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Martin Pogačar. Media Archaeologies, Micro-Archives and Storytelling: Re-Presencing the Past. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. 233 pp. ISBN 978-1-137-52580-2.

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The development of participatory culture on the internet over the last 15 years has challenged conceptualizations of many social phenomena, including society's work with the past. Acknowledging efforts by José van Dijck (2007), Andrew Hoskins (2009, 2018), and others to accommodate the conceptual architecture of shared remembering to the Web 2.0 reality, the field of memory studies still remains undertheorized. *Media Archaeologies, Micro-Archives and Storytelling: Re-Presencing the Past* by Martin Pogačar intends to fill the conceptual void by exploring grassroots memory practices on the internet. Along with exploring digital memory, the book focuses on how online remembrance activities redefine or, in Pogačar's words, re-presence the Yugoslav past.

This study is built on media archaeology and micro-archiving approaches that provide a broader explanatory context for mnemonic work within different digital platforms and for an individual desire to save the past that permeates the digital world. The book begins with extended conceptual reflections that unfold over the first three chapters. Pogačar's theoretical perspective revolves around the idea that individuals are agents of *memonautica*, a set of practices that describe our moving around from one port to another in a sea of memories. To be sure, the ever-changing digital environment opens new horizons for *homo memonautilius*, triggering subversive imagery that may challenge hegemonic narratives of the past. Yet, as it is later demonstrated through the example of Yugoslavia, intimate and nonmainstream remembrance practices not only test but also reaffirm the limits of the dominant memory regime.

At the same time, Pogačar questions the role of individual memory actors. He introduces the concept of digital acousmatics that addresses omnipresent suspicions about the exact origin, credentials, and reliability of online content. That is, digital acousmatics describes "an interaction with audiovisuals that one 'sees' (on screen) without 'seeing' (or unseeing) the source (off screen)" (p. 40). Hence Pogačar primarily looks at the participants of an online memory discourse as wandering sailors in the sea of historical artefacts who sporadically add affective meanings to the objects of the past. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's elusive idea, Pogačar calls this democratic interpretive chaos as "whatever" conditions, which open to speculation and misinterpretation "not only one's views and positions but also the individual digital acousmatics of the mediated past" (p. 48).

Methodologically the book rests on multimodal discourse analysis. Such an approach provides complex empirical material that in various ways and at various times has manifested individual memorial activities vis-à-vis the Yugoslav past. The qualitative material is collected from blogs, Facebook pages, and YouTube videos. Yet Pogačar does not explain why he has selected these digital platforms in particular and why he has excluded from his analysis such social networking sites as Wikipedia and Twitter that are important sites of media archaeology and micro-archiving. It should be also noted that the prioritization of content over other layers narrows the analytical repertoire and capacity. In other words, the multimodal discourse analysis suggests that Pogačar's analytical radar in the data collection stage was not very sensitive to actual memory agents, including their offline identities, geography, or hidden motivations. Although such an attitude towards primary sources is in line with the idea of digital acousmatics, it restricts the author's capacity to comprehensively describe and explain online mnemonic agency.

The specific cases of media archaeology and micro-archiving analyzed in this book illustrate the varied expressions of postsocialist memory discourse on Yugoslav history. A chapter on museums and memorials on social media focuses on blogs and Facebook pages. In total, two blogs (*Balkan Legacy* and *Yugoslavia—A Virtual Museum*) and three Facebook accounts (SFR Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, Olivera Marković) are explored. Although Pogačar recognizes the profound differences between blogs and Facebook posts, his analysis of both digital genres indicates a common problem that is found in other empirical chapters of the book: cases are presented and explored in a very anecdotal manner. That is to say, a lack of thick comparative description, including a more thorough study of meaning-making elements in blog posts, Facebook pages, or YouTube comments (e.g., identification of major themes and interaction between them, description of discursive styles of users and of those who share Facebook posts, etc.) leads to a very sketchy picture of micro-archiving practices that too often remains ungrounded in the actual ex-Yugoslav reality. Moreover, instead of a systematic analysis of qualitative data, the author frequently confines himself to the surface structure of memory discourse. As a result, the case analysis occasionally looks detached from the main concepts that Pogačar so eloquently introduces in the previous chapters and which he persistently invokes in terms of specific digital platforms.

A chapter on Yugoslav popular music as a trigger for "whatever" memory discourse provides the most complete empirical investigation in the book. Pogačar explores four music blogs (*Jugozvuk*, *Nevaljaleploce*, *Zaboravljeni zvuci*, and *Najpogodnije mesto*) that show the diversity of the Yugoslav music scene in the late socialist period. Specifically, he closely examines and compares the posts of two blog administrators—Aktivista and Gramofonije—making the analytical story more focused and coherent. The bloggers' motivation, activities, and interactions with their readers reveal the role of Yugoslav popular music in forming a translocal as well as transnational memory. Pogačar argues that music blogging is "a social practice that recreates and perpetuates the network of the Yugoslav social and cultural milieu, primarily through triggering and articulating memories among former Yugoslavs in a

decidedly global context" (p. 140). He also suggests that such micro-archives "should be sustainably maintained and independent from the finitude of the archivist's life, interest, resources, or the ephemerality/expirability of links at remote storage sites" (p. 143).

The last case study in this book is dedicated to grassroots interventions on YouTube. Given that YouTube contains thousands of entries related to Yugoslavia, Pogačar narrows his scope to digital video memorials that mostly engage with themes, people, and events related to the Second World War, the postwar period, and the post-Yugoslav period. This chapter also delves into user comments that are posted under YouTube videos, including clashes between opposing commentators. YouTube comments, Pogačar argues, become "a part of the memorial for other users to react to (or not) in the act of 'accumulative mourning'" (p. 167). Nonetheless, the author holds a rather critical view of the digital storytelling debates between YouTubers, likening them to pub talk that rarely appears "to compromise users' fixed positions" (p. 178). The digital memorials of three selected YouTubers (mejerchold, XPartizani0zauvijekX, dugmicMala) epitomize Yugonostalgia as the main motif behind the individual will to remember and discuss the shared past. Nostalgia of postsocialist societies in general and Yugonostalgia in particular has been an extensively researched topic over the last 15 years. In this book, the YouTube audiovisual posts and the YouTubers' comments—be they about Yugoslav antifascist partisans or matured Yugoslav socialism—exemplify the multifaceted character of nostalgia that addresses the present social order and disillusionment in the ex-Yugoslav milieu. Likewise, nostalgic activities on YouTube illuminate resistance to the ruling memory regime that ignores the subjectivity and affectivities that people attach to the Yugoslav past.

The book concludes with the author's empirically grounded reflections on the subversive power of memory in the post-Yugoslav era. Pogačar acknowledges that grassroots micro-archiving practices help to transgress the official narratives of the past, which are embedded in the criticism of what Alexei Yurchak (2006) calls the performative authoritarian discourse of the late socialism. Digital platforms, used for micro-archiving, generate discursive space for emancipated historical representations and affectivities that often retain their disconnected and decontextualized "whatever" quality. Thus micro-archiving, as Pogačar admits, is "solitary in that an interpretation is co-created in an on-the-fly community of which 'I'… may have little experiential knowledge, apart from that affectively materialised on screen" (p. 195). These grassroots activities, the book suggests, are often enhanced by the legacy of Yugoslav pop culture and public intimacies that evolved outside the authoritarian discourse. Nevertheless, Pogačar is not overwhelmingly happy about the positive impact of the digital world on individualized memory practices. He eventually expresses a somewhat conservative warning that the hyperindividualized freedom, enhanced by micro-archiving activities, "poses a threat to reason, as well as to social values and, in its final instance may lead to the absence of (collective) meaning" (pp. 203–204). In the concluding chapter, Pogačar also recaps the idea of nostalgia, but he takes it to a more general level where nostalgia is seen as an inherently rebellious

mnemonic practice that serves as an ultimate benchmark, explaining relations with the recent past in the Balkan countries. In Pogačar's words, "The specificity of the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav situations politically and historically cannot be asserted unless post-Yugoslav memory practices are seen as being firmly rooted in blooming nostalgia" (p. 188).

Overall, this book is a good contribution to the ongoing conceptual discussion on how the digital world shapes the past and what it means for offline social memory practices. Yet the anecdotal character of case studies and rather inconsistent analytical thread should be considered as a limitation for providing comprehensive explanations about online mnemonic activities in the Balkan region. Arguably, a more deliberate attention to the internal diversity of the post-Yugoslav mnemonic community that is behind the various online actors could have provided a more complex and informative perspective on the participatory practices that define social networking sites—as well as other digital platforms in general and digital mnemonic activities in particular. In a nutshell, the book is an important contribution to memory studies, but not so much to area studies.

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