



Book Review

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Coca-Cola Socialism: The Americanization of Yugoslav Popular Culture in the 1960s

by Radina Vučetić

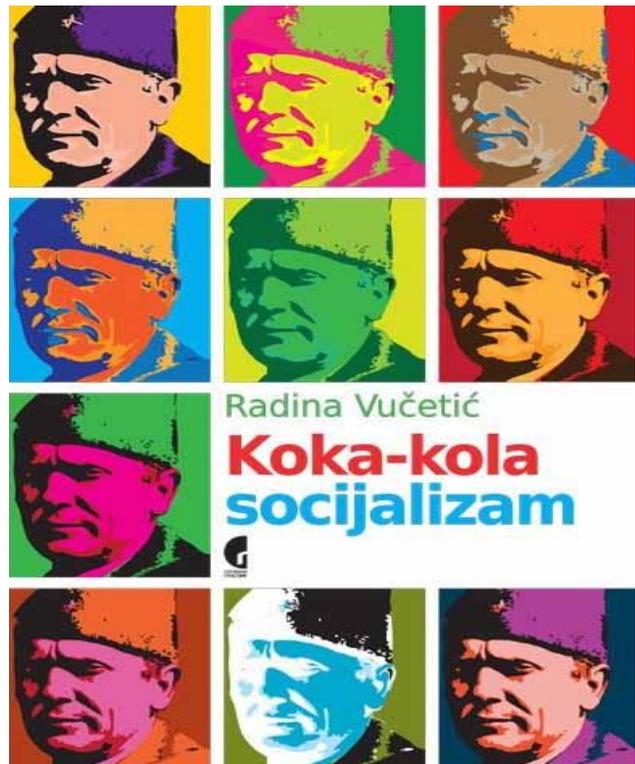
Belgrade, 2012

476 pages

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"Coca-Cola Socialism: The Americanization of Yugoslav Popular Culture in the 1960s" has been published as a derivative of the PhD thesis defended by the author and thus its scientific basis is very sound and relevant. But at the same time it is also a book that is fun to read and appeals to many generations of readers, from those who participated in the culture analyzed in it, to those youngsters who can find just traces of it in the contemporary societies of ex-Yugoslav countries. The book deals with the phenomena of domination of American e.g. US and later global culture in a socialist country of Yugoslavia in the sixties and onwards. It is thus a great starting point for all those analyzing and contemplating trends in the contemporary culture and societies from the aspect of globalization and different cultural influences, i.e. Western vs. Russian vs. Islamic vs. Chinese influences in certain societies of ex-Yugoslav countries.

The book is divided into five chapters and tells the story of relations between the culture and politics in socialist Yugoslavia in the era of cold war. Yugoslavia has been at the time the leader of non-alignment movement, balancing politically, economically and militarily between two antagonistic blocks of states lead by USA and SSSR, but also balancing between two antagonistic social, culture and value systems grounded in and symbolized by two paradigms, those of "socialism" and "capitalism", that each of these two blocks stood for. It is especially interesting for contemporary reader to look into dualism that existed in cultural approach that this book exposes: "As far as form is concerned, everything was allowed, from abstract art, pop-art and op-art, to spitting at the audience, concerts on pianos that were deliberately out of tune, and nudity on stage, yet when it came to substance, the ideology of brotherhood and unity,



communist dogmas, the working class and self-management were untouchable and defended by all means' (pp. 303–304)."

The author of the book Ms. Radina Vucetic is an associate professor at University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy. She is a researcher that focuses primarily on modernization process in Yugoslavia, cultural and social history of Yugoslavia and relations between Yugoslavia and USA.