

provokes the question, especially in our era of proliferating populist movements, what peculiar sociopolitical contexts encourage radical nonconformists to side with authoritarian rather than progressive forces in turbulent times? Is this kind of entrenched rebelliousness indeed blind to the nature of the political system it fights, as Kazakov suggests?

The east-west binary was, evidently, a crucial aspect of nonconformists' struggle. Aside from the samizdat writers of Leningrad defying the official canon of Russian literature (Josephine von Zitzewitz); the "mad" artists ignoring canons in their own field, or the student activists of the Islam revival in Sarajevo (Madigan Andrea Fichter), all other actors' deviance scrutinized by this book's authors involved re-appropriations of western "imports": cultural, intellectual, economic (Anna Kan, Peter Angus Mitchell), or technological (Patrik Wasiak). The relativization of the east-west divide, without obliterating the differences between alternative practices on two sides of the Iron Curtain, is a welcome feature of this book, in part reflecting the inspiration and influence of Alexei Yurchak's seminal work on late socialist (late Soviet) subjectivity and culture. Yet at times it seems the "discovery" of the similar-but-unique aspect of the eastern versions of nonconformity happens at the expense of ignoring important earlier work, including that of György Péteri and his excellent metaphor of the "nylon curtain" to suggest how western flows of ideas and commodities could reach easterners with relative ease, and how the "West" was perceived in the fun house mirrors of state-socialist societies (György Péteri, ed., *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, 2010.) My other criticism concerns the editors' heavy focus on two countries: six of the twelve essays cover the Soviet Union and two are dedicated to East Germany. Countries with more liberal cultural and/or economic policies are underrepresented. Their proportionate inclusion may have resulted in a more balanced representation of the phenomenon of dropping out and deviance in the region. Despite these flaws, there remains much to learn from and appreciate about the theoretical, historiographic, and ethnographic contributions of this book to the study of the former Soviet Bloc.

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Sarajevo's Holiday Inn on the Frontline of Politics and War. By Kenneth Morrison. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. xx, 248 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. \$100.00, hard bound.
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Sarajevo's Holiday Inn was built to host the 1984 Winter Olympics. The townspeople were proud to have outbid two other contenders. They hoped that the various Olympic sports venues, the new roads and housing would bring prosperity to the city. The 1984 events could also help knit together Sarajevo's multi-cultural community in post-Tito Yugoslavia. Tito, who had presided over the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's (SFRY) eight components since the end of World War II, had died in 1980.

Ivan Štraus, a well-known architect, won the competition to build the new hotel. Construction began in 1981. The completed building was not your usual Holiday Inn, which first appeared in Memphis, Tennessee in 1952. That model was simple, suited to affordable family travel, and rather boxy in style. Štraus's Holiday Inn was a yellow architectural wonder with a gaudy atrium, ten levels, multiple restaurants, boutiques, travel agencies, a casino, and a "disko." It attracted royalty and pop stars, and became an elite vacation destination. Štraus's hotel opened on October 6, 1983. Its first

guest was Juan Antonio Samaranch, head of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). He occupied the 5th floor Presidential Suite, and was delighted with what came to be known as the “Olympic” hotel.

The Olympics were a great success, giving Sarajevo (and Yugoslavia) international visibility, while the hotel itself boosted the reputation of the Holiday Inn franchise. But when the athletes departed, the spirit of “brotherhood and unity” among Yugoslavs, which the event had also promoted, was flagging. The economy was in trouble, there was an oil crisis, and nationalism was spawning multiparty elections. Of Yugoslavia’s eight political units, Serbia, with its capital of Belgrade (also Yugoslavia’s capital) was hoping to keep all Serbs—wherever in the SFRY—under Belgrade’s control. Slovenia and Croatia resisted. Ultimately, on June 25, 1991, those two northern republics declared independence. A ten-day war sealed Slovenia’s case: a truce and international recognition. Croatia was also recognized, but with its substantial ethnic Serb inhabitants, war with Serbia dragged on until 1995.

For Bosnia and Herzegovina, the most ethnically diverse of Yugoslavia’s republics, the story would be complex. Its three major ethnic communities were Serbs, Croats, and Muslims (technically a national group). The latter two got on relatively well, while the Serbs preferred to work with Serbs in Serbia. Meticulously chronicling events after January 1990 when the SFRY collapsed, the author takes up the formation of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s political parties. The leading two were Social Democratic Action (SDA) led by Alija Izetbegović and the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) headed by Radovan Karadžić. The parties spent most of the year sorting out programs. Many meetings were held at the Holiday Inn, which had ample meeting space and housing. SDA generally supported independence, while SDS backed remaining in Yugoslavia and preparing for cooperation with Serbia which could (and did) entail engaging the Serb-dominated Yugoslav National Army in order to realize the goal of Serbian unity.

In the interval, the Holiday Inn became “militarized.” Karadžić with his family took up residence in the fifth floor Presidential suite. With tensions mounting and war raging in Croatia, the SDS used armed supporters to monitor hotel guests. Holiday Inn HQ in Atlanta objected, to no avail, to Kalashnikov-armed men loitering in the lobby. Regular clientele quickly disappeared. The situation was somewhat stabilized when UNPROFOR peacekeeping monitors in Croatia were re-assigned to Bosnia. They settled into the Holiday Inn, too. Soon journalists, following the “Yugoslav” crisis, joined them. Sarajevo and the Holiday Inn thus fell into a war that lasted three and a half years. The first shots were fired on April 6, 1992, either from or toward the Holiday Inn, which thereafter remained on the front lines of the fighting. Its southern side became a favorite target of snipers.

The most interesting chapters are based on the author’s interviews of journalists, diplomats (US Embassy HQ after 1993), and “hip intellectuals” who spent time in the Holiday Inn. Living accommodations were marginal. Only 100 of its 300 rooms were useable, seventy percent of the hotel’s windows had been shot out, and access was dangerous even by vehicle. The press used the hotel because it functioned: there was food, electricity, a dedicated staff and Sarajevo’s only direct-dialing international telephone link. CNN, BBC, ABC, and Reuters put satellite dishes on window ledges. Colleagues could provide translators, smuggled provisions, and booze. In post-war gatherings of the “Sarajevo press,” there was much nostalgia about the shared experience.

This book is poorly edited. It is repetitious; for example, a paragraph on page 171 has already appeared in the text on page 170, there are typos, and even a stray “ibid” in the right margin on page 77. Maps of the city and of Bosnia are much needed. Chapters 2 and 3 (pages 7–45) are about other hotels elsewhere that have

had siege experiences, yet are tacked on even though only marginally related to the Sarajevo story.

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Frustrated Democracy in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan. By Audrey L. Altstadt. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2017. xxiv, 317 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. Maps. \$60.00, hard bound.
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Audrey L. Altstadt's book, *Frustrated Democracy in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan*, discusses several key factors of Azerbaijan's political, economic, and social configuration and their evolution over the twenty-five years since 1991. Any examination of the current challenges that the country faces, such as respect for the rule of law and democratic values, violation of human rights, the unresolved Mountainous Karabakh conflict with Armenia, the threat of political Islamism, the likelihood of sectarian conflict, marginalized opposition groups, oil revenue related to corruption and distributive justice, must all be contextualized by an awareness of Azerbaijan's history since 1918. As a historian, with significant background on international relations, Altstadt examines and analyzes the failure of democracy-building that was started by the Azerbaijani Popular Front (APF) in 1992 and the notorious cases of corruption of the ruling Aliyev family and the oligarchs associated with it, as well as the establishment of authoritarianism behind a western façade.

The book is divided into seven chapters. Each chapter examines a particular theme: the impact of history and geopolitics on the establishment of a prosperous and democratic Azerbaijan; the Mountainous Karabakh conflict; the rise and decline of democratic government in light of APF's misunderstanding of democracy and how to apply it "in the shifting sands of 1992 Azerbaijan" (57); the impact of the oil and gas industry on Azerbaijani society and on the corruption of the ruling circles; the suppression of opposition groups, journalists, and human rights defenders; institutional Islam in Azerbaijan and the threat of radical Islamism to the Azerbaijani secular regime; and Azerbaijan's choices ahead.

The author explores three main areas to give a full picture of politics and society in post-Soviet Azerbaijan. First, the failure of democratic transition and pluralism after the first relatively free and fair multicandidate elections in 1992. The notion of democracy was impeded by rents from hydrocarbons, especially when oil became Azerbaijan's "source of fame in the world and supported its independence and security" (23). Second, the impact of oil money on Azerbaijani society. Altstadt investigates stunning levels of corruption in ruling circles, theft, fraud, bribery, and money laundering. Corruption penetrates every level of Azerbaijani society and government. Political change in Georgia, Ukraine, and the Middle East threatened regime stability and provided a pretext to crack down on civil society organizations and an excuse to avoid domestic reform and quash internal critics. Instability is the greatest danger to commercial interests from oil business to tourism. Altstadt convincingly argues that "the personal wealth of the Aliyev family and their inner circle depends on oil investments, construction, and globalization, which the oligarchs are not likely to jeopardize" (45). Third, the diminishing of western pressure by the European Union and the United States for the observance of human rights and of political democratization in Azerbaijan. The Aliyev regime has mastered the art of buying influence in Washington. It pays expensive consulting contracts to lobbyists and makes gifts