppositionist, she nurtured a friendly dynamic with him. Indeed, in their conversations, she pursued a gendered strategy of warm deference and flattery. Yet, while publicly serving the Soviet regime, even ingratiating herself with the party leadership, Kollontai, in diaries written for history, privately, and at risk to her life, mourned the regime's failure to develop "communist humanism." With their interlocking themes of emotion and personalities, her diaries not only provide insight into Kollontai's uncanny survival and the personal responses of an Old Bolshevik to political changes and people but offer a rare and intimate portrait of the internal life of Soviet politics at their highest level.