



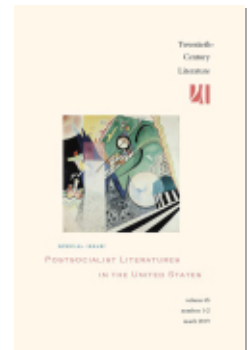
PROJECT MUSE®

Geopolitical Imaginaries: Croatian Diasporic Writers in
North America

Jelena Šesnić

Twentieth-Century Literature, Volume 65, Number 1, March 2019, pp. 71-96
(Article)

Published by Duke University Press



➔ For additional information about this article

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/720214>



Geopolitical Imaginaries: Croatian Diasporic Writers in North America

Jelena Šesnić

Americanists working in East Central European countries, such as Croatia, often find themselves caught in an older geopolitical imaginary that envisions this geography as the continental fault line of the Cold War. A two-volume publication, *East Central Europe in Exile*, recently critiqued the tendency to conflate the region with this old geopolitical divide. In the introduction, Anna Mazurkiewicz and Mieczysław Nurek (2013: xiii) explain: “While researching American attitudes toward Poland in terms of the complex fate of the post–World War II exiles, we found that from the American perspective the countries between Germany and Russia remained to a large extent a *terra incognita*, dominated by the Soviets who flagrantly violated the international wartime agreements. The American government therefore considered the *area*, not a particular country, to be a single problem called ‘Eastern Europe.’” To address this entrenched epistemological problem, the editors call for “cooperation with scholars from other Central European countries [in addition to Poland] and the United States” (3). Still, even after more than a quarter of a century following the demise of that global political paradigm, American studies scholars appear reluctant to include perspectives from the former Eastern Bloc in their work. American studies practitioners in that region, it would seem, also need to contribute more actively and resoundingly to the lifting of the Cold War mental curtain. As such a scholar myself, I examine the emergence of new post–Cold War geopolitical imaginaries in the creative work of Croatian American writers Josip Novakovich and Neda Miranda Blažević–Krietzman. Their writing engages with socialism in the former Yugoslavia and postsocialism in its successor nation Croatia, emigration from this geography, and new forms of transnationalism that bridge the United States and Croatia.

Rooted in diasporic and immigrant backgrounds, Novakovich and Blažević-Krietzman articulate concerns that are similar to those addressed by other contemporary US writers, particularly those of immigrant descent. The two authors' emphasis aligns also with the perspectives of a growing number of Central and Eastern European writers who have begun to reimagine the United States' relationship to the Eastern Bloc during and after the Cold War. The work of these authors was enabled by the spectacular end of the Cold War, which has redirected mainstream US cultural politics and reinscribed the significance of Eastern Europe into the US imaginary.¹ After the demise of the socialist Eastern Bloc, the press, popular sources, pundits, and the US government sounded triumphalist notes that were reiterated in academic discourses trying to grapple with the new reality of a post-Cold War Europe.² Only a quarter of a century later, however, geopolitical changes like the Ukrainian crisis, the rise of Russia's leadership in Eurasia, and the decline of the United States' policing role in Europe signal the tenuous nature of post-Cold War arrangements between the two former superpowers and point to the reemergence of a new world order with Cold War overtones. By developing triangulated perspectives on the former Yugoslavia, its successor nation Croatia, and the United States, the work of Novakovich and Blažević-Krietzman imaginatively intervenes into this moment when Cold War realities are resurging in modified forms. Having experienced life under socialism and in the capitalist United States, the two authors move beyond the normative reach of Cold War imaginaries and their current reemergence. Rooted in the communist period, their oppositional disposition expresses itself thematically and formally. Blažević-Krietzman, who precedes Novakovich and whose career spans communism and postcommunism, employs postmodernist and feminist styles of writing, while Novakovich, ironically and nostalgically, refracts memories of his Cold War childhood and adulthood through his immigration experiences.

Although Blažević-Krietzman's writing has not been as widely studied and recognized as Novakovich's, whose work was shortlisted for the 2013 Man Booker international prize, neither author has received sufficient credit for their innovative use of form and theme. The two writers emphasize the linguistic and geopolitical challenges they have faced since their migration, which in Novakovich's case, following a move from the former Yugoslavia to the United States and then to Canada, has involved three different countries. Both authors trace the impact of the Cold War and its aftereffects to imagine connections among the United

States, the former Yugoslavia, and Croatia. Novakovich's writing also deals with the Homeland War, the military conflict in Croatia between 1991 and 1995, and wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995. In its current, more global phase the work by Blažević-Krietzman and Novakovich often connects the Cold War to the realities of globalization and life after 9/11.

Born in Daruvar, a town in northern Croatia, Josip Novakovich emigrated to the United States in 1976 at the age of twenty, before the breakup of Yugoslavia and the onset of military conflicts. Novakovich points to a plethora of causes for his emigration. He lists his early infatuation with the United States and the English language, his increasing disaffection with political restrictions in Yugoslavia, and the fact that his maternal grandmother was a US citizen, born and raised in the United States, who had returned to Yugoslavia due to a complicated family situation. At Vassar College, Novakovich changed his major from philosophy and religious studies to literature (Novakovich and Shapard 2000: 10). Novakovich became a writer only after his arrival in the United States. Like other ESL writers, he had to embrace English as his “stepmother tongue” (9). In many of his publications that began to appear in the 1990s—short stories, a novel, and creative nonfiction that bridges the genres of memoir, essay, and travelogue—he triangulates among the United States, Yugoslavia (Croatia)/Europe, and the USSR as he revisits the period of the Cold War and deals with more contemporary themes.

In an interview with a Croatian literary periodical, Novakovich commented on the political problem of the fault line that divides diasporic Croatian writers from their homeland. He said that Croatia is “almost the only country where emigrants are despised. That was [also] the attitude in Yugoslavia, which was a xenophobic country with many external and internal enemies, while people who were abroad like me were both on the outside and on the inside” (Pavlović 2013: 12).³ As testified by a steady stream of translations of his work, the most recent of which appeared in 2017, today Novakovich occupies an important place in Croatian letters, even though the alleged political bias toward emigrés in Yugoslavia and Croatia is an integral part of many of his stories.

Neda Miranda Blažević-Krietzman left Croatia in 1991 and, after a brief stay in Berlin, moved on to the United States. She taught comparative literature at the College of St. Catherine in Minneapolis until 2007, and then moved to the University of California, San Diego. When asked if she follows developments in Croatian literature, Blažević-Krietzman (2012a:

57) responded that even though she visits the country every year and is familiar with the Croatian literary scene, “from the distance you see that we always commit the same historical mistakes.” Blažević-Krietzman (Primorac 2012) cherishes her “geographical, social and cultural dualism,” saying that she feels “at home” in both her environments, while also turning her position into a launching pad for many of her plots. Despite her increasing international commitments, she continues to publish fiction in Croatian. Perhaps because of this linguistic choice, her work is more central to Croatian studies than Novakovich’s. In Croatia, however, both authors are seen as inhabiting the fringe of the national canon; and both have developed a set of translation strategies in order to represent transnational perspectives to US, diasporic, and international audiences. These translation strategies shape their treatment of the Cold War from the triangulated perspective of communist Yugoslavia and postsocialist Croatia. In their most recent phase, the two writers occupy positions as transnational cultural agents who take full advantage of US-based global networks.

Triangulating the Cold War

Even though both Novakovich and Blažević-Krietzman are decidedly postsocialist diasporic cultural agents, their cultural activities are not derived only from their experiences of socialism. Neither author was directly catapulted into exile by the demise of communism. In their work, the term *socialism* assumes a number of meanings—from a state of mind to a system of economic management of society. They participate in the contemporary reevaluation of Eastern European state socialism, which fell after popular uprisings in countries with failing economies and communist ideologies. Considering that a period of twenty-five years marks the life-span of one generation, what is at stake is not so much remembering this past as memorializing and commemorating it.⁴

Collective efforts at comprehending the historical impact of communism have taxed all societies moving from socialism to capitalism, even for those that had supposedly completed the process of transition.⁵ Croatian American immigrant writers have participated in discussions about the status of memory after communism. For writers, artists, and intellectuals from Croatia who chose or suffered exile as a direct or indirect consequence of the Cold War, and also for those who left the country after 1989, the term *socialism* carries various meanings. The work

by Novakovich and Blažević-Krietzman has recuperated these meanings at a time when state socialism was already receding from historical reality and entering the realm of political mythology. For these authors, remembering and commemoration is further complicated by the fact that Croatia was part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945–91) and only in 1992 gained independence as a sovereign country. Any remembering or commemoration of socialist Yugoslavia is thus inevitably fraught with questions of serious political importance.

The issue of postsocialist memory has not yet been settled. Writing in 1996, Katherine Verdery (1996: 11) was strangely optimistic that the opening of archives in postsocialist countries would reveal the distortions and corruptions of socialist societies and thus prevent similar events from occurring in the future, while German historian Gerd Koenen ([2010] 2011: 15) is less convinced that the postsocialist societies are ideologically equipped to learn from their past. The issue of open archives has also surfaced in political EU declarations that acknowledge the historical reality of one-party rule in Eastern European countries.⁶ As Aleida Assmann (2014: 553) has contended, communist totalitarianism has yet to be incorporated into the memorial legacy of Europe. Maria Todorova, a renowned researcher in the field of postcommunist studies, similarly argues that institutions still need to perform considerable work to face the ghosts of the past.⁷ Todorova (2010: 18) shows that the notion of historiography has remained “delegitimized” in post-1989 Bulgaria because of historians’ past closeness to the communist regime, a fact that has threatened to confine critical perspectives on socialism to the work of “journalism, memoirs, and popular history.”

In the absence of comprehensive historical inquiries that are based primarily on the study of archives, new ways to address the communist past are needed. Literary productions, such as the creative work by Novakovich and Blažević-Krietzman, embody such forms of engagement by addressing the communist past through a focus on the familial and intimate rather than on the nation or its official archives. Their interest in the Cold War predates and anticipates the revival of interest in the study of the Cold War’s impact on US culture and its representations. As evidenced in the work by Jodi Kim, this process has been underway in American studies for some time. Arguing that “the protracted afterlife of the Cold War” (2010: 3) triangulates between the United States, Asian America, and various Asian countries, and has been felt most dramatically in Japan, China, and Korea, Kim stresses how varied transnational Cold

War genealogies are seeping into academic practices. She writes that the Cold War has “continued to enjoy a persisting recursiveness when seen as a structure of feeling, a knowledge project, and a hermeneutics for interpreting developments in the ‘post’-Cold War conjuncture.”

Blažević-Krietzman’s autobiographical story “Terrorism and the Crossings of the Cold War Borders” (2010) returns to the Iron Curtain of the late 1960s and 1970s, connecting that period to the present moment, when borders have again become impermeable. Like Kim (2010: 3), who has remarked on parallels between the “entrenched production of knowledge” during the Cold War and the contemporary war on terror, she connects the two historical moments. Blažević-Krietzman’s story begins in socialist Yugoslavia and ends in the United States but is punctuated by the stormy, so-called Red Decade of the 1970s, whose concerns with (left-wing) terrorism have reappeared in today’s now globalized terror alerts, thus capturing shifts in global thinking through a focus on the narrator’s changing political identities. Blažević-Krietzman describes how she was rendered doubly suspect when she crossed the Yugoslav-Italian border in the 1970s. To agents of her socialist government she appeared as a potential “pro-Western” smuggler moving appliances or clothing out of the country, while “conceited Westerners” (“TC” 364) on the other side of the border considered her and fellow travelers “potential terrorists, spies, secret agents, and smugglers” (365).

In her story, Blažević-Krietzman literalizes the metaphor of the border-crossing terrorist by recounting how she was stopped by German border guards on her way to Munich because she vaguely resembles Gudrun Ensslin, one of the founders of the German branch of the Red Brigades. This was a commando group of the Red Army Fraction (RAF) involved in a string of terrorist attacks between 1967 and 1977 (see Koenen [2010] 2011: 157). Blažević-Krietzman’s misidentification is rooted in a Cold War logic that views Eastern Europeans as either victims or lynchpins of a vilified communist system and its aligned left-wing ideologies, including its more extremist versions. Once the mistake is discovered, Blažević-Krietzman is allowed to proceed to West Germany.

The story shows how national boundaries not only regulate trans-border traffic, be it legal or illegal, but how they also spectrally create and sustain the kind of mental disposition that conditions the protagonist and her sister to remain “silent and cautious” (“TC” 363) when scrutinized by Italian guards. This experience influences the author’s later crossings of other borders, imbuing her with a “blunt sense of unease and hateful humiliation” (364). At the borders to Western Europe,

Blažević-Krietzman's "red passport" renders her a potential terrorist. The short story suggestively links two historical states of emergency (or states of exception)—the Cold War and the war on terror—as Blažević-Krietzman returns to the issue of European borders less than thirty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall to show how a new curtain is being drawn in the contemporary moment. The post-9/11 terrorist threat has occasioned the global reinforcement of borders and reminds Blažević-Krietzman, who now lives in the United States, of a time when borders between Eastern and Western Europe dictated people's destiny.

Josip Novakovich's work and his arrival on the US literary scene in the 1990s also mark the converging trajectories of "the protracted life of the Cold War" (Kim 2010: 3) and its US manifestations. Even though, technically speaking, the Cold War had ended by the time Novakovich entered US literature, his emergence as an author is linked to the Cold War as a structure of feeling and an epistemological template. One reason is the ongoing pull of Cold War epistemology in the entire socialist Eastern Bloc, irrespective of differences among individual countries—between, for example, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. This structure of feeling inhabits much of Novakovich's work and provides a strong template for his plots, protagonists, and ironic worldview. It is not surprising that Novakovich would be interested in borders, real and imaginary, and even more so in their crossing as a rite of passage. His protagonists, who are both fictional and rooted in (auto)biography, feel intimidated and psychologically conditioned by their lives in a policed society that touts itself as a communist utopia. As Novakovich (2012: 1) writes, "the official political reasoning was simple: if you wanted to leave a healthy society like Yugoslavia to live in the decadent West, you were insane." His characters are poised to bump up against mental, physical, geographical, and political borders, and they realize their human potential by traversing them, giving both him and his protagonists "a breakthrough into a new life, through borders not as obstacles but as thresholds to imagined freedom" (1995a: 27).

The second pull on Novakovich is linked to his experiences of Cold War epistemologies in the United States. Kim identifies the Cold War as a structure that shaped "the identity politics, and politics of identification, of the US nation in the latter half of the twentieth century" (2010: 10). Donald Pease similarly analyzes this period as key to the solidification of a national fantasy that governs its citizens' identification with the nation-state (2009: 4). In Pease's account, during this time the historical logic of US exceptionalism came to include an emphasis on its fundamental difference from its archrival, the USSR.

Novakovich often challenges this national fantasy, one familiar to his US (and other Anglophone) readers, by using his characteristic narrative irony, as well as settings, characters, and motifs that stress the paradoxes of the Cold War. The image of US abundance and peace-time generosity emerged after the Second World War, when Western goods began pouring into Yugoslavia. The vision of the United States as a benevolent yet mythic and distant benefactor reinforced widely circulated prewar images of a promised land whose denizens ate white bread and meat daily (Novakovich 2003: 166), which encouraged large-scale European emigration to the United States up until the passage of US immigration restrictions at the turn of the twentieth century.

The focus on US postwar support for Eastern Europe provides the backdrop for Novakovich's account in "Ruth's Death" of a family tragedy, the death of his four-year-old sister from a contaminated vaccination, which she received as part of the war relief effort that led to the demise of a large number of children. As Novakovich (2012: 60) ironically comments, "Tito had usually declined donations from the States, and it would have been good if he had declined this one." In another, similar story of Cold War paradoxes, "Grandmother's Tongue" (2003), Novakovich's maternal grandmother is portrayed as a dedicated socialist from Yugoslavia who nevertheless enjoys the benefits of her adopted US homeland and who later sets in motion the transatlantic dynamics that would be partly responsible for catapulting the author into emigration. Novakovich's satiric impulse also plays on the exaggerated expectations that images of the United States evoke in socialist subjects, especially in their encounters with their diasporic cousins or with media images. In communist Croatia, as the above story suggests, the United States was coveted as a consumerist paradise rather than regarded as an exacting and unstopable capitalist system and way of life.

Novakovich also "Americanizes" the Cold War. He conflates various local variants of this episteme in his protagonists, plots, and settings, and projects them against or alongside Cold War rhetoric. Novakovich's early short stories and nonfiction, in fact, exemplify the need to familiarize and domesticate multiple and otherwise uncontainable local variants of Cold War structures for US audiences. This strategy shapes his ironic and satirical stance on socialist Yugoslavia, other Eastern Bloc nations, and the capitalist United States, while also rendering Cold War epistemologies culturally manageable for his US audience.

Prepared for the fiftieth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination, Novakovich's memory of the day the president was shot exemplifies his

increasingly global literary and cultural orientation. In his story “In the Pastry Shop, Daruvar, Yugoslavia, 1963” (2013), Novakovich employs the defamiliarizing perspective of a seven-year-old boy in a Croatian provincial town in Yugoslavia.⁸ The story compresses time and space, stretching from Dallas, Texas, to Daruvar, Yugoslavia, and cuts across several countries of the Eastern Bloc. Even in the small town of Daruvar, where the story is set, Cold War events were felt as repercussions of Tito’s breaking with Stalin in 1948 and of the Soviet army’s invasion of Hungary in 1956, which stopped short of the border with Yugoslavia.

In the story, Kennedy is rendered a cultural phenomenon and a fashion icon. Winfried Fluck (2009: 471) has highlighted “the cultural mechanisms of myth formation” about the president, “the worldwide fascination with Kennedy” (476) that reached a stage where parts of his life were turned into myth, even while he was still alive. The narrator comments, tongue-in-cheek, on the arrival of Western-style fashion in socialist Yugoslavia, when most men started shaving off their Stalin-like moustache and wearing their hair Kennedy-style. The trend swayed even a local Baptist pastor. In contrast to the stylish and brilliant young US president, the burly and ungainly appearance of his Soviet counterpart, Khrushchev, did not lend itself to similar forms of imitation. The story places the Yugoslav President Tito somewhere in between Kennedy and Khrushchev; he cuts a formidable, godlike presence as he smiles from posters exhibited throughout town, but can’t match Kennedy’s charisma.

This ingenious pairing of three presidents comments on the differential power attributed to the United States and Yugoslavia as exemplars of the capitalist and communist systems. On the surface, the emphasis on Kennedy’s brilliant teeth privileges his image over his moral and leadership qualities. But the image also points to the president’s clever deployment and manipulation of the media, a skill that was one of his strong points as a public figure (Fluck 2009: 477), and was missing in Yugoslavia at the time. The somewhat less bombastic and visually spectacular posters of Tito indicate that Yugoslavia lagged behind the United States in the development of its media, and show that Tito’s “cult of personality,” which painted him as infallible in order to consolidate his power, relied less on his image than on the coercive and manipulative mechanisms of socialist totalitarianism.

In Novakovich’s story, Josip and his friend discuss the consequences for Yugoslavia of Kennedy’s assassination while ogling the *kremšnite* (crusty cream-filled cakes) in a local pastry shop. Kennedy’s death put Yugoslavia at risk of further domination by the Soviet Union. The boys conclude,

however, that Tito would fix everything. What in 1963 could still be subsumed under the context of a Cold War *détente* gradually gave way to fuzziness as the decade drew to a close and other political assassinations hovered on the horizon. The narrator wryly notes that he was twelve years old when Robert Kennedy was shot and asks why his death is not remembered to the same extent. Since 1968, the same year that Coca-Cola began to be sold in Yugoslavia, the culture of memory had evidently been replaced by the culture of consumption.

The Coca-Cola reference in Novakovich's autobiographic sketch becomes a full-blown motif in one of his other short stories. "Ice" narrates the arrival of the "divine" drink in a Croatian provincial town, where it is received like a revelation by three local boys. The boys liken the freezing and thawing of a Coke can so it can be enjoyed properly ("You're supposed to drink it with ice. Without ice it doesn't work" [1998: 112]) to transubstantiation, mimicking the form of a Holy Communion. Instead of achieving salvation, however, one of the boys contracts bronchitis from drinking the Coke, which tastes like "cough medicine" (113). The arrival of the Coca-Cola brand in socialist Yugoslavia marked the rise of what Igor Duda (2005: 7) terms "socialist consumerism," which began to permeate the lifestyle of members of the working class in the 1950s and 1960s. Because of Yugoslavia's nonalignment with the two Cold War military alliances (the NATO and the Warsaw Pact), the country found itself "in a position where it boasted of socialism, while being situated on the western edge of the socialist world and thus considerably exposed to the Western consumerist influences and habits" (6). As Stjepan Meštrović (1997: 160) contends, however, the exposure to and indulgence in Western consumer items was never intended to extend to other imports from the United States, such as its political system.

Since Kennedy, no other US president has captured the global popular imagination in quite the same way. In time, Tito faced more serious internal challenges, and in 1964 Nikita Khrushchev was removed from power. The heroes of the post-Kennedy era were of a somewhat different ilk; the likes of Jimmy Hendrix and Jim Morrison exported an alternative US lifestyle that exceeded Cold War politics. In his memories of life in Yugoslavia before his emigration, Novakovich shows that his US socialization proceeded by way of rock music and his fascination with the greenback, the quintessence of "America." His fantasy, however, as he describes in "Grandmother's Tongue," quickly withered as he encountered the realities of urban life in Cincinnati, his first destination upon his arrival in the United States.

The View from the Outside

While Novakovich does not address developments in post-Yugoslav nations that are sometimes discussed under the term *postsocialism*, Blažević-Krietzman's work is very much concerned with this period. As it denotes the state of Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the term *postsocialism* covers a whole range of phenomena and carries all manner of emotional and political overtones for debates concerning the new Europe. The concept of a "new Europe" denotes the desire of Central and Eastern European countries to plunge into capitalism. Wlad Godzich (2014), however, has called the postsocialist Eastern Bloc "Second-Hand Europe" to denote its difficulties with building a strong civil and liberal society in the face of its sudden exposure to the ravages of the market economy and a rapacious economic sphere.⁹

Blažević-Krietzman anticipated these concerns when she started writing in the late 1970s and 1980s in Yugoslavia and, alongside other young women writers, jumpstarted a new feminist literature. That perspective manifests itself most clearly in her novel-essay *Američka predgra* (*American Prelude*). Written in 1989, this hybrid text blends the genres of memoir, fiction, and philosophy to portray the protagonist's year-long stay in the United States, beginning in Minnesota and ending in New York City, and it also tackles the late socialist and Cold War period. This transnational context renders the text very experimental and daring in form, since it makes veiled political statements about the possibilities of feminist art in a socialist society.¹⁰ Written in Croatian, the text's US plot follows a young woman's emancipation through her art and intellectual life, through which she is able to rework the intersection of the ideological systems of US capitalism and Yugoslav socialism. Such a politicized reading of Blažević-Krietzman's novel-essay also recalls the idiosyncratic features of Yugoslav socialism that have informed the country's self-perception and fostered peculiar emotional reactions to its conditions of socialism.¹¹ Comparativist approaches have consistently focused on "the existence of a *quasi*-civil society and public sphere" (Todorova 2010: 19) outside the state's single party system that allowed debates between various social stakeholders (Taylor 2004: 83–84). But the creation of this sphere was never the socialist state's principal goal; instead, the appurtenances of a bourgeois mentality were assumed to disappear on the way to a new communist society peopled by new subjects. Scholars of socialism either depoliticize or deem to be self-legitimizing various forms of "quasi" civic engagement, and try to delink them from the former communist party or its various organizations.¹²

Blažević-Krietzman's novel-essay employs the form of a fictionalized diary to document the mental and emotional growth of a young professional woman, a literature professor and writer who arrives in the United States on a scholarship and negotiates the country on her own terms. The title indicates the novel's organization through cinematic devices, particularly its use of montage. As it reflects the narrator's changing psychological states, this experimental form enables the integration of intertextual and intermedial citations into several narrative strains that focus on the United States. The array of images that assault the narrator points to the simulacrum nature of the United States and reflects her existential crisis. She experiences even the solid, Protestant, and no-nonsense Midwest as a composite of literary and pop-cultural references, and as an endlessly replicated mirror-image of "our civilization and culture" (Blažević 1989: 21).¹³ This dematerialized and unreal space of the contemporary United States suits the narrator, since she has renounced any connections to a specific time and place.

Loosely modeled on Blažević-Krietzman, the protagonist makes frequent references to her socialist-embedded identity and often projects her present situation against the "self" she left behind. The spiritual exile she felt in her home society becomes reconfigured in the United States. As a subject from the socialist world, she inevitably becomes associated with Cold War categories, and she responds by mockingly assuming the roles assigned to her as an Eastern European writer, a feminist, and a woman. These various portions of her identity are assembled and disassembled like pieces of a collage, made up of images, texts, cultural references, and memories that are shared by the protagonist and her various social circles, such as her students and colleagues, her partner, her family back home, her neighbors, acquaintances, feminists, and other Eastern European exiles/intellectuals. The narrator's position as an Eastern European scholar is textualized as a cliché that can be deconstructed in the vein of the then dominant mode of theoretical inquiry. Trained in realist and modernist types of writing that are based on different models of a self-world relationship, the narrator cannot accept the dominant intellectual model of inquiry that largely eschews the exigencies of time, history, and politics. During creative writing classes, she feels that discussions of form, textuality, and narrative overwhelm any interest in representations of reality and its affect. The writer's comfortable Midwestern life is set against flattened surroundings just as she herself becomes an object of stereotyping, as evidenced in the way she is often mistaken for a citizen of another socialist country, not the former Yugoslavia.

After a while, the autodiegetic narrator departs from the relatively straightforward—though layered and densely associative—mimetic rendition of her interior state. The master-genres of diary and travelogue cease to function as adequate structuring devices as the story moves to another location—New York City. With its transfer to the city, the autodiegetic narrative divides into several hypodiegetic levels, where the narrator uses various alter egos as indicators of the protagonist's intense self-examination and her refusal to acknowledge the supremacy of ideologically inflected realities over her imaginary worlds.

The second part of the text is an embedded novel entitled *Sombra* (“shadow”) featuring Bela Hora, an exile from post-1968 Czechoslovakia and an art historian, who is at the center of a circle of dissidents in New York, trying to reassemble her life after the Soviet coup in her country. Marked by a shift in voice, the narrator uses a focalized, psychological narrative to probe into Bela's internal world as a correlative for her own life and art. New York offers a stylized, iconic, intensely visual, and intermedial *mise-en-scène* for Bela's story that ironically undercuts the urgency with which she tries to revive her pre-exile past. Bela's perception of the US hyperreality in which she finds herself is marked by her growing sense of fragmentation, and is accompanied by physical reaction, such as intense migraines, nausea, and panic attacks. Her “reality” is reassembled as a historical narrative in the next sections, which are recounted by an impersonal narrator, as if the academic traveler from the first part had transposed her sense of spiritual wandering onto Bela's displacement as a “refugee” (176).

The novel's choice of a narrator from the former Czechoslovakia may be read as an indirect, veiled commentary on the Yugoslav situation. The full ramifications of this layering become obvious only from a postsocialist perspective. The former Yugoslavia devised a special brand of communism called “Titoism” or “Yugoslavism” in order to set itself apart from the dominant Soviet variant.¹⁴ While the Yugoslav government did not have the political will or wherewithal to implement full totalitarian control over all aspects of society, the country exhibited totalitarian features, such as the uninterrupted, thirty-five year rule of a political leader within a single-party system, the existence of political prisoners, the judiciary's dependence on party dictates, and a lack of division between government branches. The impression that Yugoslavia differed from other socialist countries was largely a result of Tito's unprecedented break with Stalin in 1948 despite his actual ideological affinity with the Soviet Union. Because of Yugoslavia's somewhat unique position in the Eastern Bloc,

postsocialism carries different meanings in Yugoslav successor nations. The narrator's dissident history, a personalized, intimate rendering of the 1968 revolution in Czechoslovakia, is a poignant equivalent to the narrator's sense of spiritual exile.

In Blažević-Krietzman's work, history overtakes her plots and protagonists with urgency and inexorability, while she uses elements of the historical genre to question global politics before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Her work revolves around individual and collective forms of memory, exhibiting in the aftermath of the Cold War an abiding concern with the recent past as recorded in postsocialist diasporic literature.¹⁵ Blažević-Krietzman places the idea of socialism in imaginative contrast to the US capitalist order, and in doing so reaffirms literature as an oppositional practice in the absence of large-scale political opposition.

Bela's sense of disintegration intensifies to such an extent that the last part of her story, her meetings with a mysterious Chicana in a fabulous apartment on Fifth Avenue, could very well be a figment of her imagination, an interlude, or another transposition forestalling her complete breakdown. Blažević-Krietzman (1989: 233) leaves the ending of her story of historical exile and intellectual journey in suspension, while using the US scene as a canvas for the intersecting histories of those inhabiting "this land of strangers." In contrast to dominant Cold War geopolitical understandings of socialism and its aftermath, which sets Western democracy against the "other" of communism/socialism, the messy realities and open futures depicted in the work of Novakovich and Blažević-Krietzman refuse closure and simple assessments of past and present.¹⁶ Their work sets itself in the tradition of literary productions under socialism, where art provided the semblance of an oppositional public sphere in the absence of other viable forms of dissent. Even after gaining a foothold in the US cultural scene, the two writers continue to construct Cold War imaginaries that challenge dominant US perspectives by recasting socialist paradigms of counter-identification in a new oppositional model. Residing on the inside and the outside of their host country, writing in English and Croatian, and addressing multiple national audiences, Blažević-Krietzman and Novakovich imagine a new kind of geopolitical worlding that exceeds the tripartite division of the globe.

Transnationalizing the Croatian War

In addition to translating issues of postsocialism for Anglophone audiences, Novakovich has employed his hyphenated position as a diasporic postsocialist writer to produce English-language representations of the Croatian war and military conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁷ The war began after Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence in June 1991 and continued after the European Union and other countries recognized Croatia's independence in January 1992. (The US government's recognition came relatively late, in April 1992.) The Serbian paramilitary joined forces with the Yugoslav People's Army, which supported only one state of the ex-federation, Serbia, and promoted the dissolution of Yugoslavia in May 1992 (Goldstein 2011, 2:180). The motif of war is one of the mainstays in Croatian diasporic fiction and in the work of contemporary post-Yugoslav writers, and thus renders this work different from other postsocialist diasporic representations (Crnković 2012). The focus on war also allows post-Yugoslav diasporic authors to extend their concerns with history and memory to the present by interrogating the chaotic and dehumanizing experiences of military conflict more generally.

In its initial stages, the war could not be understood through any existing interpretive political or ethical lens. Yugoslavia's breakdown was described in more nebulous terms that exceeded accounts of the end of the communist and Cold War era (Drapac 2010: 1, 21, 245). As the Cold War paradigm was crumbling in nations such as the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and, most dramatically, Yugoslavia, a new imaginary took hold. Novakovich has likened his impulse to start writing in the 1990s to a survivor's reflex. As an interested yet geographically distant observer, he visited his home country during the war to look for story ideas, even as in "The Anti-Story" (2003) he recognized this impulse as parasitic. In a metatextual meditation on the paradoxical relationship between war and literature, Novakovich points to the uselessness and absurdity of writing during wartimes, precisely at the moment when he is surrounded by story-worthy material. His descriptions of a refugee camp on the frontline of eastern Croatia, stories of betrayal and heroism, and accounts of crime and victimization often blend together.

Novakovich addresses this ambivalence in the opening story of his 1995 collection *Yolk*. In "The Burning Clog," a prospective writer who is attending writing workshops in the United States is visiting his home to find inspiration in its flourishing oral traditions. However, he soon

realizes that the presumably “natural” local propensity for storytelling is a finely honed craft akin to clogmaking. As the young writer listens to the storyteller, who is also a clogmaker, he realizes that war is a source of endless stories. “Instead of a writing program,” he says, “I need a war. If I survived, I’d have enough stories to last a lifetime” (1995b: 9). This metanarrative intervention is placed at the beginning of Novakovich’s first story collection, identifying the war in Croatia as having instigated his writing and invigorating his perspective on the military conflict.

Fictionalizing the catastrophe for an international audience presents a challenge to Novakovich, since his own family was directly affected by war operations across Croatia (1995a: 175, 177, 179). But even as he acknowledges the existential nature of this conflict, he remains aware of his own position as both an insider and outsider to the war. Novakovich explains why in the 1990s war became a paradigm in his writing, saying, “Most writing about the war has been journalism. I’ve found that to understand what people go through, I have to resort to fiction” (2005: 9). His fictional rendering of war also follows some rules. As he explains it, “I wanted to cover the war from many points of view, ethnically, and in terms of gender. I have one story from a child’s perspective” (11).

Novakovich’s transnational perspective on the war in Croatia is developed against the backdrop of what Meštrović has called the emergence of a “postemotional society.” Meštrović (1997: 1) argues that in the postmodern era of “the mechanization of emotional life,” emotional responses are often incommensurate with the event that instigated them. Scaled-down emotional reactions tend to be responses to peer pressure, attempts at conformity or expressions of moral ambivalence by other-oriented personalities.¹⁸ Postemotionalism relies on simulated, pre-packaged emotions that fail either to sustain empathy or to incite a corresponding intellectual or moral response (Riesman 1997: ix).

Feeling himself immobilized by such scenarios in the early stages of the Croatian war, Novakovich creates emotionally charged situations through shocking first-person accounts or equally gruesome second-hand stories in *Apricots from Chernobyl* (1995). This strategy competes with the more widespread “blasé attitude” (Meštrović 1997: 1) toward the war. For instance, Meštrović argues that while images of the war, first in Croatia and then in Bosnia and Herzegovina, came pouring into US and Western European homes and were compounded by verified reports, the informational (and graphic) overload prevented the emergence of a clear moral stand or political action (13, 55–56). Novakovich (1995a: 183) references this (hyper)mediated nature of war in the example of an

especially graphic photograph of a dead Croatian soldier in Slavonia, the eastern part of Croatia bordering Serbia that was marked by particularly heavy fighting. The photographer sold the image to foreign reporters, who claimed authorship to assert their (simulated) presence on the frontlines. The image thus turned into a commodified media fetish of the conflict in ways that, according to the postemotional standards, falls under the category of moral ambiguity.

As he overcomes his reluctance to represent the full scale of the war, Novakovich creates emotionally charged stories that emphasize the surreal nature of wartime horrors and refuse to normalize war. In “Sheepskin” (1998), the battle of Vukovar is recounted by an anonymous, disoriented, and unreliable protagonist who survived the siege of the city and escaped from the ensuing reprisals. The author employs narrative twists to shake up the audience’s complacency. Another of his stories, “Honey in the Carcass” (1998), presents a fantastic plot, in which a Croatian beekeeper and his wife hid in their besieged town of Vukovar while a swarm of bees murdered their attackers.

Toward US Croatian Transnational Fiction

In the more contemporary period, Blažević-Krietzman and Novakovich have expanded their thematic range and shuttle more freely between the geographies of the United States and postsocialist Croatia, which are becoming more alike, while also addressing the complexities of globalization. Paradoxically, the protagonists of the two writers’ fictional and nonfictional writing appear better suited to navigate the Cold War mental and political blocs than the contemporary muddle.

In the latest phase of their work, both writers have developed even more explicitly transnational perspectives. While their diasporic and immigrant position has enabled them to develop transnationally infused perspectives on the Cold War, socialism, and the Homeland War, their bilingual and multilocal focus has also rendered their work part of the new body of US geopolitical writing, as theorized by Caren Irr. Irr (2014: 3) proposes that twenty-first century US fiction “actively seeks creative ways to move beyond existing national forms,” increasingly leaning toward international themes, a global scope of action, multicultural characters, plots that celebrate mobility, and more diverse communities in order to reflect on “the interconnected global environment of the new millennium” (2). US literature has become transnational to such an unprecedented extent precisely because the ranks of its writers are filled

by immigrant authors, such as Novakovich, whose geopolitical imaginary was ushered in by the end of the Cold War. Even though he is only briefly referenced in Irr's study, Novakovich can be placed into several of her categories, including MFA program writing, migrant writing, and "self-consciously 'indie' literature" (8).

In the most recent stage of his creative work, Novakovich (2012: 13) has self-identified as a Canadian author with multiple identities whose work is firmly rooted in the English language. In his collection of essays *Shopping for a Better Country*, which employs various genres stretching from journalism to the travelogue, Novakovich assumes the new role of a US expat who has turned his back on his former (host) country. "America, now in a state of disarray," he writes, "had suddenly alienated me." *Shopping* points to a shift away from Novakovich's earlier, US-based collection of essays *Plum Brandy*. The new work revisits themes, situations, and protagonists described in his earlier writing from his new position of double immigrant. The collection can be divided into personal and familial essays, in which Novakovich traverses the present and past of his extended transatlantic family and focuses on US and Croatian/European themes.

Novakovich's latest shift in perspective also shapes his observations on life in postsocialist Southeastern Europe, which is now well on its way to capitalism. However, some roadblocks remain, as revealed in his postwar take on the city of Vukovar, which has remained a main motif in his writing. The essay entitled "Vukovar," dated September 15, 1997, reads like a piece of journalism and is a record of Novakovich's official visit as a journalist to the occupied easternmost part of Croatia. It deals with the period about which comparatively little is known, the time after the complete destruction and takeover of the city by the Serbian/YPA (Yugoslav People's Army) forces on November 18, 1991, and its seven-year occupation before the city and the region were peacefully reintegrated into Croatia under the UN mandate in January 1998. The lack of engagement with cultural, collective, and historical memory in post-Yugoslav nations, which differs from Germany's attitude toward its World War II history (Assman [1993] 2002: 7), may be one of the reasons why the past always threatens to return in this region of the world.

In "Balkan Express," another piece in Novakovich's collection, the author again overlays several temporal layers onto a geography he had reinvented numerous times in his earlier writing. His account of his recent train ride from Zagreb to Sofia, Bulgaria, begins as a nostalgic recollection of the receding network of railroads and trains in the global

age of air and road travel. The story's facetious title and its seemingly orientalist sentiment obscure Novakovich's more serious investigation into the historical, cultural, and political implications of Austro-Hungarian empire-building, as manifested in the erection of railroads as vehicles of colonial enterprise and civilization. According to Nikola Petković (2003: 41), "the mechanism of colonization of Central Europe from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries" by the Habsburg Empire proceeded by "a spatial rather than a temporal model" (42), which evinced what he has called a "centripetal colonial structure." In his writing, Novakovich establishes a striking comparison between the political joint ventures promoted by Austria-Hungary and more contemporary efforts carried out in the same geography by the equally ambitious European Union. The latest globalizing push will likely lead to the demise of the railroads, and it is unclear what will be put in its place. The railroad stands in for the historical memory of a Central and Southeastern Europe under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which is slowly passing away as it is swallowed by globalization, another form of colonization, this time by the European Union.

Like Novakovich's work, Blažević-Krietzman's writing resides on the borders of genres, languages, cultures, and national literatures. Even if she mostly stays away from writing in English, Blažević-Krietzman's work also falls into Irr's model of US geopolitical literature, particularly the category of "program fiction," since the author was trained in creative writing at the University of Iowa. In her US period, Blažević-Krietzman's fiction has become more economical, her sentences clipped and precise, while dialogue remains her favorite way of providing character analysis (2012b: 57). Her 2012 collection of short stories *Marilyn Monroe, moja majka* (*Marilyn Monroe, My Mother*), released in Zagreb, uses transnational characters, who, according to Irr's (2014: 4) model of the geopolitical novel, are the actual "hero[es] of globalization" as they strive to achieve agency "in a media-saturated environment." Blažević-Krietzman (2012b: 57) has said about her book, which contains stories from 1991 onward, that it "is a collection of varied and mixed identities, in which I claim that each one of us is multicultural in their own way." Half of the stories are set in the United States and feature multiethnic characters, while the other half are set in Croatia. The title story introduces the key motif that unifies the collection, the multiplicity of images of Marilyn Monroe that render her "real" self unfathomable. All of the novel's characters are pursuing a phantom, whether they are experiencing life-changing encounters or internal changes. Each story registers processes of transformation, either

when characters' physical movement places them in contact with the strange or when their earlier experiences are revalued through the lens of crisis. The crisis is often only alluded to and left unresolved.

The US setting features a motley crew of characters, including business travelers, US returnees to Croatia, and US emigrants or refugees from Croatia (or Bosnia and Herzegovina). Their state of mobility constitutes a substantive facet of their shifting self-awareness. All the characters play out their identities in the vein of the titular character, with one explicitly claiming fictive kinship with Monroe. Marilyn embodies both the trashy and mythical aspects of the United States, parasitically subsisting on the hyperreality of US popular culture that has come to encompass the globe and, to some, indicates the "end of history" (Ramet and Crnković 2003). The stories also record the irruption of different realities: the realization of illusions, the flight from war, the search for one's origin, attempts to escape one's origin, and efforts to address the trauma of war. Rather than indicting her characters for pursuing their illusions, Blažević-Krietzman is sympathetic to their US-based or Americanized trajectories of self-discovery. But she also makes clear that the "America" conjured in her work is a myth rather than a real *topos*.

If we link the transformation of her characters with an insight Novakovich proposed in his ironic farewell to the United States as the country of his immigrant dreams, which had been pursued over generations of his family, we can claim that the United States has ceased to be the privileged space of immigration for Croatian American diasporic writers, having become only *one* possible place for their ruminations. Their experiences of European state socialism, a system presumably antithetical to the capitalist United States, has provided them with critical views of the United States while also shaping their creative visions of an interconnected world. The demise of state socialism in Europe spawned their ironic and nostalgic creative productions, made more poignant by their focus on the Croatian war, while the latest geopolitical turn in their fiction leaves them searching for a sense of order in the disorienting reality of the United States and the ever more confusing world. In its choice of themes, protagonists, and locations, their writing strongly advocates for a new transnationalist literature, while also asking for the development of new critical models for the study of transnationalism in US literature and culture.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the editors of the special issue and the anonymous reviewer for their astute and committed reading of this essay. The initial research for this article was supported by a generous grant from the J. F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies Library at the Freie Universität Berlin. I would also like to acknowledge key support by the Croatian Science Foundation (HRZZ-1543).



Jelena Šesnić is associate professor in the Department of English at the University of Zagreb, Croatia. Author of *From Shadow to Presence: Representations of Ethnicity in Contemporary American Literature* (2007) and *Mračne žene. Prikazi ženstva u američkoj književnosti (1820–1860)* (*Dark Ladies: Figures of Femininity in American Literature [1820–1860]*; 2010), she is editor of *Siting America, Sighting Modernity: Essays in Honor of Sonja Bašić* (2010) and coeditor of *The Errant Labor of the Humanities: Festschrift Presented to Stipe Grgas* (2017). Šesnić is president of the Croatian Association for American Studies, coorganizer of the annual Zagreb American Studies Workshops, and vice-president of the Association for American Studies in South-Eastern Europe.

Notes

1. Donald Pease's assessment is indicative of attempts to account for significant "re-mappings" and "re-imaginings" in American studies, which he connects with two events, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the terrorist attacks of 9/11. His account is less clear on the extent that the transnational turn has displaced previous "disciplinary formations" (2011: 1).
2. Ronald Reagan's Brandenburg Gate Speech in Berlin, which he delivered in 1987, less than two years before the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, is even more representative than his successor's rather staid addresses (see Reagan 2005). Soon afterward, the United States would shift its attention to the First Gulf War. Reports in the European press employed the term "peaceful revolution" (or, more famously, "velvet revolution," a term describing the events that led to the demise of Czechoslovakia) to account for the end of the communist era. For a more balanced and historically minded approach, see Dahrendorf (1992) 1996; Garton Ash 1993.
3. All translations from Croatian are mine.
4. For the purpose of this argument, the action of remembering refers to first-hand cognitive and affective activities, while memorializing and commemorating designate second-hand, mostly collective processes of

working with the material processed first-hand. These activities can occur on the individual and the collective level (Fara and Patterson 1998).

5. The reluctance in many postsocialist countries to tackle the painful and often disgraceful socialist past manifests itself in weak institutional support, outright resistance, or hostility. For an account of the Polish failure to face its past, see Garton Ash 2007.

6. Resolution 1096 of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in 1996, Resolution 1481 of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in 2006, and the European Parliament Resolution on European Conscience and Totalitarianism, 2 April 2009 point to the persistence of some of these issues. Opposition to the resolutions points to a plethora of causes, some of which are denounced by Darko Polšek (2011).

7. US-based scholar Andreas Huyssen (2000) noticed a significant rise in memory and trauma studies as well as in historical revisionism in the West in the early 1980s through 1990s, with a focus on the ghostly past as one of the emerging themes.

8. All quotations are from the Croatian version of the story.

9. Godzich (2014) correctly criticizes the fantasy that free enterprise can adequately transform defunct socialist societies, but he does not address the moral and institutional failures of former communist societies in preventing the emergence of a public sphere independent of the single party system.

10. For a brief, informative overview of the history of Yugoslav feminism in the mid-1970s to the early 1990s, see Knežević 2004. Gender difference, according to Knežević, could not easily be incorporated into the Marxist concept of a classless society. The dominant party rhetoric characterized feminism as “nestl[ed] in a petit-bourgeois sphere of the capitalist society” (252) in order to launch an attack on feminism at home. In addition, even though socialism was thought to eventually lead to the emancipation of all men (and women), the rise of women’s prose and its focus on private concerns was considered subversive (i.e., bourgeois) in a society focused on collective enterprise. This is just one instance when an emerging quasi-public sphere stopped seeing eye-to-eye with the Yugoslav communist party’s politics, which had become highly contentious by the 1980s, and unraveled with the advent of war in the 1990s.

11. Obviously, I am not pursuing a strictly historical argument here since I deal with the endurance and impact of representation. For a documentary report from the period of late communism that disrupts the official imaginary of the country, see the US Helsinki Watch Committee’s reports on the state of human rights in SFR Yugoslavia in the 1980s prior to the country’s dissolution, entitled *Violations of the Helsinki Accords: Yugoslavia* (1986); *As the Federation Disintegrates: Human Rights in Yugoslavia* (1989).

12. The nominal obsolescence of the public sphere in socialist states might be explained by the communist party's monopoly on power, which means that the party "monopolizes to a great degree the management of all the social processes to the extent that the very reproduction of life is identified with the reproduction of the established power relation" (Kuvačić 1997: 15; translation mine).

13. All references are to the Croatian edition.

14. Aleksa Djilas (1991: 174–80) points out that "Titoism" was interchangeable with "Yugoslavism," as used in the League of Communists' documents. After the attack by Stalin, Yugoslav communists began to articulate a specific brand of their revolution that relied on the figure of Josip Broz Tito and was self-sustaining, functioning without Soviet help during the war. For a glowing view of Tito and his contributions to the Yugoslav state, see Edvard Kardelj (1977), one of the Party's leading ideologues and Tito's closest and most loyal associates, in particular his laudatory speech commemorating Tito's thirty years at the head of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (esp. 45–59).

15. Already in January 1991, George H. Bush announced a New World Order in which the Cold War was supplanted by a new international political agenda focused on the Middle East (2005: 113–20). All subsequent presidents have maintained this focus with varying degrees of intensity, which has recently been compounded by an emphasis on other points of interest, such as China and North Korea.

16. In fostering such an imaginary, they come much closer to the domestic, i.e., Croatian and Central/Eastern European imaginings of (post)socialism, as the phenomenon is placed in a comparative context by Maša Kolanović. As Kolanović (2013: 11) points out, the tenacity of the term the "other Europe," a Cold war label used by the West, is evidenced in efforts to separate it from the objects of definition. Her edited collection employs "different national experiences and *the emotional capital*" so as to present "a symbolic politics of comparative analyses of Slavic experiences of a postsocialist condition" (12; translation mine). The introduction applies the Bakhtinian term of the chronotope to contemporary attempts to apprehend the states of transition, postsocialism, postcommunism, and the like.

17. See Novakovich 2003: 147. Angela Courtney Brkic also employs a transnational perspective in her collection of short stories *Stillness and Other Stories* (2013) and in her memoir *The Stone Fields: Love and Death in the Balkans* (2004), which spans several generations of her family in the turbulent twentieth century framed by the aftermath of the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sara Nović's *Girl at War* (2015) is another example. But both authors are US writers, and therefore do not fall within the scope of this discussion. For comparable writing projects in Croatian by diasporic Croatian

American writers, see Blažević-Krietzman's novel *Ples na pepelu* (*Dancing on the Ashes*; 1994) and Vladimir Goss's thematization of the war in his fiction and nonfiction, including *Antigonin dnevnik* (*Antigone's Diary*; 1993); *Washingtonska fronta* (*The Washington Front*; 1994); the war trilogy: *Nada* (*Hope*; 1996), *Dayton* (1999), *Nagodba* (*The Settlement*; 2002); *S obje strane oceana* (*Across the Ocean*; 2001).

18. For a definition of the other-directed personality type, see Riesman, Glazer, and Denney 1954: 32–48.

Works Cited

- Assmann, Aleida. (1993) 2002. *Rad na nacionalnom pamćenju* (*Work on the National Memory*). Translated by A. Bajazetov-Vučen. Belgrade: Biblioteka XX vek.
- Assmann, Aleida. 2014. "Transnational Memories." *European Review* 22, no. 4: 546–56.
- Blažević, Neda Miranda. 1989. *Američka predigra. Roman*. Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske.
- Blažević-Krietzman, Neda Miranda. 2010. "Terorizam i prijelazi preko hladnoratovskih granica." In *Sedamdesete. Zbornik*, edited by Irena Lukšić, 347–62. Zagreb: HFD, Biblioteka Književna smotra.
- Blažević-Krietzman, Neda Miranda. 2012a. "The Entry into Tin's Coffee Shop Was Like the Entry into a Reading Room." Interview by Željko Valentić. *Forum* 44, no. 1: 56–57.
- Blažević-Krietzman, Neda Miranda. 2012b. *Marilyn Monroe, moja majka. Pripovijetke*. Zagreb: Fraktura.
- Bush, George H. 2005. "The New World Order." In *American Political Speeches*, edited by Klaus Stüwe and Birgit Stüwe, 113–20. Stuttgart, Germany: Reclam.
- Crnković, Gordana P. 2012. *Post-Yugoslav Literature and Film: Fires, Foundations, Flourishes*. New York: Bloomsbury.
- Dahrendorf, Ralf. (1992) 1996. *Razmatranja o revoluciji u Europi* (*Reflections on the Revolution in Europe*). Translated by I. Prpić. Zagreb: Izdanja Antibarbarus.
- Djilas, Aleksa. 1991. *Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919–1953*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Drapac, Vesna. 2010. *Constructing Yugoslavia: A Transnational History*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Duda, Igor. 2005. *U potrazi za blagostanjem. O povijesti dokolice i potrošačkoga društva u Hrvatskoj 1950-ih i 1960-ih*. Zagreb: Srednja Europa.
- Fara, Patricia, and Karalyn Patterson. 1998. "Introduction." In *Memory*, edited by Patricia Fara and Karalyn Patterson, 1–9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Fluck, Winfried. 2009. "The Fallen Hero: John F Kennedy in Cultural Perspective." In *Romance with America?*, 471–95. Heidelberg, Germany: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- Garton Ash, Timothy. 1993. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. London: Vintage.
- Garton Ash, Timothy. 2007. "Poland Has Made a Humiliating Farce out of Dealing with Its Red Ghosts." *Guardian*, May 17. www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2007/may/24/comment.
- Godzich, Wlad. 2014. "Sekend-Hend Europe." *boundary 2* 41, no. 1: 1–15.
- Goldstein, Ivo. 2011. *Povijest Hrvatske, 1945–2011*. 3 vols. Zagreb: EPH.
- Huysen, Andreas. 2000. "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia." *Public Culture* 12, no. 1: 21–38.
- Irr, Caren. 2014. *Toward the Geopolitical Novel: US Fiction in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kardelj, Edvard. 1977. *Tito i jugoslavenska socijalistička revolucija*. Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, Dnevnik, Naša knjiga.
- Kim, Jodi. 2010. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Knežević, Đurđa. 2004. "Kraj ili novi početak?—Feminizam od šezdesetih do danas u Jugoslaviji/Hrvatskoj." In *Žene u Hrvatskoj. Ženska i kulturna povijest*, edited by A. Feldman, 247–60. Zagreb: Institut Vlado Gotovac, Ženska infoteka.
- Koenen, Gerd. (2010) 2011. *Što je bio komunizam? (What Was Communism?)*. Translated by N. Popović. Zagreb: Durieux.
- Kolanović, Maša. 2013. *Komparativni postsocijalizam: slavenska iskustva*. Zagreb: Zagrebačka slavistička škola.
- Kuvačić, Ivan. 1997. *Kako se raspao boljševizam. Deset eseja o problemima prijelaznog razdoblja*. Zagreb: Naprijed.
- Mazurkiewicz, Anna, and Mieczysław Nurek. 2013. "Introduction." In *East Central Europe in Exile*, vol. 1, edited by Anna Mazurkiewicz, xiii–xxii. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.
- Meštrović, Stjepan. 1997. *Postemotional Society*. London: Sage.
- Novakovich, Josip. 1995a. *Apricots from Chernobyl*. Saint Paul, MN: Graywolf.
- Novakovich, Josip. 1995b. *Yolk*. Saint Paul, MN: Graywolf.
- Novakovich, Josip. 1998. *Salvation and other Disasters*. Saint Paul, MN: Graywolf.
- Novakovich, Josip. 2003. *Plum Brandy: Croatian Journeys*. Buffalo, NY: White Pine.
- Novakovich, Josip. 2005. *Infidelities: Stories of War and Lust*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Novakovich, Josip. 2012. *Shopping for a Better Country: Essays*. Westland, MI: Dzanc.
- Novakovich, Josip. 2013. "Gdje sam bio kad je umro Kennedy? U slastičarni ("Where Was I When Kennedy Died? In a Pastry Shop, Daruvar, Jugoslavija, 1963"). *Jutarnji list*, November 9, 55.

- Novakovich, Josip, and Robert Shapard. 2000. "Introduction." In *Stories in the Stepmother Tongue*, edited by Novakovich and Shapard, 9–18. Buffalo, NY: White Pine.
- Pavlović, Ivan. 2013. "Moje pisanje pripada i Hrvatskoj." *Vijenac* 30: 12.
- Pease, Donald. 2009. *The New American Exceptionalism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Pease, Donald. 2011. "Introduction: Re-mapping the Transnational Turn." In *Re-Framing the Transnational Turn in American Studies*, edited by Winfried Fluck, et al., 1–46. Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press.
- Petković, Nikola. 2003. *A Central Europe of Our Own: Postmodernism, Postcolonialism, Postcommunism, and the Absence of Authenticity*. Rijeka, Croatia: Adamić.
- Polšek, Darko. 2011. "Socijalni meandri ilustracije—retribucije i pomirenja." *Europski glasnik* 16: 263–77.
- Primorac, Strahimir. 2012. "Priče u kojima pulsira suvremenost." *Vijenac* 6: 12.
- Ramet, Sabrina P, and Gordana P. Crnković, eds. 2003. *Kazaam! Splat! Ploof! The American Impact on European Popular Culture since 1945*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Reagan, Ronald. 2005. "Brandenburg Gate Speech." In *American Political Speeches*, edited by Klaus Stüwe and Birgit Stüwe, 103–12. Stuttgart, Germany: Reclam.
- Riesman, David. 1997. "Foreword." In *Postemotional Society*, by Stjepan Meštrović, ix–x. London: Sage.
- Riesman, David, Nathan Glazer, and Reuel Denney. 1954. *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*. Abridged. New York: Doubleday.
- Taylor, Charles. 2004. *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Todorova, Maria. 2010. "Introduction: The Process of Remembering Communism." In *Remembering Communism: Genres of Representation*, edited by Maria Todorova, 9–34. New York: Social Science Research Council.
- US Helsinki Watch Committee. 1986. *Violations of the Helsinki Accords: Yugoslavia. A Report Prepared for the Helsinki Review Conference*. Vienna: US Helsinki Watch Committee.
- US Helsinki Watch Committee. 1989. *As the Federation Disintegrates: Human Rights in Yugoslavia*. New York: US Helsinki Watch Committee.
- Verdery, Katherine. 1996. *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.