field of historical research by allowing the history of historiography to make its re-entry into theory? The affirmative response to these questions will be further stimulated by the *OHHW*'s impressive dealings with the sheer bulk of empirical information required to represent its topic. These have definitively substantiated its own motto '*nec nimis*'. Indeed, less material and more synthesis on a much stronger theoretical basis is the clear-cut message of this series. There are few achievements more commendable than to have moved an emerging discipline into a position where it can make paradigmatic decisions. The editors of the *OHHW* are indeed entitled to make such a claim.

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Tito: A Biography, by Geoffrey Swain (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011; pp. 219. £59.50)

Geoffrey Swain has written a sympathetic biography of Yugoslav Communist leader Josip Broz, 'Tito', for an English language readership. Tito, of course, is not short of English language biographies, sympathetic or otherwise. In praise of Tito and his achievements there is the early *Tito Speaks: His Self Portrait and Struggle with Stalin* (1953), a translated work by Vladimir Dedijer; the important *Tito: A Biography* (1970), by Phyllis Auty (the Yugoslav Communists' court historian), based on the author's numerous interviews with her subject; and, more recently, two readable accounts by non-specialists, Jasper Ridley's *Tito* (1994) and Richard West's *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia* (1994). Tito's notable detractors include Socialist Yugoslavia's insider-turned-naysayer, Milovan Djilas, and his *Tito: The Story from Inside* (1980); Nora Beloff with *Tito's Flawed Legacy* (1985); and Steven K. Pavlowitch with his essay *Tito: A Reassessment* (1992).

Swain's book is a welcome addition to this slightly crowded field. Breaking with a convention of Tito's Anglophone sympathisers, Swain's emphasis falls not on the Partisan war (1941–5) but on Tito's early Communist years and his time at the head of Socialist Yugoslavia after 1945. In the first half of the book, Swain looks at Tito's politically formative period in the trades union movement in inter-war Yugoslavia, and his perilous years as a Comintern functionary, in and out of Moscow. The latter half of the book looks at the departures from Socialist orthodoxy taken by Tito and the Yugoslav Communists after the break with Stalin. Unlike many commentators, Swain is willing to treat Tito's experiments in political economy as, by and large, coherent and substantial. Long discussions of Socialist workers' self-management and party reform make this a book as much about Titoism as about Tito himself. This is not to say that Swain does not have clear ideas about his subject's traits and his personal influence on Communism in Yugoslavia—he does. Tito is shown to be a figure 'instinctively on the left' (p. 20) of Yugoslav Communism. Swain also detects an air of self-reliance in the pre-1945 Tito, evidenced by his ability to find alternative resources and support when the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was out of favour with the Comintern during the 1930s (p. 26). Yet with these credentials established, and as the book progresses to the post-1945 period, Tito the man fades out in favour of Titoism the system. In the sections on Socialist

Yugoslavia, analysis of party and economic reform are favoured over analysis of Tito's personal style of leadership or, say, the cultivation and reception of his public image and personality cult. Swain tends to use memoir literature from Tito's inner circle (Milovan Djilas, Svetozar Vukmanović, *et al.*) for what it tells us about policy decisions rather than for insights into the man himself. Each of Tito's four wives receives little more than a paragraph of text. Biographical titbits are absent from this account in favour of an assessment of Titoism as a viable organisational alternative to the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

Along with good will, the author brings to the subject his numerous and varied specialisations. Swain has a lot of hats, and they are put to good use here. His knowledge of the Yugoslav context is very fine indeed (with tiny and insignificant exceptions: Stjepan Radić was not murdered on 28 June, he was shot on 20 June, and died some weeks later; and the Prince Regent Paul was the cousin, not the son, of King Alexander Karađorđedvić), as is his understanding of eastern European Communism after 1945. Swain's analysis of the establishment of the Communist Information Bureau (the Cominform) and Tito's hubris leading to the split with Stalin in 1948 is excellent. For Swain, the split arose from an excess of zeal on the part of the Yugoslav Communists and a misreading of the messages coming from Stalin. This led Tito and his inner circle to look on the Cominform as a means of promoting socialist revolution throughout Europe, whereas, for Stalin, the Cominform was a means of consolidation and a defence in his eastern European satellites; therein lay the break. Swain has argued this elsewhere, but this biography is an excellent opportunity to place the 1948 crisis in the larger context of Tito's pre-war leftism. Swain covers the aftermath too, looking at the long and halting process of reconciliation between the Yugoslavs and the Soviets in the 1950s and 1960s. These sections benefit greatly from Swain's expertise on the Soviet Union and his ability to read Russian language sources.

This is an insightful biography, written by an experienced observer of Yugoslavia. Instead of Tito the charismatic war hero or Tito the defiant underdog we have Tito the committed leftist and Tito the energetic innovator of state socialism. Swain's treatment is sometimes reminiscent of the articles and books written by adherents of the New Left who, in the 1960s and 1970s, were optimistic about Titoism's ability to chart a new course in world Communism. The tragic end of the Yugoslav story has rendered this sort of interpretation rather unfashionable, some would say obsolete. Swain does not discuss the legacy of Tito and Titoism and their parts in the break up of the country. This is not altogether a dodge, since many factors important in ending socialism in Yugoslavia materialised after Tito's death in 1980 and were unconnected to Tito and his system. Nevertheless, Tito must take his share of the responsibility, and leaving out the wars of the 1990s means also leaving out a discussion of how at least some of the conditions necessary for war were created in Tito's Yugoslavia.

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