

ISSN 0259-7446  
EUR 6,50

# ***medien* & *zeit***

Kommunikation in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart

**Topic:  
The *Balkans* as the  
European Inner Otherness**

**Being-with(out) Balkan**

**Between Ethnic  
and Civic Nationalism**

**Serbia's In-Betweenness**

**Europe through the Gaze of the  
"Illustrierte Zeitung" Anno 1858**

**New Crisis, Old Perception?**

**Research Corner:  
The Political Element in Serbian  
Public Discourse**

***1/2016***

**Jahrgang 31**

# medien & zeit

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## Impressum

MEDIENINHABER, HERAUSGEBER UND VERLEGER  
Verein „Arbeitskreis für historische Kommunikationsforschung  
(AHK)“, Währinger Straße 29, 1090 Wien,  
ZVR-Zahl 963010743  
<http://www.medienundzeit.at>

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### PREPRESS

Grafikbüro Ebner, Wiengasse 6, 1140 Wien,

### VERSAND

ÖHTB – Österreichisches Hilfswerk für Taubblinde und

hochgradig Hör- und Sehbehinderte

Werkstätte Humboldtplatz 7, 1100 Wien,

### ERSCHEINUNGSWEISE & BEZUGSBEDINGUNGEN

*medien & zeit* erscheint vierteljährlich gedruckt und digital.

Heftbestellungen:

Einzelheft (exkl. Versand): 6,50 Euro

Jahresabonnement:

Österreich (inkl. Versand): 22,00 Euro

Ausland (inkl. Versand auf dem Landweg): 30,00 Euro

Jahresabonnement für StudentInnen:

Österreich (inkl. Versand): 16,00 Euro

Ausland (inkl. Versand auf dem Landweg): 24,00 Euro

Bestellung an:

[abo@medienundzeit.at](mailto:abo@medienundzeit.at) sowie auf <http://www.medienundzeit.at>

oder an: *medien & zeit*, Währinger Straße 29, 1090 Wien

und über den gut sortierten Buch- und Zeitschriftenhandel

ISSN 0259-7446

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will Forum für eine kritische und interdisziplinär ausgerichtete

Auseinandersetzung über Theorien, Methoden und Probleme der

Kommunikationsgeschichte sein.

## Editorial

In her brilliant course *From the Discourse of Brotherhood and Unity to the Discourses of EU Integration: The case of transition in Serbia* at the Center for Comparative Conflict Studies in Belgrade, cultural and gender scientist Jelisaveta Blagojević gave the inspiration to the present issue of *medien & zeit*. One of Blagojević's main concerns was to demonstrate and to sensitize her audience to the significance of designations: To wield the power of naming means to take part in ruling discourses that strongly influence the acceptance of thoughts and possible actions – which, unfortunately, often function to diminish the status of others. The current academic debates about Southeast Europe demonstrate structures of power created by language use and political terms. By developing the title of this issue *The Balkans as the European Inner Otherness*, the editors decided to use this much-discussed expression, which should be briefly addressed in the following.

The term *Balkans*, especially the phrase *Western Balkans*, has been criticized as an adverse expression established by the *West* leading politicians and scientists to refuse its use, even to suggest banishing the expression from the language used. *Western Balkans* is the official terminus technicus created by the European Union in 1998. With the exception of Slovenia, which acceded to the EU in 2004, it includes the post-Yugoslavian countries of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, and Albania. Criticism is levelled at the term as a product of the western symbolic order and western symbolic geography as well as the partially negative connotations of the term *Balkans*. According to Erhard Busek, former Austrian Vice-chancellor and Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe from 2002 until 2008, the term *Balkan* is connected to a psychological devaluation, which will undoubtedly affect the sensitivity of people in *Balkan* states. The term *Balkan* is associated with corruption, disorganization and anything but sympathy (Busek, 2005, p. 10).

Following this idea, the *Western* definition of this region is of such formative power that any attempt to differentiate and deconstruct the *Balkans* has to fail on the term. Art historian Louisa Avgita remarks appositely: "There is no Balkan side of the Balkan story, simply because the Balkans does

not exist without the West" (2007, p. 219). The same line is taken by media scientist Zala Volcic when she concludes that the historic interference of the *West* and the *Balkans* mainly resulted in the exploitation of Southeast Europe. Hence, she also comprehends the term *Balkans* not only as a geographical concept but using the expression to indicate

*"a cultural entity, widely defined by shared imperial legacies and by the specific marginal positioning of the region in relation to Western Europe."*

(Volcic, 2013, p. 334)

As the philosopher, philologist, and theorist Judith Butler made very clear, the dilemma of stereotyping is certainly inevitable:

*"Identity categories tend to be instruments of regulatory regimes, whether as the normalizing categories of oppressive structures or as the rallying points for a liberatory contestation of that very oppression."*

(Butler, 1993, p. 308)

However, the recent debates have shifted, especially since Maria Todorova published her well-known study in 2009, *Imagining the Balkans*. The historian suggests another view: by re-establishing and redefining the term, by adding meaning and significations, it may be used as a term of empowerment:

*"If Europe has produced not only racism but also antiracism, not only misogyny but also feminism, not only anti-Semitism, but also its repudiation, then what can be termed Balkanism has not yet been coupled with its complementing and ennobling antiparticle."*

(Todorova, 2009, p. 189)

In this sense, the ability to name oneself provides the possibility to speak for oneself, to raise one's own voice and to emerge from the silence.

In this issue the editors follow her idea as a positive approach to deconstruct historically grown inequality and exploitation without ignoring the entitlement of other arguments and without closing our minds to further debate. This point of view may help to criticize conventional terms and

to reconstruct connotations in a productive and confident way.

A positive approach is particularly necessary nowadays, since questions of the future development of Europe are urgent: Considering the current political, economic, and social situation, for example the wars in the Ukraine on European soil, the remaining economic uncertainties followed by deep cuts in social expenditures, social indifference, and a decline in the helpfulness of the “European fortress”, the question arises as to what exactly will remain of the European idea? It requires no prophetic gifts to already imagine that, after these fundamental upheavals, Europe must be reformulated, possibly reformatted. We will be urged again to debate the canon of its values, its history and borders, discussing the architecture of its institutions and the ways of decision-making.

The question of tomorrow raises the question of the actors within the European future: Who will be the European decision-makers of the future? Those who want to gain a perspective on the future of Europeans are well advised to focus on the many, on their identities and learn to understand social structures and their historical contexts. Focusing on the role of Southeast Europe, this issue of *medien & zeit* contributes to the debate for a strengthened and united future Europe.

The prelude is given by media and communication scientist Mirjana Stošić. In her paper she focuses on the significance of the specific hegemony of coded interpretations in the contemporary Western cultural relation to “cultural otherness”. In a profound analysis of discourses of “otherness” she examines the West-East dichotomy and its certain discursive issues of identity and difference as well as the phenomena of race, nation, ethnic group, and class. The cultural and theoretical heritage of *Balkan* and the *West* are put in relation to each other and thus the question of *Balkan* is engaged as theoretically made, unmade, and remade and the consequences are defined. Stošić stimulates the thoughts about “otherness” and equips the reader to the challenge of academic debate.

The subject of identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina is raised by historian Anida Sokol in her investigation of the propaganda campaigns during the Census of 2013. In this survey, the population

was given a limited choice to associate with the three traditional, ethno-national groups, hence to identify as Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats, creating religious and national senses of belonging. The highly politicized Census was also taken as an opportunity to protest against ethno-national divisions by civil society groups and to question the constitutional privileges of particular groups of citizens, human rights and the level of state repression.

Silvia Nadjivan addresses the public discourse on the EU accession process in Serbia. With special emphasis on a detailed historic derivation Nadjivan reconstructs the paradoxical process of both aiming to belong to the EU and refusing this option. The political and communication scientist therefore demonstrates not only the difficulties of the East-West dichotomy, but depicts impressively the political protagonists and provides their historical backgrounds. Thus the paper contributes to the political assessment of the construction and policy of “Europeanness” in Serbia and the EU.

Eva Tamara Asboth’s media analysis of the uprisings in the *Balkans* in the middle of the 19th century contributes to the conceptual history and the history of Europe’s discovery of the *Balkan* countries. She shows the dichotomy between an imagined civilized European community on one side, and on the other side the notion of the backwardness of European Turkey, namely Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia circulated by the first German illustrated newspaper *Illustrierte Zeitung*.

In his short essay, philologist and journalist Nedad Memić gives precise insights into the medial presentation of refugees and the *Balkans* in Austria’s current reporting.

In the section *Research Corner* Christina Krakovsky presents her paper on the public involvement in political affairs, mainly with regard to Serbia. Aiming to expand the understanding of political activities, the closely entwined areas of political and cultural, artistic and civic activism are examined. The public potential of political involvement can be traced by disclosing the historical background of mutual recognition and interference as well as the formation of the current political situation. As a result, the author questions the perceived

lack of democratic will to participate in the political system.

With the contents of the present *medien & zeit* issue, *The Balkans as the European Inner Otherness*, we contribute to the research complex of the Franz Vranitzky Chair of European Studies. One main research field of the transdisciplinary professorship at the University of Vienna is dedicated to exploring the generation born into the tumultuous and collapsing Yugoslavia of the Nineties. A detailed description of the research

focus can be found in the recent publication *Generation In-Between. The Children of the Balkan Wars: Getting to Know a Crucial Generation for Europe* (2016) written by the editors.

We encourage the readers of this issue to enter this crucial debate and act to develop a mutual Europe of equal values. We hope you enjoy reading the present issue.

Rainer Gries,  
Christina Krakovsky & Eva T. Asboth

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## Bekanntgabe zur Gründung des Advisory Boards:

Auch im 31. Jahr seines Bestehens intendiert die Zeitschrift *medien & zeit* jung zu bleiben und nach inhaltlicher Qualität zu streben. Der Arbeitskreis für historische Kommunikationsforschung hat sich daher entschieden, die aktuelle Generation der deutschsprachigen Medien- und Kommunikations-historikerInnen, durch die Gründung eines *Advisory Boards* aktiver mit einzubeziehen. Damit wird der Kreis unserer langjährigen und geschätzten Korrespondenten Prof. Dr. **Markus Behmer** (Bamberg), Prof. Dr. **Hans Bohrmann** (Dortmund), Prof. Dr. **Hermann Haarmann** (Berlin), Prof. Dr. **Arnulf Kutsch** (Leipzig), Prof. Dr. **Ed Mc Luskie** (Boise, Idaho), Prof. Dr. **Rudolf Stöber** (Bamberg) erweitert. Wir freuen uns über die zusätzlich im Advisory Board Mitwirkenden und heißen Prof. Dr. **Stefanie Awerbeck-Lietz** (Bremen), Dr. **Thomas Birkner** (Münster), Prof. Dr. **Rainer Gries** (Jena, Wien), Prof. Dr. **Susanne Kinnebrock** (Augsburg), Prof. Dr. **Maria Löblich** (Berlin), Dr. **Corinna Lüthje** (Rostock), Prof. Dr. **Martina Thiele** (Salzburg) herzlich willkommen.

## Corrigendum zu Heft 4/2015:

Dimitri Prandner und Rudi Renger die Autoren des Beitrages *Von der Technikkritik zur Optimierungs-ideologie. Zur Debatte zwischen Marktkräften, Technikfolgen und Demokratie* entschuldigen sich für jenen Fehler, der sich in die Fußnote 3 in der Printversion von *medien & zeit* (4/2015, Jg. 30, *Die Zukunft von gestern*, S. 22) aufgrund eines Quellenbelegs eingeschlichen hat, der sich einzig und allein durch die Arbeit am Text zu spätabendlicher Stunde erklären lässt. Die Autoren distanzieren sich mit Nachdruck von den rechtsextremen Inhalten des Online-Portals [de.metapedia.org](http://de.metapedia.org), das in seinem Wiki in höchst verwechselbarer Gestaltung u.a. über Adorno berichtet.

# Being-with(out) Balkan

Eulogy for the Excess

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## Abstract

This paper intends to show the significance of the specific hegemony of coded interpretations in the contemporary Western cultural relation to “cultural otherness”. Rendered through the West-East dichotomy, certain discursive issues of identity and difference, human and nonhuman, and the phenomena of race, nation, ethnic group, class, and gender are formulated within a polarized paradigm of Western thought. “Balkan” is theoretically made, unmade, and remade continuously and with all the consequences that it carries. To think of “Balkan” is to unthink the thinking itself, to rephrase, rename, reclaim the thinking. I intentionally use words aligned with language, with the “corpus” of thinking, the border point of the corporeality of thinking. It means to rewrite, to unwrite; not to commence but to suspend, to defer finishing, to safeguard the openness of the questions of/on “Balkan”; to inhabit the interruption that this non-European other punctures in the vivid, colourful, and tightly knit canvas of Europe.

*Either it is the fold of the infinite, or the constant folds of finitude which curve the outside and constitute the inside.*

Gilles Deleuze

*It is difficult to resist the temptation to make monsters speak; for a long time, they were created for that very purpose. They provoked interpretation before eliciting an explanation. As divine sign of an impending threat or punishment, the monster delivered a truth from elsewhere. As objects of study and experiments, the truth with which we illuminate them transports us elsewhere. But whether the monster delivers the truth to us or receives it from us, only the direction of flow changes.*

*Truth always passes through the monster.*

Alain Grosrichard

## “The Other Concerns Me”

This paper intends to show the significance of the specific hegemony of coded interpretations in the contemporary Western cultural relation to “cultural otherness”. Critical reading of the aspects of cultural fascination with the other, different, unknown, and foreign is based on recognition of techniques and modes of contemporary cultural environment and the cultural patterns related to the forms of marginalization and othering. An interdisciplinary approach and a cross-scientific model of semiotics, sociology, anthropology,

cultural studies, literary theory, and feminist theories in recent science research examine the phenomenon of the alterity, in the ethical, political, cultural and media domain, questioning the position of “the other” in discourses of culture, language, body, race, nation, gender, sex and colonial subject, and in the emergent field of monster theory. Rendered through a West-East dichotomy, certain discursive issues of identity and difference, human and nonhuman, and the phenomena of race, nation, ethnic group, class, and gender are formulated within a polarized paradigm of Western thought.



Just a few of the most significant turns in thinking of difference and identity and some of the inventive forms of redefining the philosophical scene are represented by, for example: Jean Paul Sartre's "hell is other people"; the ethical encounter with the other in the works of Emmanuel Lévinas; Gilles Deleuze's interventions in "becoming" and subjectivation; and Jacques Derrida's re-questioning of the concept of alterity, radicalized in postcolonial and postfeminist theories. The question of alterity is precisely the cornerstone of re-interrogating the metaphysical schemes embedded in Western thought. The other is always already inscribed in founding, Platonic binarisms, that are constantly rejuvenated in contemporary thought, but also consistently being redefined and displaced in theoretical approaches in various fields. If the threshold of twentieth- and twenty-first century-philosophical inquiry is the linguistic turn, the critique of "organic representation", and the question who/what is the subject, then these three interrelated thresholds are the starting points to examine the authority of the non-European other. The twentieth century marks the era of the invention of the notion of otherness as a concept of impossibility, detained at the border of what is signifiable, speakable – from this limit of the language one can only reproduce, strengthen, and maintain the practices of exclusion of the other. Or, as Barthes puts it:

*"But language – the performance of a language system – is neither reactionary nor progressive; it is quite simply fascist; for fascism does not prevent speech, it compels speech."*  
(Barthes, 1982, p. 461)

Being the site of construction of the other, language has always already "missaid" (in Beckett's terms) the other. To speak in the name of the other is to "missay" the other. As a cultural and political structure, language constructs the other, leaving the other only the quiescence, not a place to speak from. Hence, the other does not, or is not able to speak, because the other speaks within the language that made and un-made the other as such. We are, therefore, destined to trace the sites of knowledge production of the other (with the indignity that speaking in the name of the other carries). We are destined, and it must be liberating and agonizing, to stammer within the language

structure, to distort the language structure with a stutter of alterity, to develop a (non)style<sup>1</sup>, a scripture intrinsic to the Western paradigm of thinking. The stammer is in fact a threatening voice, destabilizing the language of identity. Or, as Deleuze states:

*"A style is managing to stammer in one's own language. Not being a stammerer in one's speech, but being a stammerer of language itself. Being like a foreigner in one's own language. Constructing a line of flight. [...] We must be bilingual inside our own language, we must create a minor use of our own language."*  
(Deleuze, 1987, p. 4)

## The Limit of the Originary Metonymy

Producing the discourse of otherness is actually a metonymic practice that reduces the understanding of otherness to the essentialist needs of paradigmatic thinking. Objectification and reification practices within the knowledge production of the other also produce the reality whose inevitable elements are precisely the figures of otherness. Places where the other resides are not geographical, even though they are named and studied through representational "discourse-geography". Western-European political, economic and cultural projects maintain the system of representations of the other as uncivilized, dangerous, and bestial in order to produce "the system of asymmetrical relations of differentiation, subordination, inequality, exploitation, dependence, etc." (Rakita, 2013, p. 215), with the aim of (re)producing the image of Western civilization's continual progress.

The other is a product of reductive practices. However, the other cannot be reduced; the excess of the other bodies (always metonymically reduced to the sameness of a type), of other narratives, myths, histories, desires and dreams (nightmarish, quite often) is the disturbing force to reckon with. To think the other is to think spaces, and "to think space is to think thinking" (Arsić, 2005, p. 127). The other is not some entity occupying the space of "pure" culture. The other is the being at the limit. The border is not a fixed line, undisturbed and colonised by forceful representation – the border is mobile, it contains

<sup>1</sup> I will come back to this notion of style (specifically, a "proper style", contrary to the Deleuzian notion of style) later

in the text when dealing with the notion of "palanka" in the book by Radomir Konstantinović.

multiplicities and its place is not territorial but historical: “discursive”.

To investigate this limit, avoiding the trap of conceptualizing it for the mere purpose of delineation between the self and the other, we need to place ourselves at the brink of cultural, political and epistemological Western knowledge production. This approach is complex and difficult, because it needs to be constantly stitched through by the other – other voice, tonality and rhythm – in order to re-evaluate, deconstruct and destabilize Western cartography and representational discourse-geography.

Signifying practices are not innocent or neutral. Language is the originary site of colonization, a battlefield of meaning-production. The shifts in Western thinking in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are sliding over the limits of language as a place of the invention of openness towards the call of the other. This openness assumes a theoretical stance of distancing oneself from the imperialism of the same, towards the oneiric – Derrida’s hetero-tautological dictum to think and welcome the gift of the unpredictable, uncanny and foreign: “tout autre est tout autre” [“every other (one) is every (bit) other”] (Derrida, 1995, p. 82).

What follows is a short summary of the argument I made in “Inns and Mills of Balkan – European Monstrous Spaces” (2014), namely, the discourse of Balkan is elaborated and recognized in the capital works of: Milica Bakić-Hayden (*Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia*, 1995); Maria Todorova (*Imagining the Balkans*, 1997); Vesna Goldsworthy (*Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination*, 1998); Julia Kristeva (*Bulgaria, My Suffering*, 2000); Slavoj Žižek (*The Fragile Absolute*, 2001); Dušan I. Bjelić (*Are the Balkans the Unconscious of Europe?*, 2011); and many others, and it could be said that “Balkan” is theoretically made, unmade and remade continuously and with all the aftermaths that this carries. Balkan is

*“conceived of as Europe’s monstrous twin – a diabolic mirror in which Europe sees itself reflected. [...] Balkans’ place is in speech, in language, or if you prefer – in discourse.”*

(Stošić, 2014, p. 13)

Balkan, as “the inner other of Europe”, is a discursive set of beliefs, narratives, pseudo-histories, as is “Europe proper”, the imagined dominant and enlightened cultural realm.

Therefore, we cannot think “Balkan” from some “starting point” (we can, but we wouldn’t get very far), but we are inclined to read the footnotes to the grand studies/narratives of the Western mind, reason; Western politics, culture, and epistemologies; of “Europe” and of “Balkan”. To think of “Balkan” is to unthink the thinking itself, to rephrase, rename, reclaim the thinking. I intentionally use words aligned with language, with the “corpus” of thinking, the border point of the corporeality of thinking. It means to rewrite, to unwrite; not to commence but to suspend, to defer finishing, to safeguard the openness of the questions of “Balkan”, to inhabit the interruption that this non-European other punctures in the vivid, colourful, and tightly knit canvas of Europe. Dušan I. Bjelić traced the representations of Balkan in the European imagery: Balkan appears as Europe’s “political excreta”, “abject of the polis”: “Through the Balkan veins, Mephistopheles would have said, streams a ‘special juice’, brewed not in nature, but in ink and grammar” (Bjelić, 2003). “Balkan” can be thought of as an uncanny chronotope of excess,<sup>2</sup> and to read the narratives that have constituted Balkan as such (nationalistic, European, Eastern, Communist or Oriental, to name a few) would be to become a timespace-naut, to navigate through folds, scars, stitches, lesions, layers and extensions, through narratives, memory sites, (auto)biographies, or (auto)thanatographies.<sup>3</sup> As Nancy puts it, “a thought of the limit is a thought of excess” (Nancy, 1997, p. 40), and Balkan as Europe’s (inner)other is the marking ground of

<sup>2</sup> One of many weird statements attributed to Winston Churchill is that “Balkan” generates more history than it can locally consume. Whether a false attribution or an actual claim, this statement encompasses both sides of the West-East divide. The rhetoric of hazardous excess is embedded within the discourse of Balkan. The excess that I have in mind concerns the multitude of languages, signs, cultures, confessions, narratives, histories, and these multitudes Europe cannot consume. Neither can Balkan.

<sup>3</sup> The “thanatological conception of community” is well recognized as a marking point of philosophical investigations of the concept of community, in the works of Peter Sloterdijk, Jean-Luc Nancy, Giorgio Agamben, Roberto Esposito, etc. (see Savić, 2012). However, I would dispute this etiquette attributed to Nancy, Sloterdijk, Agamben, Esposito, because it comes from the binarism of speculative vs. empirical, or from the presumed exclusive relation between investigating the “real”, existing communities and the communities as concepts to deal with.



being-with, demonstrating its essence in being related to the other essence. Its essence, therefore, can be taken as being-in-relation.

## Mélange, "Palanka", "Europe"

I wish to continue with three citations. These aphoristic citations may not be the best choices there are, nor are they carefully selected from the vast literature on the Balkan-Europe relation, but are the workings of intimate woundings, metaphoric suspensions, and scarings acquired while thinking of the "excess", the "being-with", mixings and "eulogies" within my/from my/ beyond my "corner of the world"; beyond the errant spirit of Balkan.

In an essay on the activity of "mixing", answering the call to write a eulogy on mélange (represented by the city of Sarajevo, a melting point of Balkan's *mêlée*), Jean-Luc Nancy states the following: "The *mêlée* is not accidental; it is originary. It is not contingent; it is necessary. It is not; it happens constantly" (Nancy, 2000, p. 156).

In his cult philosophy book of the Serbian intellectual realm of the 1970s, *Philosophy of the Province* (*Filozofija palanke*, 1969), Radomir Konstantinović introduces the new philosophical character, that of "palanka", a small town mentality, a collectivity without an individual, "the tribe in agony", and states the following: "Our experience is provincial" (Konstantinović, 1991, p. 7).

Dealing with Husserl's, Heidegger's, Patocka's, and Derrida's conceptions of "Europe", Rodolphe Gasché investigates what kind of term, or a word, or a hallucination "Europe" is:

*"By referring to itself as 'Europe,' Europe, therefore, avails itself of 'the first glance upon Europe that occurred from outside it – from Asia'. In other words, by calling itself by 'the name of an other,' Europe looks at itself; and grasps itself reflectively only through the opaqueness of the name that comes to it from the other."*

(Gasché, 2009, p. 10)

Let me try to clarify these statements. The first one represents the Nancyian "being-singular-plural" notion of being, namely, that

being is always already "being-with", and that community is inevitably grounded in the notion of co-existence, no matter how (in)common that communal ground is, or to what amount one believes to "belong" to a singular, self-same and unitary culture (culture of sameness). On this plurality of the notion of culture and community, Nancy writes:

*"Cultures, or what are known as cultures, do not mix. They encounter each other, modify each other, and reconfigure each other. They cultivate one another; they irrigate or drain each other; they work over and plough through each other, or graft one onto the other."*

(Nancy, 2000, p. 148)

Nancy addresses this essay to the Balkan city of Sarajevo in the 1990s; it is a "eulogy" sent to a burning Sarajevo, a mélange city entrapped within the ghastly violent inscription of "the simplistic eulogy of purity" (*ibid.*).

The second statement is a critique and vivid description and analysis of palanka, as if the Nancyian "simplistic eulogy of purity" gains its conceptual character, the one who speaks the language of purity and celebrates the political, cultural, ethnic, and corporeal differentiation of blood cells. This philosophical book was too often interpreted in a closed Balkan context, as a Balkan palanka, a political subjectivity deprived of its subject's position and embedded within a self-identical collective political body.<sup>4</sup> However, if one reads Konstantinović's book attentively, a certain question cannot be overlooked: "If the world is provincial, isn't the province by the same means – worldly?" (Konstantinović, 1991, p. 7) And this question is followed by the insightful conclusion that

*"the provincial world exists only in spirit; the spirit of palanka is the only absolute palanka, and this spirit surpasses every imaginable reality of palanka. This spirit does not have a world for itself, into which it could materialise perfectly, as its ideal embodiment."*

(Konstantinović, 1991, p. 8)

Thus, it is quite clear that palanka is not a geographical site, or some territorial borderland,

<sup>4</sup> Radomir Konstantinović stresses the fall of individuality in palanka, because the provincial man, in Konstantinović's terms, is "born in a certain closed world, and does not see himself as a subject of that world, but as its object. [...] If the provincial

man would recognize himself as a subject, the province would be endangered as a will: where I am the subject, the world cannot be the subject" (Konstantinović, 1991, p. 9).

secluded and gone completely mad. Palanka is the (im)possibility and necessity of every community. The spirit of palanka is an errant spirit, “a certain impossible spirit”:

*“... there is no country where it is impossible, because it is equally impossible everywhere, with its claim for perfect closure, that is beyond time, and, hence, it is the nothingness of eternity.”*

(Konstantinović, 1991, p. 8)

In a book on the unthinkable, *The Politics of the Unthinkable: Introduction to Antifascist Life* (*Politike nemislivog: uvod u ne-fašistički život*, 2015), Jelisaveta Blagojević, a contemporary Serbian philosopher, analyses the mise-en-scène in Dogville (Lars von Trier, 2003), through the lens of “the philosophy of the province/the palanka”. The author introduces a figure, in this case, a conceptual character of the province, and it is the man of palanka (“palančanin”), with the political surname: “the writer of interjections in search of illustrations” (Blagojević, 2015, p. 140). The features of this man of palanka correspond to one Dogville character, namely Tom Edison Jr. Tom is a focal narrative point of the story of Dogville, a small mountain town, described through minimalist scenery: “a road sign, a map or a diagram of a ‘real’ town and ‘real’ world” (ibid.). The man of palanka, Tom, is “an errant spirit of the Dogville story” (ibid.), the story of a closed, frightened, and violent community whose identity structure is shaken with the arrival of Grace, the foreigner, the other. Who is Tom, then? Can he be imagined as a eulogist, delivering over and over again the speech on the impossible spirit of community, of good, kind people, taking pride in their purity and isolated infinity in space and time? Could Tom be the one, the Everyman, delivering “the simplistic eulogy of purity”, a conceptual character of the discourse of sameness, oneness and ipseity – the pride and joy of every community as such? The man of palanka is not “an individual on a personal path; he is the sum of an experience, he is an attitude, a style. When he is guarding the province, he is actually watching over this attitude and this style” (Konstantinović, 1991, p. 9). He is keeping watch over the experience, and the only experience we are guaranteed to have is the experience of the provincial.

**Palanka cannot be mapped, or located, or placed (politically, historically or geologically, etc.), even though it is often done.**

Palanka cannot be mapped, or located, or placed (politically, historically or geologically, etc.), even though it is often done. To think “palanka” is to invent a different form of thinking: topoetical thinking, a critical choreography of eluding, slipping, delineating any possible “identitary” ground as a birthing place of conservatism, nationalism, and fascism. It is to allow and call for mêlée, to recognize and reveal the provinciality of experience of any community, and to invent lines of flight.

The third statement represents the significant inversion in the theoretical interrogation of the notion of “Europe”. Europe is all ex-cited outside, but persistently erasing this outside (what Greeks called the barbarism of Western lands, i.e., Europe) making “Europe proper” the core of Europe’s self-identity. Europe constitutes itself on the place of the other. Gasché states that “Europe has been something like a philosopheme” (Gasché, 2009, p. 87) “of the order of the philosophical”, a shifting idea carrying with itself infinite tasks, various projects, and empires, different

unities. If Europe is a philosopheme, as Gasché presumes, then it is a composite, grafted and layered construct of the Western mind. If the first two citations are carefully read, than mêlée and palanka are “something

like a philosopheme” too, “of the order of the philosophical”. These three philosophemes make a “deconstructive embrace” (Spivak); they all engage in the notion of excess and, therefore, openness. Being mixed – and it just happens, all the time, constantly, maybe even stubbornly – is the only certainty we can count on, even though our provincial experience demands purity and oneness. Becoming-mêlée means to constantly strive towards a hallucinatory melange of undecidedness between the names (“proper name”; the Balkan, Europe, West, East, Us, Them), the term(s), the word(s), the phantom(s), the myth(s), the narrative(s) – it is the necessity to decide on the undecidable. If we are unable to decide, when dealing with these philosophemes, what we are thinking of, i.e., are we thinking of them as terms, words, names, or concepts, then perhaps we need to rethink the thinking itself, to examine the tools in front of us. To think “Europe”, palanka, and mêlée is to track “the order of the philosophical”, and “only as a

bricoleur, by collecting and patchworking images, words, attributions and discursive statements that already exist. One must speak within the discourse on the discourse itself, in order to let the margins speak” (Stošić, 2015, p. 14). And it is the only way to speak of the Balkan, or any figure of the otherness, too.

Is it possible to imagine intimate cartographies of otherness – inscriptions, prologues and postscripts – that would reveal that the Western subject is built upon an identity whose central ground is always already decentred, always “on the side”, at the limit, from the vast spaces of the excluded and marginalized? The centre of the subject is externalized, and the insideness and essence of the subject’s position is grounded in the turmoil of the limit, the other – named, evaluated and structured. Intimate cartographies of the otherness can only be conceived as maps of vulnerability. On these intimate borders, vulnerable bodies interact with other bodies and create places of connectivity and risk:

*“I am, I exist in this mixed contingency that changes again and again through the agency of the storm that is the other, through the possibility of his or her existence. We throw each other off balance, we are at risk.”*

(Michel Serres, 2008, p. 29)

Michel Serres’s assumptions delivered in the book *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies* (*Les cinq sens*, 1985) make a cunning device for the action of *mêlée*, for thinking mixed/mingled bodies that “display skins in full bloom”.

*“Is it, then, culture which makes sure that nothing new, nothing different can happen to us except for its own alterity? Does our allegiance to ‘our’ own culture, the culture in which we live, assure us that we will never experience anything different from what we have already experienced; that we will never know anything else but that which we already know? Is not such a culture a constant reaffirmation of the way in which things are what they are, in which we ourselves are always the same and in which we are deprived of the possibility of change – either with regard to ourselves or to the culture that determines us?”*

(Blagojević, 2012, p. 70)

Nevertheless, questions remain: Is it possible to think of culture as an opened space of excesses and as a multitude? Is it possible, because there is always a choice, to imagine (and we are already on the threshold of creation, of invention) culture as a plurality of “mixed” cultures in which (and outside of it) every space is always already space of the other and inclusive?

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# Between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism

## Census and Nation Building in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to illustrate ethno-national and civic narratives through the analysis of propaganda campaigns during the Census of 2013 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first post-war systematic enumeration of the country's population was highly politicized and contested and was preceded by propaganda campaigns by all the three ethno-national groups that called on people to identify themselves as Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats, together with the religious affiliation and mother tongue that these categories entail. On the other hand, civil society groups advocated a civic identity, in protest against ethno-national divisions in the country and with the aim to alter the constitution, which is based on ethnicity that gives privileges to specific groups.

Particularly visible and aggressive were campaigns by the Bosniak religious and political groups that included elements of the Bosniak nation-building narrative and specifically focused on the importance of the census, since it was the first time that Bosniaks could self-identify as such. According to this narrative, the division of the Bosnian Muslims into Bosniaks, Bosnian and Herzegovinians, and Muslims was an "auto-genocide" and a danger to the future integrity of the country. Contrarily, civil society groups used human rights discourse and focused on the discrimination of the category of Others. They did not propagate a specific self-identification, but called on people to identify unconstitutionally with the aim to change the political system of the country.

In international literature on nationalism and ethnicity, the dichotomy between civic and ethnic nationalism is widely accepted. The first, civic nationalism, is a political notion developed in the West which preceded or coincided with the development of states that encompassed relatively homogeneous populations in terms of culture, such as France and England, while the second, which developed from the German concept of the nation based on cultural traits, was consolidated in the areas where ethnic and cultural boundaries did not match with political ones (Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires), with elites mobilizing populations to carve out their nation-states.

According to Anthony D. Smith, the Western civic model is predominantly a spatial or a territorial concept, a community of laws and institutions that share a single political will, the legal equality of its members, a common culture, and a civic ideology. The non-Western model is based on descent/

ethnicity rather than territory, a "super family" with intellectuals tracking down pedigrees and genealogies to back up their claims, particularly in Eastern European and Middle Eastern countries:

*"By creating a widespread awareness of the myths, history and linguistic traditions of the community, they succeeded in substantiating and crystallizing the idea of an ethnic nation in the minds of most members [...]."*  
(Smith, 1991, p. 12)

Scholars have also applied this dichotomy when analysing the post-communist space: according to Brubaker, the key elements of the new states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are the sense of ownership of the state by a particular ethno-cultural "core" nation that is distinct from citizenry and the "compensatory" project of using state power to promote the "core" nation's specific interests. The author considers it difficult that

civic nationalism would prevail in this “New Europe” due to

*“pervasively institutionalized understandings of nationality as fundamentally ethno-cultural rather than political, as sharply distinct from citizenship, and as grounding claims to ‘ownership’ of politics.”*

(Brubaker, 1996, p. 105)

Resistance to communism as a foreign oppression, the power vacuum left by the communist regimes, transition, and corruption have further contributed to the “revival” of ethnic nationalism in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, it should also be taken into account that the distinction between the two is not clear-cut, and today it is considered that most of the states have elements of both models (Smith, 1991, p. 13).

Bosnia and Herzegovina, a former Yugoslav republic that experienced the worst political and identity crisis due to the devastating war of 1992-1995, was not an ethno-territorial unit of a particular ethno-cultural nation either in the post-war or the pre-war periods. Although some might argue that the “core nation” of Bosnia and Herzegovina are the Bosniaks, according to the constitutional arrangement of the Dayton Peace Accords that confirmed the state’s legal existence but changed its internal structure, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a state of three “constituent peoples” – Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats – and its political system is based on consociational democracy or power sharing (Lijphart, 1969, p. 216) that even further perpetuates ethno-national divisions.

The painful conflict, which included genocide, ethnic cleansing, and large population displacement, and in which the three groups were the warring sides, raised the salience of ethnic nationalism and reduced the fluidity of ethno-national categories, leading to the “encapsulation and the territorialization of ethnic identities” (Aitken, 2010, p. 246). Religious, political, and war elites of the three groups have developed their own ethno-national narratives based on conflicting interpretations of wartime events and the roles played by their military forces as well as newly-created or revived ethno-genesis myths of the longevity of the three groups and thus their natural right to the territory (Gavrilović & Perica, 2011; Kolstø, 2005; Velikonja, 2003). Two other main features of these dynamics are the politicization of religion, since religion is the main pillar of identity differentiation, even though this “comeback” has

been more nominal than real (Radeljić & Topić, 2015; Ognjenović & Jozelić, 2014), and “language engineering,” through which Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian languages have been codified often with the creation of artificial differences used as contrastive means of self-identification (Kordić, 2010; Greenberg, 2004).

Starting from the constructivist/instrumentalist approach to nation building, the aim of this paper is to analyse civic and ethnic nationalisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It focuses on two narratives: the “constituent” ethno-national Bosniak narrative, constructed by the Bosniak elites in the 1990s, based on the primordialistic model of ethnicity, considered as permanent, ascribed by birth and defined by cultural traits, religion and mother tongue, and the “unconstituent” civic Bosnian (or rather Bosnian-Herzegovinian) narrative, promoted by civil society groups as a protest against ethno-national divisions in the country, based on the notion of a civic nation that shares a set of political practices and equal individual rights. These opposing narratives are analysed through the first post-war Census of 2013, which was highly politicized and contested and was preceded by propaganda campaigns by all the three ethno-national groups that called on people to identify themselves as Bosniaks, Serbs, or Croats, together with the religious affiliation and mother tongue that these categories entail.

## Census Politics: a Historical Overview

Scholars have asserted the importance and connection between nation building and censuses. Drawing on the examples of colonial rule in South East Asia, in a chapter devoted to the role of censuses, maps, and museums in the construction of national identities, Benedict Anderson in his very influential book *The Imagined Communities* observed:

*“One notices, in addition, the census-makers’ passion for completeness and unambiguity. Hence their intolerance of multiple, politically ‘transvestite,’ blurred, or changing identifications. [...] The fiction of the census is that everyone is in it, and that everyone has one – and only one – extremely clear place. No fractions.”*

(Anderson, 1983, pp. 165f)



David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel argue that the significance of the official state certification of collective identities gained prominence with the emergence of the modern state, before which collective identities had great fluidity and no necessary exclusivity, and censuses were used only for matters of taxation and military conscription, with little social pressure on people to “rank-order their overlapping and localized identities.” The emergence of nationalism required the identification of national groups and the census became “the most visible and arguably the most politically important means by which states statistically depict collective identities” (Kertzer & Arel, 2002, p. 3). As the two scholars affirm, although they seem as bureaucratic routines, censuses not only reflect social reality, but play a key role in the construction of that reality, giving power to the ruling elites to justify the claim of political and territorial ownership, diving people into clear-cut categories, and scientifically legitimizing the existence of socially imagined groups. The census therefore

*“[...] has the power to construct and solidify identities and belonging, making it an important arena in which identity and ethnic battles are fought, often with dramatic repercussions.”*

(Visoka & Gjevori, 2013, p. 479)

In multicultural societies, such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where group entitlements usually come from statistics, the census plays a crucial role, becoming a political battlefield for domination and survival. In their assessment of the very fragile census processes in the Balkans held in 2011 in Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Albania, Gëzim Visoka and Elvin Gjevori illustrated the highly politicized nature of census politics in the region affected by economic underdevelopment and ethnic politics that revealed the unstable and contested nature of citizenship, ethnic belonging, weak civic identity, and fragile regional relations:

*“By making people choose what ethnicity they are, what their first language is, and so on, new categories are formed on which nationalist struggles are based and legitimized [...]”*

(Visoka & Gjevori, 2013, p. 479; see also Keil & Perry, 2015)

Throughout history, census politics in the region reflected both the political situation and the interest of power-holders, influencing individuals’ self-identification. The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy enumerated the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina using religion as the main marker of identity (Kraljačić 1987, p. 14), while in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes people were categorized based on language: one nation with three names (*troimeni narod*), the ideology behind the Yugoslav unification, included those who spoke Serbo-Croatian, i.e. Serbs or Croats, and those who spoke Slovenian (Definitivni rezultati popisa stanovništva<sup>1</sup>, 1932, p. 3). Interestingly enough, the question on nationality (*narodnost*) for the first time was introduced in 1931, with the aim to strengthen the new policy of the kingdom, which was renamed into Yugoslavia in 1929; the category of Yugoslavs included Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins and undecided or nationally undeclared Muslims (*neopredijeljeni muslimani*), while ethnic minorities were placed in a category of “others” (Mrdjen, 2002, p.78).

National or ethnic self-identification became an inseparable part of all the censuses in Socialist Yugoslavia, although it often changed its form: in 1948, 1953, and 1961 the term was *narodnost* (nationality); in 1971 *narodnost ili etnička pripadnost* (nationality or ethnic affiliation), in 1981 *narod, narodnost ili etnička pripadnost* (nation, nationality or ethnic affiliation), and in 1991 *nacionalna pripadnost* (national affiliation) (Mrdjen, 2002). However, Western scholars advise caution when translating these terms; *narod* corresponds neither to an ethnic group (non-political concept) nor a nation (political concept) as they are understood in the West. According to Kolstø (2014, p. 5), the term *narod* today is simultaneously a cultural and a political concept, as it denotes a cultural group which possesses a political identity linked to a state but is not identical with the entire population of the state. Valery Perry also draws attention to the inconsistent use of language in the references to census in state and entity legislation of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war in which “national” and “ethnic” are used interchangeably (Perry, 2015, p. 59).

In Socialist Yugoslavia, nationality was interpreted

<sup>1</sup> The definitive results of the census (trans.)

based on territory, and Tone Brंगा explains it the following way: *narodi* (nations) had their national home in one of the six republics and a constitutional right to equal representation; *narodnosti* (nationalities) were allowed a variety of language and other rights. The largest group were Albanians and Hungarians, and had their home outside Yugoslavia, while the third group were ethnic minorities (*etničke manjine*) (Bringa, 1995, p. 26). Snježana Mrdjen in the article on the changing category of “nationality” in censuses in socialist Yugoslavia concluded that not only the number of nationalities changed from one census to another, but also the number of available categories as well as the manner of forming the question (Mrdjen, 2002). Individuals identified themselves differently from one census to another; some categories vanished, while new ones emerged, which was especially connected with the Muslims and Yugoslavs, whose numbers were interconnected, the second decreased, when the first were recognized as one of the six constituent nations.

In the first post-World War II census of 1948, Bosnian Muslims could choose between Serb-Muslim (*Srbīn-musliman*), Croat-Muslim (*Hrvat-musliman*) and nationally undeclared Muslim (*musliman-neopredijeljen*), while in the census of 1953, instead of nationally undeclared Muslim, the option was nationally undeclared Yugoslav (*Jugoslaveni neopredijeljeni*) (Velikonja 2003, p. 221; Sarač-Rujanac, 2012; Bougarel, 2009; Friedman, 1996, p. 15). Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina primarily opted for nationally undeclared Muslims (1948) and nationally undeclared Yugoslavs (1953), unlike Muslim Slavs in other parts of Yugoslavia who mostly identified with the predominant nation. This party's policy that reflected the confusion and differences of opinion regarding the Muslims' identity as a nation and religious community (Velikonja, 2003, p. 223) gradually started changing when in 1961 a new category was introduced “Muslim in an ethnic sense” (*Musliman u etničkom smislu*), which signified ethnic and not religious belonging and thus could include also those who were not religious. In the same census, the category of Yugoslavs was introduced for the first time and referred to nationally uncommitted persons, as a residual category for those with no particular nationality (Sekulić, Massey, & Hodson, 1994, p. 84). In 1961, 8.4% of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina self-identified as Yugoslav; in

1971, this number decreased (1.2%), which is directly connected with the inclusion of Muslims as a national category in the census of 1971.

Choosing the term Muslim instead of Bosniak according to Bougarel was the decision of the League of Communists not to identify Bosnia and Herzegovina with any of its nations: in the Serbo-Croatian official orthography the ambiguity of the term “Muslim” (*Musliman*) was avoided by writing this noun with an initial capital letter for a member of the ethnic or national group and with a small letter for a member of the religious community. However, there were many discrepancies connected with this “unfinished national affirmation”: although considered a secular nation, the religious community saw this national name as a way of expressing the fundamental importance of religion for national identity and the Islamic community became the main replacement for a national institution (Bougarel, 2009, pp. 122-123).

On the other hand, Yugoslav self-identification was mostly connected with urban residents, young people, those from nationally mixed marriages, members, and persons from minority groups. Yugoslavia's leaders believed that with the policy of equality and right to self-determination nationalism would eventually be distinguished, neglecting the identity associated with the state (Sekulić, Massey, & Hodson, 1994). In the 1980s, the number of Yugoslavs increased again (to 7.9%), mostly associated with people who were born after World War II: according to the study of Sergej Flere, a significant number of young people in the 1980s did not feel as members of their nation, particularly the Muslims, and did not have problems with two ethnic identities: Yugoslav and Muslim (Flere, 1988).

However, the expectation that the modernization of society would weaken nationalism was not met and economic and political rivalries intensified leading to the country's disintegration. In 1991, the number of Yugoslavs would once again decrease, the last census was held amid the process of the country's disintegration and the newly elected political ethno-national parties called on people not to identify as Yugoslavs since larger numbers of their groups meant larger political power (Mrdjen, 2002). The results of the last census demonstrated the prevalence of Muslims, Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina,

but also a variety of other terms were used for national/ethnic belonging. Only a small number of citizens, however, used the terms *Bosani* and *Bošnjak* for their national identification, and other terms such as *Muslimani-Bošnjaci* (Muslim-Bosniak), *Muslimani-Bosanci* (Muslim-Bosnian) also appeared (Zavod za statistiku,<sup>2</sup> 1994). Despite this, in 1993, the main representatives of Muslims who gathered at the *Bošnjački Sabor* (Bosniak Parliament) decided to “give back” to the people “its historical and national name Bosniaks,” and to strongly connect the Bosniaks with their country Bosnia and Herzegovina, and their Bosnian language. The change of name from Muslims to Bosniaks, which was discussed and was not accepted by many intellectuals, was also a need to attract the West to the Muslim cause (Abazović 2012; Filandra 2012). Twenty years later, during the first post-war Census of 2013, this term would again come into the focus of ardent debates.

## The Census of 2013

The results of the first post-war census in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was held October 1-15, 2013, was delayed compared to other Balkan censuses. Because it reflected the consequences of war, large population displacement and ethnic cleansing, and thus might influence its constitutional arrangement, it was highly contested and politicized, and revealed all the frenzy over ethnic issues. The parties in the Republika Srpska have been most interested in holding a census to consolidate the Serb majority in that territory, while Bosniaks were more reluctant on the grounds that it would legitimize ethnic cleansing and could realize the Bosnian Serbs’ threats of separation. Croats, on the other hand, feared that the census’ results would reveal their low numbers and each side aspired to reach a numerical threshold with which they could attain their goals. This led to continued delays although in 2011 among the three goals set by the European Union for the unfreezing of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s EU Stabilization and Association Agreement was the adoption of state law on census, which was approved only in February 2012 (*Zakon o popisu*,<sup>3</sup> 2012). Although updated data on population for an economically underdeveloped country is important for various

aspects, such as social and economic development, foreign investments, infrastructure, economic policies, etc., political parties, religious groups, the media and general public primarily focused on the three main criteria utilized to distinguish among the three constituent categories, ethnicity, language, and religion, which were included despite the fact that according to the EU practice and recommendations they are not obligatory (Perry, 2015; ACIPS, 2012).

Even though according to the Law on the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina, national/ethnic and religious affiliation are non-obligatory (Article 12), the category of language can serve as an indirect marker of ethnicity. The other point of debate was the form, and many NGOs drew attention to the need of open-ended questions that would give liberty to citizens and would not force them to be placed into clear-cut categories of Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats, and the Others. On the other hand, open-ended questions have practical limits as some identities might be lumped into the category of “others” or can be subsumed into existing ones. After complaints from civil society groups, a semi-open form for the three questions was accepted; the question on ethnic affiliation included four boxes, three reserved for the three constituent peoples, Bosniak, Serb, and Croat, and one for those who preferred not to declare their affiliation, while a space was left for answers that did not fit into the three categories. Literally, a respondent could self-identify in any possible way as a Serb, Croat, Serbo-Croatian, Roma, European, etc., however, the three boxes clearly emphasized the groups that are officially recognized by the state. Regarding religious affiliation, a number of options (boxes) were given including: Islamic, Orthodox, Catholic, Atheist, and Agnostic, and a space was left for those who adhered to different beliefs. As already stated, language was included as an obligatory part, with three boxes for the three languages recognized by the state, Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, while as with the other two questions a space was left for any other declaration. The pilot census was conducted from October 1-15, 2012, and by late October there were already alleged initial leaked results, according to which 35% of respondents declared themselves to be Bosnians, a trend that was

<sup>2</sup> Statistical Office (trans.)

<sup>3</sup> Law on the Census (trans.)

declared to be common among “young urban people” (Perry, 2013).

What followed was a race to win those who might be misled regarding their own true self-identification and the census was preceded by aggressive propaganda campaigns, which aimed to educate people how to answer the three crucial questions on ethnic affiliation, religious affiliation, and mother tongue. Each side had a goal to reach: the Serbs aimed to consolidate their position in the Republika Srpska, the Croats to show that their presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still relevant, and the Bosniaks to demonstrate their numerical superiority in the whole country.

### “It Is Important to Be Bosniak”

Even though census propaganda campaigns were held by all three ethno-national groups, particularly visible and aggressive were those by the Bosniak religious and political groups which reflected both divergent opinions over the name as well as fears that the term Bosniak has not been accepted by all the members. Young urban people with Muslim origin were those who mostly self-identified as Bosnian (Armakolas & Maksimović, 2014), while on the other hand there were still those who preferred the previous term, Muslim (Abazović, 2012).

Bosnian Muslims, indeed, have attracted substantial attention from national and international scholars. During the 1990s, there was the catching up of the Bosniak nation building: the elites played an important role in the formulation of the new identity connected with the name Bosniak which included the codification of the Bosnian language, and the writing of new books of history and geography. Bosniak intellectuals and historians such as Mustafa Imamović and Enver Imamović had a particular role in the development of the stories and myths about the Bosnian Muslims as the “chosen people” and the oldest native inhabitants of the country (Gavrilović & Perica, 2011,

p. 29). Mustafa Imamović connects Bosniaks to a Slavic tribe called “Bosna” in the fifth and sixth centuries, while Enver Imamović goes even further, arguing that the Bosniaks are indigenous Balkan/European people who have existed in this region for over 4000 years. In particular, the latter is accredited for introducing the symbol of the golden lily, the fleur-de-lis, into the public discourse in the 1990s, tracing its origin back to a special endemic subspecies, *lilium bosniacum*, a flower that grows only in the mountains of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which means that it predates the Middle Ages. Another part of history that has been revived is the medieval period and of the Bosnian Muslims as the only descendants of the adherents of the Bosnian Medieval Church, who converted to Islam en masse after the Ottoman conquest. The Bosniak narrative, on the one

hand, is based on the historical continuity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina is depicted as the only military formation that during the war fought for the multinational state, while on the other hand, religious ceremonies, the exclusion of the victims of other ethnicities and the involvement of the Islamic community give the image of a separatist, exclusively Islamic/Bosniak discourse.

[The pilot census] was followed by a race to win those who might be misled regarding their own true self-identification and the census was preceded by aggressive propaganda campaigns, which aimed to educate people how to answer the three crucial questions on ethnic affiliation, religious affiliation, and mother tongue.

All these elements were visible in the Bosniak propaganda campaigns conducted prior to the Census of 2013. The coalition of Bosniak organizations *Bitno je biti Bošnjak* (It is important to be Bosniak), which included a number of Bosniak NGOs based in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as *Bošnjački pokret za ravnopravnost naroda* (Bosniak Movement for the Equality of People), *Aktivna bošnjačka mreža* (Active Bosniak Network), *Bošnjačka kulturna zajednica* (Bosniak Cultural Community), and outside such as *Institut za istraživanje genocida* (Institute for Research on Genocide), *Kongres Bošnjaka Sjeverne Amerike* (The Congress of Bosniaks of Northern America), gave lectures and material on terms such as territorial belonging, ethnic belonging, religion, language; published articles in the SAFF

magazine and its website, on various internet sites, and gave interviews, etc.

All these organizations tried to reach the public through their internet visibility: many have Facebook pages, with a large numbers of followers; they posted on YouTube numerous videos, such as the video of the whole conference of *Popis stanovništva u BiH – Lažne dileme Bošnjaka* (The Census in BiH: Fake dilemmas of the Bosniaks)<sup>4</sup>; and distributed propaganda material both on YouTube and Facebook, which was shared on social networks. Highly controversial were propaganda videos such as those posted by *Omladinski kulturni centar Gradačac* (Youth Cultural Center Gradačac), which depicted young children protesting against others trying to “trick” them into the Bosnian group.<sup>5</sup> Other videos depicted young people removing plasters from their mouths and stating: “Ja sam Bošnjak, vjera mi je Islam, jezik mi je bosanski” (“I am a Bosniak, my religion is Islam, my language is Bosnian”).<sup>6</sup> Popular were videos with citations from different historical periods, where the term Bosniak is mentioned, followed by images of lilies, medieval knights, warriors, *stećci* (medieval tombstones), historical personalities such as Husein Gradaščević, a general who fought for Bosnian autonomy in the Ottoman Empire, with images of a dragon that allude to him (he is often referred to “Zmaj of Bosne,” “the Dragon of Bosnia”), while citations of different historical personalities such as Tvrtko I. Kotromanić, Safvet Beg Bašagić, Ilija Garašanin, Fra Ivan Franjo Jukić, Vuk Karadžić who mention the Bosniaks are emphasized.<sup>7</sup> All of them were either Catholic or Orthodox, except Safvet Beg Bašagić who was a Muslim but identified as a Croat. The aim of these citations was to prove that Bosniaks not only existed since medieval times, but that their existence was acknowledged by important people of other religions, even by figures such as Ilija

Garašanin, statesman and administrator of Serbia, who is considered the intellectual creator of the idea of Great Serbia, and Vuk Karadžić, reformer of the Serbian language.

Based on a number of articles collected from the sites of *Aktivna bošnjačka mreža* (Active Bosniak network), *Asocijacija za kulturu, obrazovanje i sport* (Association for Culture, Education and Sport), *Popisi2013* (Census2013), and *SAFF*,<sup>8</sup> it can be summarized that, first and foremost, emphasis was placed on the importance of the census, since it was the first time that the Bosniaks can be called by their self-appointed name. In this sense the census was the most important event after the war and the first opportunity for this particular group to express their real identity.

Thus, the false Bosniak identity dilemma, the division of Bosnian Muslims into Bosniaks, Muslims, and Bosnians was considered as an “auto-genocide” and a danger for the future integrity of the country. This dilemma is a result of constant oppression, which culminated in the last war, seen as an aggression against the sovereign state of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a genocidal act against the Bosniak people. Bosniak initiatives and foundations asserted that this division would put Bosniaks at risk; if Croats and Serbs declared as Croats and Serbs, and Bosniaks divided themselves among Bosniaks, Bosnians, Bosnian and Herzegovinians, and even Muslims, then their numerical superiority in Bosnia and Herzegovina could not be guaranteed, which could have negative consequences for the integrity of the country and for the very survival of the nation (Armakolas & Maksimović, 2014). They claimed that, without the Bosniak people, Bosnia and Herzegovina would not exist, that for hundreds of years they had not been allowed to be

<sup>4</sup> *Popis stanovništva u BiH, lažne dileme Bošnjaka* (Census in BiH, fake dilemmas of Bosniaks), available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n\\_jEO27hGOI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_jEO27hGOI), accessed on 02-12-2016. The video was published in November 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Despite the protests of the NGOs, the video is still available online: *Djeca znaju, zele da nam podvale da smo Bosanci mi smo BOSNJACI!!!!!!!* (Children know, they want to trick us into being Bosnians, but we are Bosniaks), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkQ8ilj62lo>, accessed on 02-12-2016. See also, *Zloupotreba djece u kampanji za popis*, September 23, 2013, available at <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/zloupotreba-djece-u-kampanji-za-popis>, accessed on 02-12-2016.

<sup>6</sup> See *Ne budi regionalac! Bitno je biti Bošnjak!* (Do not be regionalist, be Bosniak!) available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJVyeYgV-ro>, accessed on 02-12-2016. The video was posted on December 2, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> See for example *Bitno je biti Bošnjak*, promotivni spot (It is important to be Bosniak), available at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dhh8\\_VS2zjQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dhh8_VS2zjQ), accessed on 02-12-2016.

<sup>8</sup> Some of these articles are Sedad Dedić, *Zašto smo bošnjaci* (Why are we Bosniaks), September 8, 2012. Available at [http://abom.ba/zasto-smo-bosnjaci/Aktivna\\_Bošnjačka\\_mreža,\\_Anti-bosanske\\_posljedice\\_Bosanstva\\_\(Anti-Bosnian\\_consequences\\_of\\_Bosnianness\)\\_February\\_12,\\_2012](http://abom.ba/zasto-smo-bosnjaci/Aktivna_Bošnjačka_mreža,_Anti-bosanske_posljedice_Bosanstva_(Anti-Bosnian_consequences_of_Bosnianness)_February_12,_2012). Available at <http://abom.ba/antibosanske-posljedice-bosanstva>, accessed on 02-12-2016; *Proglas Rijasete islamske zajednice o popisu stanovništva*, available at <http://www.akos.ba/u-fokusu/79proglas-rijasete-islamske-zajednice-o-popisu-stanovnistva>, accessed on 02-12-2016. Filipović, Muhamed. *Vječiti strah of samog sebe. Popis2013 Bosna i Hercegovina*, (Perpetual fear of one's own self), September 5, 2013. Available at <http://popis2013.net/index.php?docid=963>, accessed on 02-12-2016.



called by their self-appointed name, Bosniak, for which they had to pay a high price: war. To declare themselves Bosnians instead of Bosniaks, which they called the “false Bosniak dilemma”, was just a reflection of their fear due to constant persecution but also an attempt to bring into question the existence of the Bosniak people, and also of the whole country. In these narratives, words that allude to war such as genocide, destruction, aggression, and victimization were particularly emphasized as well as the images of the enemy that threatens the existence of the whole group.

## “Citizen First of All”

Parallel with these campaigns, the voices of those who refute the ethno-national categories and the discrimination of people who belong to the category of Others were raised. During the census, *Koalicija jednakost* (Coalition Equality), which included twenty-four civil society organizations from both entities (the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), such as *Gradanski front* (Civil front) from Mostar, *Omladinski pokret Revolt* (The Youth Movement Revolt) from Tuzla, *Oštra nula* (Sharp Zero) from Banja Luka, Alumni Association of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Sarajevo (ACIPS), *Centar Za Mlade Kuart* (Center for Youth) from Prijedor, organized a campaign: *Budi građanin prije svega: Za Bosnu i Hercegovinu bez diskriminacije* (Be a Citizen, First of All: For Bosnia and Herzegovina Without Discrimination) with the aim to raise citizen awareness about the importance of individual rather than collective rights and change the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina that gives privileges to the three constituent groups (*Koalicija Jednakost*). The campaign particularly used human rights discourse and focused on the discrimination on the category of Others, that include seventeen constitutionally recognized ethnic minorities, those who identify themselves differently from the three constituent peoples, those who have multiple ethnic/national

To declare themselves Bosnians instead of Bosniaks, which they called the “false Bosniak dilemma”, was just a reflection of their fear due to constant persecution but also an attempt to bring into question the existence of the Bosniak people, and also of the whole country.

identities, as well as those who do not identify nationally/ethnically.

The coalition collected hundreds of photographs of people holding inscriptions with creative statements about their identities, stressing the importance of being a citizen of the country, but also using humour to express their self-perception as well as their protest against the government-imposed ethno-national categories. Inscriptions on the photographs varied from *Gradanin/ka prije svega* (citizen first of all), *ja sam građanka* (I am a citizen), *neopredijeljena* (undetermined), *ja sam za BiH bez diskriminacije* (I am for BiH without discrimination), *nisam konstitutivan* (I am not constituent), *žena* (woman), *Ja sam vanzemaljac* (I am an alien). People were photographed

on the street during the coalition's tours in different cities where they gave information about their campaign as well as about the census, but they could also upload their own photographs on the internet and directly participate in the initiative (*Koalicija Jednakost*). In this sense the campaign gave voice to the common people on the street, especially the young, although

a number of known artists, film directors, professors, and actors also took part.

The members of the coalition stressed that the experience of one's own self-perception was a personal matter and there was no wrong answer to the questions on ethnic and religious belonging; challenging anyone's self-identification in terms of ethnic/national and religious identity would mean infringing on basic human rights (*Koalicija Jednakost*). In light of citizens' fears that by refusing one of the constituent boxes they would be lumped into the category of Others, the members stated that if a large number of people would self-identify as Bosnians and Herzegovinians, their exact number would be shown in the final results. However, the campaign was not straightforward about which term to choose as an alternative to the main constituent groups, which led to the confusion as to whether they should identify themselves as Bosnians or as Bosnians and Herzegovinians. Their main aim



was opposition that would eventually lead to the change of the political system that gives privileges to certain groups based on ethnicity, which is fundamentally unjust and anti-democratic, and that led to the creation of ethno-national political elites that use the privileges of “constitutionality” to satisfy their own interests, while the rest of society is sinking into deeper economic and social problems. Such difficulties concerning most citizens of the country are one of the reference points of this narrative that can be termed civic or “unconstituent” and includes various bottom-up initiatives. For example, memory initiatives that do not commemorate the war in an ethno-national way and give a more inclusive memory of the last war belong to these narratives. The civic narrative is primarily a protest against the ethno-national regimes and the leading political parties, blamed for the economic situation in the country, suffered by most of the population regardless of their ethnic and religious affiliation. These protests culminated in the social riots that spread in a number of cities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in February 2014, during which many called on the government to end the ethno-national divisions and concentrate instead on improving economic conditions in the country (Arsenijević, 2014).

## Conclusion

In the overwhelming majority of the studies conducted so far (Dević, 2014; Majstorović & Turjačanin, 2013), people in Bosnia and Herzegovina self-identify according to the “constituent boxes”, correlating their ethnicity with their religion and language, and perceiving symbols, memories and narratives according to the constructions and definitions of the post-war ethno-national regimes.

Identity consolidation is carried out on the level of the ethno-national groups, and thus, aside from attempts by some civil society organizations which aim to strengthen the civic identity over the ethno-national identities, it is difficult to speak about strategies of identity consolidation on the state level. Instead, identity building takes place in the entities (the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), cantons, and local levels, where the crucial roles are played by ethno-national regimes and the elites of the three prevailing groups.

Although the Bosniak identity building is connected to the state, still it is an ethnically-conceived nationhood and excludes other groups. When it comes to the Serb and Croat identity consolidation, their connection with the state is almost non-existent, which is demonstrated by their negative loyalty scores to Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kolstø, 2014, p. 242) and their rejection of Bosnianness. Still, as Dević confirms, there are some optimistic pan-Bosnian tendencies in popular culture and everyday life such as sports events, celebrities, and music contents (Dević, 2014, p. 84).

The Census of 2013 demonstrated all the frenzy of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society over ethnic issues as all the debates concentrated on the three questions that serve as pillars of identity differentiation: ethnicity, religion, and mother tongue. The census was preceded by propaganda campaigns that used the ethno-national narratives developed by elites in the early 1990s based on different interpretations of wartime events. Even though census propaganda campaigns were conducted by the three ethno-national groups, particularly visible and aggressive were those by the Bosniak religious and political groups that included elements of the Bosniak nation-building narrative and specifically focused on the importance of the census, since it was the first time that the Bosniaks could self-identify as such. According to this narrative, the division of the Bosnian Muslims into Bosniaks, Bosnian and Herzegovinians, and Muslims was an “auto-genocide” and a danger for the future integrity of the country.

On the other hand, civil society groups used human rights discourse and focused on the discrimination of the category of Others. They did not propagate a specific self-identification, but called on people to identify unconstitutionally in order to change the country’s political system which is based on ethnicity that privileges specific groups. However, civic narratives in Bosnia and Herzegovina are very marginal, bottom-up initiatives in the form of protests against the critical political and economic situation and the prevailing ethno-national narratives. The state lacks structures that support inclusive nation building since the war and the constitution led to the encapsulation and the territorialization of ethnic identities further dividing its citizens. However, protests against the unfavourable political and economic situation as well as humour can serve as reference points for a more inclusive civic identity.

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## Recent Publications:

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# Serbia's In-Betweenness

## The Interplay of Balkanism, Europeanness and Disappointed Expectations in Serbia's EU Integration Process

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### Abstract

This article focuses on the public discourse about the EU accession process in Serbia as seen through the prism of symbolic geography that is historically structured by the dichotomy of Europe and the Balkans. On the basis of theoretical approaches such as mental mapping, symbolic geography, Balkanism and the concept of Europeanness as an interplay between self-perceptions and perceptions of the so-called other, this paper tries to reconstruct the paradoxical processes of aiming to belong to the EU and neglecting this option.

During the 1990s, the liberal-democratic, EU-oriented opposition "Balkanized" the Milošević regime in order to delegitimize and ultimately to successfully overthrow it in 2000. Referring to Western European values and Europeanness as such, this new liberal-democratic government around the Democratic Party (DS) awakened expectations of Serbia's quick EU accession, a resulting prosperity, and improved living standards. The fact that those promises did not come true delegitimized the DS, which after twelve years of ruling went into opposition. Ironically, those politicians who had been part of the Milošević regime and thus Balkanized by their EU-oriented opponents, are now in power and are, consequently, fostering Serbia's EU integration and accession process. Those developments affirm a broad, discursively constructed commitment to Europeanness.

The following article focuses on the public discourse about the European Union accession process in Serbia as seen through the prism of symbolic geography that is historically structured by the dichotomy of Europe and the Balkans. Thus, the main questions are: What are the self-perceptions in Serbia with regard to the dichotomy of Europe and the Balkans? To what extent are Balkanism, high expectations and deep disappointments regarding the EU integration process in Serbia interrelated?

On the basis of theoretical approaches such as mental mapping, symbolic geography and Balkanism as an interplay between self-perceptions and perceptions of the so-called 'other', this paper tries to reconstruct the paradoxical process of aiming to belong to the EU and neglecting this option. The support for Serbia's EU accession is constantly changing due to national and international political and socio-economic developments. Aleksandra Čavoški, who defines the EU accession as "a two way process" placing "significant strains on the EU institutions and individual Member States", notices a constant

decrease in the public support for Serbia's EU accession in the last years (Čavoški, 2013, p. 1). Čavoški came to this conclusion in 2013, after the international financial and economic crises since 2007 and before the so-called rapidly increasing "Greece debt crisis" in 2014/2015 and "EU asylum policy crisis" in 2015. Now these developments seem to lead to questioning the credibility of the European Union as well as European values as such. However, this article focuses on the perspective within Serbia, which has been an official EU candidate state since 2012, representing views "from outside" the EU. According to the anthropologists from the University of Pittsburgh, Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert Hayden, "the view of 'Europe' afforded by the periphery of the continent" proves to be "a particularly revealing one, and not only because of its reflections of the European self-image" (Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 13). The "marginal observer" is the "most acute one", as they state (ibid). In that sense, Serbia belongs to countries of the (Western) European periphery (ibid.; see also Nadjivan, 2010, p. 143ff) which

can be contextualized in the framework of symbolic geography and mental mapping in order to scrutinize changing and even paradox imaginations of the EU and Europe as a whole.

## The Use of Symbolic Geography and Mental Mapping

Symbolic geography is – in contrast to ‘professional’ or ‘modern’ geography – mostly created by imaginations and discursive representations of political, economic and social actors. The best-known example of symbolic geography is the division of the world into North and South, as well as into West and East (Straughn, 2006, p. 5). As a result, the symbolic geography does not always conform to professional mapping. Mental maps are used “to mark the distinctions and recognitions” that different and often competing decision makers and actors have (Liotta, 2005, p. 84). Mental maps include aspects such as “economic, cultural, religious” and “political” identities as well as “physical geography” (ibid., p. 68). The line along which regions are divided “may shift in one direction or the other” and depends on political, social, economic or cultural processes, which of course have nothing to do with cartographical divisions. Moreover, the symbolic shifting results from the notions, interests and agitations of various actors who define the so-called ‘other’ by referring to dichotomies. “And herein,” the sociologist from the Westminster College, Jeremy Brooke Straughn locates

*“the key to understanding the mysterious alliance between symbolic boundaries and symbolic geography, in the formation and reproduction of social groups and collective identities.”*  
(Straughn, 2006, p. 6)

Symbolic boundaries serve to create groups and construct identities: Insiders are divided from outsiders, specifically by defined characteristics which then serve to organize relations between insiders and outsiders as well as among insiders themselves (ibid.).

Jeremy Brooke Straughn points out that

*“geographic signifiers such as ‘east’ and ‘west’ simply denote the endpoints of an abstract continuum with no natural breaking point, as one moves horizontally across any arbitrary sector of the globe.”*  
(Straughn, 2006, p. 9)

This action of dichotomizing can be repeated everywhere to form sub regions, which can be defined as East and West (ibid.). This definition makes clear to what extent the East-West dichotomy is socially constructed and thus easy to instrumentalize, or even manipulate. Where mental maps correspond to cartographic maps, “symbolic geography can help naturalize and reinforce an otherwise arbitrary symbolic boundary between insiders and outsiders” – on the basis of the East-West axis. The fact that “symbolic and spatial boundaries” (ibid., p. 7) often do not fit together and thus lead to conflict is validated, for example, by the continuing tensions and disputes concerning Kosovo’s independence. Mental maps serve political and economic interests, by which the lines are drawn (Liotta, 2005, p. 69). The cultural map comprises the dichotomy between the mostly positively connoted Europe and the often negatively perceived Balkans. Confronted with Europe, the Balkans represent the ‘other’, not only on the cultural but also the religious map which divides the Catholic from Orthodox Christianity (ibid., p. 77ff), not to mention from Islam. As Serbia traditionally represents an Orthodox Christian country, it is disputable whether it belongs to (a Roman Catholic) Europe in this sense. The term Europe means “the broad eye” in the ancient Greek language, as the late Peter H. Liotta, former Director of the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy at Salve Regina University, pointed out. In answer to his own question of what might be included in this broadness (ibid., p. 80), Liotta offers the following, referring to Maria Todorova: “Europe ends where politicians want it to end” (Todorova, 1997, p. 60, 139; quoted from Liotta, 2005, p. 69).

## Imagining the Other against the European Background

Europe, as a matter of fact, is not only the name of a continent, but also the embodiment of historic achievements such as enlightenment, secularism, modernity, democracy, equality, human and civil rights, free economy, economic prosperity and so forth. As a result, the European Union does not only represent “an institutional organization, but also a community of values” (Ristić, 2007, p. 185). Europeanness, according to Irena Ristić, includes values and norms that determine Western Europe so that it can be defined as the European identity



or identity of Europe (ibid.). This claim is, of course, constructed discursively and “proposes”, as Reiner Keller points out,

*“positions for actors engaging in knowledge production and circulation as well as opportunity structures for using symbols to say things or to create the dispositional prerequisites for power effects.”*  
(Keller, 2005)

The Balkans therefore can be defined as “a ‘place’ in a discourse-geography” (Bjelić, 2002, p. 4, emphasis added), or symbolic geography within the concept of Balkanism that refers to Orientalism. “Orientalism” (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004, p. 631) as a critique to imagined Western constructs of and projections to the East, was initially described by Edward Said (Said, 1979; quoted from Bakić-Hayden and Hayden, 1992, p. 1). Orientalism discerns superior societies and cultures, such as those in Europe, from inferior ones like the Orient. That means the former form the

*“privilege[d] [...] self-confidently ‘progressive’, ‘modern’ and ‘rational’ Europe over the (latter) putatively ‘stagnant’, ‘backward’, ‘traditional’ and ‘mystical’ [...] Orient.”*  
(Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 1)

Referring to this approach, “Balkanism” was first established as an analytical category by the anthropologist Milica Bakić-Hayden, the historian and professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Maria Todorova and Vesna Goldsworthy, writer and professor for English literature at the Kingston University London and consists of the same dualism: “rational/irrational, center/periphery, civilization/barbarism, modernity/backwardness, democracy/autocracy”, which erects the same hierarchy between a superior Europe and inferior Balkans (Bjelić, 2002, p. 3f). The main difference between Orientalism and Balkanism is, as Todorova points out, that Orientalism represents a “discourse about imputed oppositions”, while Balkanism is a “discourse about imputed ambiguity” (Todorova, 1997, p. 7; quoted from Razsa and Lindstrom 2004, p. 632). In contrast to Bakić-Hayden, Todorova understands the Balkans as a part of Europe, as “Europe’s shadow, the structurally despised alter ego” (quoted from Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004, p. 633).

Referring to Todorova, the sociologist, literary theorist and co-founder of the Ljubljana school of psychoanalysis, Rastko Močnik clearly defines “Balkanism” as

*“an ideology of domination, demonstrating that within Balkanism, two types of relations of domination are articulated: the relations of geo-political and economic hegemony and the relations of internal domination within societies geo-politically stigmatized as ‘Balkan’.”*  
(Močnik, 2002, p. 79)

Moreover, following Močnik, Balkanism underlines “the economic, social, and political dependence of a certain semiperipheral European region upon the Western center”. At the same time it also strengthens “the socio-economic domination of the ruling elites within the countries of the region” (ibid., p. 80). In that sense, the “Orientalistic representation of the Balkans”, or balkanization functions on two interrelated levels: On the one hand, in the international context, “this ideology defines the Balkans as a particular region with specific codes of behavior” (ibid., p. 86). As a useful result, Balkanism in fact does not separate (defined) Balkan countries from Europe, but assigns them to an inferior position within the international system. As a result, this

*“illusion of separation [...] keeps the Balkan countries in an inferior position. The Oriental view of the Balkans is thus a mechanism of international domination.”*  
(Močnik, 2002, p. 79)

On the other hand, “this same Orientalistic ideology” can be used “as a mechanism of domination within the Balkan countries themselves” (ibid.). This second level of Balkanization, as a form of self-perception in the region will be analysed in the following. The main idea herein is that Balkanism is not only an ascription from outside, or from the so-called West, but also a reference point for self-perceptions within the Balkan region. Indeed, there is an interplay between this stigmatizing ideology and the stigmatized, so that Balkanism represents a “hegemonic ideology” (ibid., p. 83). The proof for its “hegemonic nature” is, according to Bakić-Hayden and Hayden, that “terms, and the orientalist (Balkanizing) framework in general, are often used even by those who are disparaged by them” (Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 3).



Thus, hegemonic discourses produce hegemonic ideologies, which by themselves construct symbolic geographies and mental maps. According to Alexander Kiossev, “the Balkans” as a term implies that a specific region related to a specific identity does exist (Kiossev, 2002, p. 165). In the context of symbolic geography and mental mapping, the Balkan region is socially constructed and re-produced within hegemonic discourses. Consequently, Kiossev understands territory as an “‘empty’ place that serves arbitrary cognitive projections” (ibid., p. 173).

## The Balkans’ In-Betweenness

As an imagined territory, whether Byzantine or Ottoman, the Balkans embody the “cultural and religious ‘Other’ to Europe” (Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 3). Thus, from the so-called Western point of view, the Balkans appear to be “something non-European, semi-European and in any case insufficiently European”, or as a “blurred and irritating *In-between*, neither Europe – nor Asia” (Koprivitsa [Koprivica], 2013, p. 18f). As Časlav Koprivica, philosopher and professor at the University for Political Science in Belgrade, points out, the Balkans are perceived as the European inner “alien” so that the “Balkan identity” may be understood as a “corner stone of the Western Balkanistic discourse” (ibid., p. 19). In other words, “the Balkans are just a ‘Western’, or ‘non-Balkanistic’ invention”. However, this “in-betweenness of the Balkans” could be “simply” constructed as an “incomplete other”, but instead, it is constructed as an “incomplete self” (ibid.). The Balkans appear not only to be “an incomplete Europeanism but also an incomplete Orientalness” according to Koprivica. Interesting in this context is the impact of the European “hetero-discourse” on the Balkan “auto-discourse” (ibid.) by internalizing the “Western Balkanistic discourse”, or Balkanism. So, Koprivica links the “perception of own geographic interspaciality” with “the perception of own cultural in-betweenness” (ibid., p. 24f).

Moreover, Koprivica reveals the “‘Balkanistic’ auto-perception of the Balkanites” (Balkan people) not only as an “interiorization of the West’s Balkanistic discourse”, but also as “the consequence of centuries-long history of foreign (Western) interfering in Balkans’ affairs which at least partly” creates a reality corresponding to “the Balkanistic interpretation of the Balkans” – consequently, the situation of “self-fulfilling

prophecy”. Ironically, this “self-fulfilling prophecy” remains silenced by Balkanites themselves, namely through internalizing the Western Balkanistic discourse in the frame of a “‘Balkanistic’ self-consciousness” (ibid., p. 25). In order to stop the reproduction of Balkanistic realities, Koprivica asks for new orientations through new mental spaces or maps, as main reference points (ibid., p. 33). The present study, however, aims to reveal the impact of Balkanism and Europeanness on Serbia’s public discourse relating to the European integration.

The historical origins of Balkanism, produced by the hegemonic discourse and the thus resulting symbolic geography can be found in the Christian schism of 1054 which led to the division between Western (Catholic) and Eastern (Orthodox) churches. In the following centuries the mostly conflicting imperialist relations among the Catholic Habsburg monarchy and the Islamic Ottoman dynasty, occupying Southeastern Europe, reproduced such a hegemonic discourse and symbolic geography (Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 4f). The Habsburg monarchy furthermore used imaginations of its own superiority to legitimize its imperialist interests in Southeastern Europe. Furthermore, the strategy of disparaging and even defeating the so-called other, the enemy, was used before, during, and after World War I (Keegan, 2010, p. 21ff). The racial ideology of the Nazi era further perverted imaginations of superiority with drastic consequences such as mass killing and genocide (Ristović, 2007, p. 297).

After World War II, during the Cold War period, Balkanism was reactivated in a new context. The traditional symbolic geography was then extended by an ideological and political one, so that the “democratic, capitalist west” was confronted with the “totalitarian, communist east” (Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 3). However, the stereotypes remained the same, so that Western progress and modernity juxtaposed Eastern primitivism and traditionalism. As Bakić-Hayden and Hayden point out, the “entire hierarchy” in the framework of the symbolic geography includes the dualism between a “north-west” (of the highest value) and the “south-east” (of the lowest value) (ibid., p. 4).

Due to the heritage of competing empires, the Yugoslav states – the first manifestation after World War I and the second in particular, the Tito-Yugoslavia, after World War II – represented melting points of different religions, scripts,

nations, “ethnics”, and cultures (*ibid.*). In the context of the Yugoslav economic crisis which started in the 1970s and transformed into a political crisis after the death of the founder and long-time president of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ), Josip Broz Tito, power struggles, distribution conflicts, and legitimacy battles among competing elites were connoted not only nationalistically (Imbusch, 2006, p. 227ff), but also orientalistically, in other words, they were Balkanized (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004, pp. 633-639). After decades of the Yugoslav, respectively Tito’s, “Sonderweg”, the non-aligned movement, the orientalist dualism determined emerging nationalisms. Consequently, national(istic) elites of the “Western” republics referring to “European” values declared themselves as European, i.e., civilized and modern, while degrading the “others”, the “Eastern ones”, as “Balkan”, “byzantine”, and hence primitive and backward (Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 5).

What the authors Bakić-Hayden and Hayden stated in 1992 during the unification process of the European Community and before its redefinition as the European Union, as well as during the wars on the territory of former Yugoslavia, is valid until today: “in the post-colonial world” the orientalist, specifically Balkanizing matrix still sets “a powerful set of categories” in order to “stigmatize” and disqualify societies that are not “western-style democracies” (*ibid.*, p. 2). Thus, this matrix or the hegemonic discourse still seems to determine the “European”<sup>1</sup> unification process (Bakić-Hayden & Hayden, 1992, p. 2). Balkanism has determined the political discourse during the autocratic Milošević regime, the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, and the regime change in 2000 (*ibid.*, p. 173).

## Balkanized Struggles among Political Opponents in Serbia

The post-socialist state Yugoslavia or Serbia under the rule of Slobodan Milošević (1987-2000) was, according to Nenad Dimitrijević, professor at the political science department at the Central European University in Budapest, characterized by privatization and criminalization by the political elite (“Milošević’s cartel”), pluralization and decentralization of physical violence

(paramilitary), and elimination “of the socialist rudimentary statehood” (Dimitrijević, 2005, p. 61). The Milošević regime relied on connections between organized crime and political, military and police institutions. These informal, criminal structures were camouflaged by socialist as well as patriotic and nationalist rhetoric (*ibid.*, p. 67). In the deeply polarized Serbian society, the Milošević regime was characterized by the interplay of the socialist heritage and ethno-nationalist elements.<sup>2</sup> Hence, it did not win all possible voters so that especially liberal-democratic and Western-oriented citizens remained excluded.

Due to its historical heritage and the sociopolitical context, the Serbian society was and still is characterized by heterogeneity, discontinuity and competing ideologies that lead to its deep polarization. For that reason, Ristić concludes that two rival imaginations of Serbia’s belonging to Europe do exist herein: According to the first understanding, Serbia embodies a Western European country sharing Western values and culture, with a “strong urban identification” and a conceptual focus on the citizen. This imagination is defined here as Europeanness. The second understanding of Serbia is the one of “a traditional state that belongs to Europe but does not necessarily share all values considered as European”, but instead shows “an orientation towards Russia”. Referring to the orthodox religion “collectivism” is set in the foreground, and not “individual responsibility” (Ristić, 2007, p. 190).

During the 1990s, the hegemonic ideology of Balkanism worked in various forms: while Serbia was internationally perceived, especially by the Western states, as a negatively connoted Balkan state, the political elite (Milošević’s cartel) used Balkanism to occidentalize the homogenized Serbian “people” by separating it from the orientalized others. This strategy (hate speech in its worst form) served to legitimize suppression and wars against non-Serbs, primarily against Bosnian and Albanian citizens. At the same time, the liberal-democratic, Western oriented political and cultural opposition used the same strategy: it orientalized or Balkanized the regime in order to disqualify and delegitimize it and, as a result, unhinge its power. In reference to Europeanness, to

<sup>1</sup> Similar to the invention of the authors Petra Bernhardt, Leila Hadj-Abdou, Karin Liebhart, and Andreas Pribersky, the term European refers to all things concerning the EU, whereas European is used in a broader sense (see Bernhardt,

Hadj-Abdou, Liebhart and Pribersky, 2009, p. 7).

<sup>2</sup> According to the conversation with the sociologists Stjepan Gredelj and Zoran Gavrilović on January 15, 2003 in Belgrade.

Western Europe and European values, the liberal-democratic, mostly urban-oriented opposition always distinguished itself from the therefore Balkanized Milošević regime and its supporters (Džihic, Nadjivan, Paic & Stachowitsch, 2006, p. 185 ff). Consequently in 2000, it celebrated its (controversial) victory at the Yugoslav presidential elections and the fall of the Milošević regime as liberation against a Balkan despot.<sup>3</sup> This political victory, symbolically speaking, was not only the victory of European values against Balkan primitivism, but much more: After a dark decade of wars and international isolation, this victory brought Serbia, recently the epitome of backwardness, back to the civilized, developed and cultivated world – to Europe.

## Longing for Europe and Europeanness

One of the main reasons why the former autocratic Milošević regime had been overthrown on October 5, 2000, was the promise of the liberal-democratic and pro-EU-oriented opposition Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS<sup>4</sup>), led by Zoran Đinđić, to realize Serbia's EU membership in the next few years. Moreover, the new liberal-democratic government proclaimed Serbia's EU accession as one of its main goals (Ristić, 2007, p. 185; Spasić, 2008). Other important promises of the liberal-democratic parties were the following: to abolish the EU visa regime against Serbia, to bring international investments to Serbia, create new jobs, and establish a better living standard for all the Serbian people in the next few years (Spasić, 2008).

However, the liberal-democratic and pro-European oriented government did not succeed in accomplishing a system change. The most important supporters of the Milošević regime

avoided the system change by keeping their networks, the cartel, alive and by preserving "the rudimentary façade statehood" (Dimitrijević, 2005, p. 61). The most extreme evidence for that is the assassination of the Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić on March 12, 2003. With Đinđić's death Serbia lost one of its most important proponents for European integration and accession, which was also reflected by the Serbian media at that time. Post hum Đinđić appeared as the more or less only guarantee for Serbia to pass its way to EU, or Europe.<sup>5</sup> Metaphorically speaking, with Đinđić's assassination Serbia's Europeanness was killed so that Serbia again fell back to a backward Balkanic state. But in the public discourse at that time, there was still no doubt about the common will to continue the way to stabilization, democracy, and prosperity, embodied by Europeanness. As opinion polls soon after Đinđić's assassination showed, the majority, 47.2% of the respondents, shared the opinion that Đinđić's contribution to Serbia was the greatest and most important one, whereas 37.6% thought that Đinđić had made a great contribution to Serbia. For only 3.1% of the respondents was Đinđić's work of little importance, and not more than 1.7% thought Đinđić's work was of no importance at all. These results show that even his political opponents acknowledged his achievements for the country. Besides, 90% of the respondents articulated their wish to continue with the started reforms. For 85% the investigation of the murder and combating crime in Serbia had the highest priority. Only 10% wished to have the preservation of "national honour" as a policy objective of the government.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, all of the promises the DOS government had made correlated with perceptions that the Serbian population had of the European Union. According to surveys from 2002 to 2007, the EU, respectively Europe, as a projection

<sup>3</sup> N. N. (10-06-2000). Slavi se u svim gradovima (Celebrations in all cities). In: *Blic*, p. 3; N. N. (10-06-2000). Volja naroda pobedila (The will of the people has won). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 1; N. N. (10-06-2000). Zvečke umesto pušaka (Rattles instead of weapons). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 3; N. N. (10-06-2000). Suzama do slobode (With tears to freedom). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 3; N. N. (10-06-2000). Gde je Milošević? (Where is Milošević?). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 4; Milošević, M. (10-12-2000). *Veliki preokret* (The great turning point). In: *Vreme*, available at [http://www.vreme.com/arhiva\\_html/510/index.html](http://www.vreme.com/arhiva_html/510/index.html), accessed on 02-06-2013.

<sup>4</sup> Democratic Opposition of Serbia (Demokratska Opozicija Srbije) was a party coalition around the Democratic Party (Demokratska Stranka, DS), headed by Zoran Đinđić.

<sup>5</sup> N. N. (03-13-2003). Državnici šokirani (Citizens

shocked). In: *Blic*, p. 8; N. N. (03-13-2003). Veliki gubitak (Big loss). In: *Blic*, p. 9; N. N. (03-13-2003). Pokušaj da se promeni istorija (Attempt to change history). In: *Politika*, p. 1; N. N. (03-13-2003). Srbija u šoku (Serbia in shock). In: *Politika*, p. 4; N. N. (03-13-2003). Ubistvo premijera Zorana Đinđića (Assassination of the Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić). In: *Vreme*, available at <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=334940>, accessed on 02-06-2013. N. N. (03-13-2003). Ubijena nada u bolju budućnost Srbije (Murdered hope of a better future in Serbia). In: *Blic*, p. 2; N. N. (03-15-2003). Simbol i stub Srbije (Serbia's symbol und pillar). In: *Politika*, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> I. L. (03-15-2003). Zasluge priznali i oponenti (Even his opponents acknowledged his contributions). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 9.

screen represented more or less everything people in Serbia wished to have: freedom of movement, economic prosperity, good living standards, security, and “law and order”.<sup>7</sup>

Yet the so-called “way to Europe” (“put ka Evropi”)<sup>8</sup> proved to be a much longer one than previously expected (Ristić, 2007, p. 185). What liberal-democratic politicians of the post-Milošević, pro-European governments prospected did not come true: In 2003, two months after the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić, the then elected Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Živković proclaimed to expect Serbia’s EU membership in 2007.<sup>9</sup> In 2004, the Deputy Prime Minister Miroljub Labus expected Serbia’s EU accession in 2012.<sup>10</sup>

Opinion polls in Serbia at that time revealed a high correlation of promises Serbian liberal-democratic politicians had made and the high expectations regarding Serbia’s EU accession. When asked in 2006, in which year they would expect Serbia’s EU membership, most of the respondents, namely 34.5% named the time between 2010 and 2014. The years 2015 to 2019 were chosen by 23.8% of the respondents, whereas 23.4% estimated Serbia’s EU accession after 2020, and 17.3% of the respondents expected it by 2009 (Čavoški, 2013, p. 3). These results show, on the one hand, high normative expectations also aroused by politicians, and on the other, the unawareness

among the majority of Serbian people regarding the lengthy proceedings of such an accession process (Čavoški, 2013, p. 3).

In 2006, Labus resigned from his position of Deputy Prime Minister, after the EU’s decision to suspend further stabilization and association discussions with Serbia and Montenegro.<sup>11</sup> The reason for the suspension was the government’s failure to find and extradite Ratko Mladić to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. Mladić, who had been the commander of the Serb army in Bosnia and Herzegovina was – together with Radovan Karadžić, the self-proclaimed President of Republika Srpska – accused of war crimes from 1992 to 1995. Both, Mladić and Karadžić were on the run, while the question of whether they were national heroes or war criminals deeply divided the Serbian society (Inotai, 2007, p. 316). However, it should take two or five years more to catch and extradite Karadžić in 2008, and Mladić in 2011 (Pensold, Nadjivan & Asboth, 2015, pp. 199, 202).

It is worth mentioning that the Serbian mainstream media – in contrast to emotionally charged debates of previous years (Džihic, Nadjivan, Paic & Stachowitsch, 2006, p. 178f) – ceased to question Karadžić’s and Mladić’s arrest. Each arrest simply appeared as a long overdue obligation, while especially statements of satisfied European

<sup>7</sup> From the interviews with Velimir Čurgus, Director of Ebart Media Archive, on July 15, 2005, and Svetlana Logar, Director of Strategic Marketing on July 26, 2005 in Belgrade; SMMRI (September 2004). *Evropska orijentacija građana Srbije*. Trendovi. Za potrebe kancelarije za pridruživanje EU vlade Republike Srbije (The European Orientation of Serbian Citizens. Trends. For the Use of the Serbian Government Council for European Integration). Belgrade, 47f.

<sup>8</sup> N. N. (04-06-2003). Prosper: Put ka Evropi samo kroz punu saradnju s Hagom (Pierre-Richard Prosper, US-American ambassador: Way to Europe only through full cooperation with the ICTY in The Hague). In: *Blic*, available at <http://www.blic.rs/vesti/drustvo/prosper-put-ka-evropi-samo-kroz-punu-saradnju-s-hagom/mc4jqz6>, accessed on 12-18-2015.

<sup>9</sup> N. N. (05-24-2003). Živković: Teoretski moguć prijem u EU 2007. godine (Zoran Živković: Serbia’s EU Accession theoretically possible in 2007). In: *B92*, available at [http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2003&mm=05&ddd=24&nav\\_id=109415](http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2003&mm=05&ddd=24&nav_id=109415), accessed on 12-18-2015.

<sup>10</sup> N. N. (10-06-2004). Labus: Srbija u EU do 2012? (Miroljub Labus: Serbia in the EU until 2012?). In: *Blic*, available at <http://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/labus-srbija-u-eu-do-2012/vty7lh2>, accessed on 12-18-2015.

<sup>11</sup> N. N. (05-03-2006). Labus resigns: Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Miroljub Labus has resigned. In: *B92*, available at [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2006&mm=05&ddd=03&nav\\_id=34730](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2006&mm=05&ddd=03&nav_id=34730), accessed on 12-18-2015.

<sup>12</sup> N. N. (07-22-2008). EU: Ključni događaj za Srbiju (EU: key event for Serbia). In: *Blic*, p. 4; N. N. (07-22-2008).

Uhapšen Karadžić (Karadžić arrested). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 5; N. N. (07-23-2008). EU zadovoljna, čeka se Mladić (EU satisfied, now waiting for Mladić). In: *Politika*, p. 1, 4; N. N. (07-23-2008). U Hagu iduće nedelje (Next week to The Hague). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 2; Kokanović, V. (07-23-2008). Evropski ministri zadovoljni, ali očekuje se hvatanje Mladića (European ministers satisfied, but expect arrest of Mladić). In: *Politika*, p. 3; N. N. (07-23-2008). Samo još dvojica na slobodi (Only two still fugitive). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 5; p. Rovčanin, P. (07-23-2008). Čekaju Mladića (They wait for Mladić). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 8; N. N. (07-26-2008). Izručenje od ponedjeljka (Extradition on monday). In: *Politika*, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Spaić, T. (05-26-2011). Preporuka Srbiji (Recommendation to Serbia). In: *Blic*, p. 5; Bogosavljević, Ž. (05-27-2011). Mladić radio kao nadničar na građevini (Mladić worked as a construction laborer). In: *Blic*, p. 2f; Simonović, V. (05-27-2011). N. N. (05-27-2011). Konačno dobra vest (Finally good news). In: *Blic*, p. 2; Marković-Subota, T. (05-27-2011). Ratni komandant se mirno predao policajcima (The war commander peacefully devoted himself to the police). In: *Blic*, (05-27-2011), p. 2f; Pivljanin, R. (05-27-2011). Heroj preko noći postao krvavi komandant (Hero became a bloodthirsty commander overnight). In: *Blic*, p. 4f; N. N. (05-27-2011). Istražićemo šta se dešavalo proteklih 16 godina (We will examine what has happened in the last 16 years). In: *Blic*, (05-27-2011), p. 6; Spaić, T. (05-27-2011). Srbiji otvoren put ka EU (The way to EU is open for Serbia). In: *Blic*, p. 6; Uskoković, Z. (05-27-2011). General nije pružao otpor (The



politicians filled the newspapers. Eight,<sup>12</sup> and eleven years<sup>13</sup> after the fall of the Milošević regime, both arrests just seemed to be important steps to eliminating such annoying obstacles on Serbia's way to normalization, meaning to free itself from the historic burden and finally become a normal and European state. In contrast to the Serbian mainstream media, an opinion poll that was made at the time of Karadžić's arrest, however, showed that one third of the respondents perceived Karadžić as a "national hero" (Konitzer, 2014, p. 97). Nevertheless, such perceptions seemed not to be useful to the political elite who worked on Serbia's EU integration and accession.

## Broken Dreams and Social Dissatisfaction

Since the regime change of 2000, public opinion polls such as the Eurobarometer and the ones of the Serbian European Integration Office showed an obvious decrease in support for Serbia's EU accession, going hand-in-hand with an overall dissatisfaction about the political, socioeconomic, and thus individual situation. That broad disappointment among the Serbian citizens arose due to the problematic economic situation, high unemployment, widespread corruption, long-time unresolved status of a common state with Montenegro (that peacefully declared its independence in 2006) and Kosovo (that self-proclaimed its state sovereignty in 2008), and the EU conditionality towards Serbia that also included the cooperation with the ICTY as a sine qua non condition (Bačević, Slavujević, Pantić, Matić & Ristić, 2012, p. 5f). After the liberal-democratic, pro-European government had promised to solve all those mentioned problems in 2001, ten years later a three-quarter majority of the Serbian citizens were dissatisfied with their economic situation, thus having pessimistic future visions and no trust in the Serbian government, nor institutions (ibid., p. 18).

All of the developments in the "EU waiting room" brought up a change in the people's attitude towards the EU and towards Europeanness as well. According to Čavoški's illustration of the opinion poll results, in 2002 nearly 70% of respondents would vote for Serbia's EU accession, whereas in 2012 only 41% would do that. On the other hand, the percentage of EU sceptics, or those who would not vote for the EU, is increasing: from nearly 10% in 2002 to 31% in 2012 (Čavoški 2013, p. 2). However, EU support increased again in recent years: in 2013 even 51% of respondents would vote for the EU; in 2014, 44% and in 2015, 48%. This share is doubtlessly higher than that for EU sceptics: in 2013, 22% would vote against the EU; in 2014, 25%, and in 2015, 28%.<sup>14</sup> This leads to the conclusion that, in spite of several percentage changes, the share of EU supporters is bigger than that of EU opponents. The commitment to join the EU therefore dominates over possible alternatives, such as intensifying the relations with Russia. However, the recent international financial and economic crisis and the actual "asylum crisis policy of the EU"<sup>15</sup> have chipped away at the EU's credibility. Consequently, it can be concluded that Europe does not as a matter of course embody welfare, prosperity, security and humanity, as it might have done in previous years. Apart from all difficulties of Serbia and its in-betweenness, Europe seems to have partly lost its glow.

On the other hand, significant steps in Serbia's EU accession process seem to remain mostly unnoticed so that they may hardly affect a greater public support of that accession (Čavoški, 2013, p. 2). Among important steps within Serbia's EU integration process, there was the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) by the EU and Serbia on April 29, 2008, which formalized Serbia's ongoing EU integration process (ibid, p. 1; Galičić, 2014, p. 17). Apart from other agreements, the Agreement of Visa Facilitation was not only an important formal

General did not resist). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 3; Spasojević, V. C. and Kovačević, M. T. (05-27-2011). Dobro jutro. Da, ja sam Ratko Mladić (Good morning. Yes, I am Ratko Mladić). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 3; N. N. (05-27-2011). Viđan od Beča do Kine (Seen from Vienna to China). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 4; Radosavljević, E., Dragović, R. and Mijatović, V. (05-28-2011). Dan bez skrivanja (The day without hiding). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 2; Spasojević, V. C. (05-28-2011). Mladić je bio gladan (Mladić was hungry). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 3; R., S. S. & M., D. (05-28-2011). Sad će sve biti lakše (Now everything will be easier). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 7; Pivljanin, R.

(05-29-2011): Uslovljavanje (Committal). In: *Blic*, p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Government of the Republic of Serbia (2015). Serbian Citizens' Attitude towards EU. Public opinion poll. Available at [http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna\\_dokumenta/istrazivanja\\_javnog\\_mnjenja/opinion\\_poll\\_december\\_15.pdf](http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna_dokumenta/istrazivanja_javnog_mnjenja/opinion_poll_december_15.pdf), accessed on 01-22-2016.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Schuman Foundation (2015). The crisis of the common asylum policy in the European Union. In: European Issue No. 367, 10-12-2015. Available at <http://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/european-issues/0367-the-crisis-of-the-common-asylum-policy-in-the-european-union>, accessed on 01-22-2016.

measure, but also of great public interest due to its immediate effects. After seventeen years of international isolation (since the UN sanctions of 1992), Serbian people could now travel to EU member states without any visa requirements, which was mostly perceived as a return to normality. As a result, this novelty was celebrated in the Serbian public and media.<sup>16</sup> A headline of the pro-European newspaper *Blic* brought it to the point: "So that we can live normally like the rest of the world too."<sup>17</sup> A slight increase in support of Serbia's EU accession was therefore to observe (Čavoški 2013, p. 1).

At the same time, on December 22, 2009, the Serbian government submitted its application for EU membership. On March 1, 2012, Serbia received the EU candidate status in accordance with the Commission's positive opinion (*ibid.*, p. 1). And finally on January 21, 2014, the negotiations between the Serbian government and the EU started officially (the first EU chapters were opened in January 2015).<sup>18</sup>

That official start of the EU negotiations by Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić, leader of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and former member of the Milošević regime, was said to be the "most important historical event since World War II". However, according to the pro-European and oppositional weekly newspaper *Vreme*, that day was an important date in history because exactly those politicians who had previously spread hate speech against "Western neo-fascist neo-imperialism" and therefore effectuated xenophobia, now proclaimed Serbia's EU integration as their most important goal.<sup>19</sup> These politicians had formerly been important members of the Milošević regime, namely Ivica Dačić (SPS) and Aleksandar Vučić (Serbian Radical Party, SRS, now: Serbian Progressive Party, SNS) who split off from their problematic past in order to adapt to prevailing positive EU attitudes in Serbia, and to foster Serbia's EU integration and succession as well.

Ivica Dačić, Milošević's former confidant, belongs to those leading SPS-reformers who, during the presidential election of 2002, refused to publicly support the right extreme candidate Vojislav Šešelj, founder and leader of the Serbian Radical Party (SRS). Besides, Šešelj was accused of war crimes by the ICTY in The Hague. Dačić's stance had nearly led to a party split within the SPS (Konitzer, 2014, p. 98f).

## Serbia's "Political Tsunami" against the Background of Europeanness

During the parliamentary election campaigns in 2008, Dačić's SPS focused on social issues and for that reason attracted many voters. From a mostly negatively connoted, old fashioned and relatively unimportant oppositional party, the SPS turned into a presentable, trustful political player. In the following, the SPS joined the explicitly pro-European coalition under Boris Tadić's DS.

On the contrary, the SRS focusing on extreme right positions regarding the Kosovo status faced an enormous election defeat. Pragmatic SRS politicians such as Tomislav Nikolić and Aleksandar Vučić turned their back on the party leader Šešelj who was attending the ICTY trial in The Hague and dictated the SRS policy from abroad. Instead, they founded a new, pro-European party, the Serbian Progressive Party (Srpska Napredna Stranka, SNS) (*ibid.*, pp. 98f, 106f; Ristić, 2014, p. 81). What was revolutionary about the 2008 elections was the fact that the DS and SPS, although they had been clear opponents since the regime change of 2000, formed a common and functioning government that was obviously dedicated to European values, Europeanness, and fostering Serbia's EU accession. The next parliamentary elections of 2012 proved to be revolutionary due to the fact that for the first time since the regime change of 2000, the DS was not part of the Serbian government anymore,

<sup>16</sup> Vučetić, S. (12-11-2009). Nedelja koja obećava (A very promising week). In: *Blic*, p. 7; Martinović, S. (12-18-2009). Zasluge (Merits). In: *Blic*, p. 4; S., B. & M., D. (12-18-2009). Šengenski zid pada u ponoć (Schengen wall falls at midnight). In: *Blic*, p. 4f; Pivljanin, R. (12-20-2009). Povratak u normalnost (Return to normality). In: *Blic*, p. 2; Gucijan, S. (12-20-2009). Rakija za istoriju (Schnapps for history). In: *Politika*, p. 7; N. N. (12-20-2009). Vraćeno dostojanstvo (Regained dignity). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 5; N. N. (12-20-2009). Sada sanjam jedan drugi san (Now I am dreaming another dream).

In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> N. N. (12-20-2009). Da živimo kao sav normalan svet. In: *Blic*, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Dragoljo, S. (12-14-2015). Serbia Readies to Open First EU Chapters. In: *BalkanInsight*. Available at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbia-starts-eu-talks-challenges-lie-ahead-12-11-2015>, accessed on 12-16-2015.

<sup>19</sup> Ivanji, A. (01-23-2014). Dobar dan, dobro došli (Hello and welcome). In: *Vreme*. Available at <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=1167673>, accessed on 02-02-2014.



but instead went into opposition. The SNS under Vučić won the most votes and was invited by Dačić's SPS to form a common government. Although being head of the third largest party according to the elections results, Dačić took over the position of Prime Minister. Until 2014 the SPS-SNS-government made important steps towards Serbia's EU accession by starting EU membership talks and improving the relations to the Kosovo government in Priština. Further important steps were achievements in the fight of organized crime and corruption (Ristić, 2014, p. 80; Galičić, 2014, p. 17f).

Nevertheless, the SNS-leadership called for snap elections in order to receive "the highest political support of the citizens of Serbia" as was officially declared.<sup>20</sup> It was clear that Vučić longed for the position of the Prime Minister, which Dačić even offered him to take over – without further elections. But

Vučić's aim was to gain more parliamentary seats and to know the clear majority of Serbian voters supported him in setting future political steps. So, these elections should prove to be a "strategically good move" (Ristić, 2014, p. 81), as they brought a clear victory of the party coalition SNS and SPS, in other words: a "political tsunami" as it was reported at that time.<sup>21</sup>

Interestingly, as the historian, political scientist and researcher at the Institute for Social Sciences in Belgrade, Irena Ristić highlights, the election campaigns and wording of the parties were for most largely the same, instead of the extreme right ones such as SRS and the far right Dveri movement (Ristić, 2014, p. 81). Moreover, the SNS just used the ideology and copied the program of its most evident rival, the DS. In contrast to the DS, the SRS and later SNS representatives were able to mobilize the most voters after the regime change without gaining governmental positions. Since 2008, and especially 2012, the SNS did not only openly support Serbia's EU accession, but also declared it as its most important goal – as the DS

had done since its government takeover in 2000. Besides, it left the extreme nationalistic position towards Kosovo and aimed to establish a good dialogue with the Kosovo-Albanian government. The fight against organized crime and corruption appeared as a declared SNS goal as well, similar to the DS program, but in contrast to the DS's credibility. The expectations the DS had awakened among their voters were not fulfilled as previously expected, which subsequently led to deep disappointment and to the loss of its credibility among Serbian voters (Ristić, 2014, p. 84f). As Ristić points out,

**Opinion polls in recent years show that there is a clear agreement to reform main areas such as the judiciary and the health sector as well as the fight against corruption.**

*"paradoxically, with the victory of the SNS and the SPS, the ideology of DOS won, not through the parties that constituted the DOS coalition, but rather through their one-time opponents."*

(Ristić, 2014, p. 84f)

One important continuity is that, since 2000, 50% of the voters supported parties that declared Serbia's EU accession as their main goal (ibid., p. 85). Similar to the call for early elections in 2014, the recent one in 2016 proves to be an indicator for "authoritarian temptation" (quoted by ibid., p. 86.) according to Florian Bieber, professor for political science and head of the Centre for Southeast European Studies of the University of Graz, and the aim to monopolize power through populism and cults of personality. The political rhetoric of that new authoritarian regime is, however, not characterized by traditionalistic, nor extreme right positions, but by a doubtlessly European-oriented rhetoric in the framework of Europeanness. The new, pro-European government benefits from the fact that the Serbian opposition mostly shares the same European values, which had not been the case of the DOS and later DS government that mostly had faced an extreme right opposition accusing the government of betrayal. Moreover, the oppositional SRS of Šešelj who has returned

<sup>20</sup> Press Release of the Government of Serbia (2014). Vlada predložila predsedniku Republike da raspusti parlament (Government proposed to the President of the Republic to dissolve the parliament; as cited in: Ristić, 2014, p. 80).

<sup>21</sup> N. N. (03-17-2014). Pastor, I. Očekujem poziv SNS-a na

razgovore (I am expecting a call from SNS for talks). In: Radio Televizija Srbije (RTS). Available at <http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/2208/Izbori+2014/1550088/Pastor%3A+O%C4%8Dekujem+poziv+SNS-a+na+razgovore.html>, accessed on 12-20-2015; see also Ristić, 2014, p. 84.

to Serbia in 2014, at least today appears as a marginalized political movement.

Apart from the direct pro-European ideology and program, the SNS also took over the ruling methodologies the DS had used before. So, the SNS controls most of the mainstream media with the effect that hardly anyone criticizes or even opposes SNS positions, for instance its pro-European stance. Through clientelism, the SNS controls the state apparatus, and undermines the system of checks and balances. The cult of personality, used by Tadić's DS before and now perfected by Vučić's SNS, serves to underline all government's achievements, while political opponents are discredited by the imputation of being corrupt. Finally, those expectations the DS government has awakened, but not fulfilled, appear to be addressed by the SNS (*ibid.*, p. 84). Moreover, the SNS seems to have very strong self-esteem regarding its position on Europe. Under the impression of the Western Balkan Summit in Vienna in August 2015, as part of the ongoing Berlin process, Aleksandar Vučić stated: "We all from the Balkans can be as strong as Europe."<sup>22</sup> This statement, that might recall Barack Obama's slogan "Yes, we can" during his first presidential campaign in the USA, symbolizes a tough Balkan region, equal to Europe. Similar to the DS politician Boris Tadić who maintained that Serbia does not embody a supplicant, but instead a strong partner,<sup>23</sup> Vučić refers to all the Balkanites, to Balkan people, metaphorically empowering the Balkan region, and implicitly equalizing the Balkan region with Europe. As a result, the Balkans, or correctly the Western Balkans, shall not be perceived as Europe's back yard, but as its immanent and equal part. In that context, the term Western Balkans that was constructed as the terminus technicus on the EU level in 1998, may be seen as a product of symbolic geography that conceptualizes the Balkans as "going West", in the sense of the European integration perspective. The Western Balkans (meaning all the post-Yugoslav countries without Slovenia, but including Albania)

refers to Europeanness and appears more European than the Balkanized Balkans. Scepticism about Serbia's possible EU accession seems not to exist in Vučić's powerful rhetoric.

However, there were and still are serious concerns about a possible EU membership. Among the most apparent are the fear that it might not be good for Serbia and could lead to the loss of sovereignty and national identity, as shown by the opinion poll of 2015. According to that, 41% of the respondents think that the EU membership would be a good thing for Serbia, 29% say it would be bad for Serbia, while 30% are indifferent to that question.<sup>24</sup>

These results simply show that the developments of the last years relativized the bright image of Europe among the Serbian population. Following Čavoški's findings of 2013 that are still valid, there is a mistrust among citizens relating to EU conditionality and institutions and the assumption of EU's "double standards" regarding Serbia that prolonged the length of Serbia's EU accession process (Čavoški, 2013, p. 4)<sup>25</sup> and Serbia's state of in-betweenness. Opinion polls in recent years however show that there is a clear agreement to reform main areas such as the judiciary and the health sector as well as the fight against corruption. Actually, there is even the agreement to normalize the relations to the Priština government, regardless of whether Serbia will become an EU member state or not, as again highlighted by the Serbian government.<sup>26</sup> To sum up, there is a slightly changeable, but still obvious support for EU accession and Europeanness, although or maybe because Serbia has faced major political changes since 2012.

## Concluding the Interplay of Self-Perception, Balkanism and Europeanness

As the present study shows, Balkanism as a part of hegemonic discourse and the therein included dichotomy of Europe and the Balkans and the

<sup>22</sup> N.N. (08-27-2015). Vučić: Mi svi sa Balkana možemo da budemo jaki kao Evropa. In: *N1*. Available at <http://rs.n1info.com/a88008/Vesti/Vucic-Mi-svi-sa-Balkana-mozemo-da-budemo-jaki-kao-Evropa.html>, accessed on 12-20-2015.

<sup>23</sup> N. N. (03-04-2012). Od Evrope tražimo šansu (We ask Europe to give us a chance). In: *Večernje novosti*, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Government of the Republic of Serbia (2015). Serbian Citizens' Attitude towards the EU. Public opinion poll. Available at [http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna\\_dokumenta/istrazivanja\\_javnog\\_mnjenja/opinion\\_poll\\_december\\_15.pdf](http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna_dokumenta/istrazivanja_javnog_mnjenja/opinion_poll_december_15.pdf), accessed on 12-20-2015.

<sup>25</sup> See also: Government of the Republic of Serbia (2015). Serbian Citizens' Attitude towards the EU. Public opinion poll. Available at [http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna\\_dokumenta/istrazivanja\\_javnog\\_mnjenja/opinion\\_poll\\_december\\_15.pdf](http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna_dokumenta/istrazivanja_javnog_mnjenja/opinion_poll_december_15.pdf), accessed on 12-20-2015.

<sup>26</sup> Government of the Republic of Serbia (2015). Serbian Citizens' Attitude towards the EU. Public opinion poll. Available at [http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna\\_dokumenta/istrazivanja\\_javnog\\_mnjenja/opinion\\_poll\\_december\\_15.pdf](http://www.seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna_dokumenta/istrazivanja_javnog_mnjenja/opinion_poll_december_15.pdf), accessed on 12-20-2015.

following symbolic geography have always served various and often competing political interests. As a matter of fact, the symbolic regions Europe and the Balkans are filled with connotations according to those political interests and power relations.

During the 1990s, the Milošević regime that was Balkanized and characterized as being backward by Western states used Balkanism to Occidentalize the homogenized Serbian people by separating them from the Orientalized others, the enemies. In that sense, Europe appeared to be weak and decadent, while Orientalized Islam was discredited as backward and primitive. So, the symbolic geography shifted gears, defining the common 'us' against the concept of the 'other'. In reference to Western European concepts, liberal-democratic opposition Balkanized the Milošević regime in order to delegitimize it as despotic and backward. With the same aim to disqualify its political opponents, the Milošević regime discredited those opponents as traitors and agents of the sneaky West and remained in power for thirteen years.

The liberal-democratic opposition finally succeeded in disqualifying and overthrowing the Milošević regime. Referring to Western European values and Europeanness as such, it Balkanized and thus delegitimized the regime. In contrast to the Milošević regime that had also played with various meanings of the Balkans, the liberal-democratic opposition used the Balkans only in a negative way. Moreover, it awakened expectations of Serbia's quick EU accession, prosperity, and better living standards, always against the background of Europeanness. However, the promises did not come true, which finally delegitimized the DS government. After twelve years in power, the DS mostly lost its credibility and went in opposition. Meanwhile, the attitude of the Serbian people towards the EU stabilized to the extent that the EU support in spite of decreasing tendencies dominated over EU scepticism. Finally, European values or Europeanness as such embodied normality, which Serbia longed for, sitting in the European waiting room, the state of in-betweenness.

In contrast to the former Milošević regime that was Balkanized and overthrown in a political and ideological sense, the later, pro-European parties

in power were voted out, while adopting their pro-European ideology. Due to Serbia's finally broad commitment with regards to the EU and European values, new protagonists could take over the ideology of the meanwhile unpopular and disqualified pro-European parties, first of all the DS.

Ironically, those 'new' protagonists were not originally new in the sense of new movements, but instead representatives of the former Milošević regime, the former party in power, SPS, with a newly adapted, expressively pro-European party program; it included well-known former members of the SRS who had just founded a new party, the SNS, while taking over the ideology, program and ruling methods of its greatest enemy, the DS. As no influential party is located more right than the now ruling SNS, but rather the opposition mostly shares the same values with the SNS, it does not face the same struggles and resistance that the DS had to face during its attempts to foster Serbia's EU access. Today, the most common ideological background is Europeanness, the reference point of the authoritarian ruling party SNS, while Balkanism at the same time has lost its previous importance. There is hardly anyone to Balkanize, since the majority of the Serbian population seems to agree with Europeanness. Therefore the state of Serbia's in-betweenness meanwhile appears to be located more in Western Europe, which is further echoed by the terminus technicus Western Balkans, a term created in reference to symbolic geography. As long as the authoritarian ruling party SNS cooperates with EU representatives, the EU supports it in turn.

Paradoxically, therefore, the success of European values, Europeanness, and, finally, European integration and the succession of Serbia appears to be based on the authoritarian ruling methods of the SNS that seems to realize the promises of the DS. It may be concluded that the current hegemonic discourse of Europeanness has mostly pushed concepts of Balkanism into the background, and former, Balkanized politicians have put on European clothes. In spite of the current developments that have relativized the EU's image of being the epitome of prosperity, welfare, humanity, and security, there is, for now, no competitive alternative to the European idea.

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# Europe through the Gaze of the “Illustrirte Zeitung” Anno 1858

Tracing the Narrative “The Balkans are Europe’s Powder Keg”

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## Abstract

In the year 1858, the events in the Balkans aroused the attention of the European public. The *Illustrirte Zeitung* [illustrated newspaper], which was published in Leipzig, provided its readers not only with in-depth reportages about these events, but also with pictures. The illustrator Felix Kanitz, who travelled five decades long for ethnographical studies and art history through the Balkans, started focusing on the region while he witnessed the events in 1858. Kanitz’s reports for the *Illustrirte Zeitung* included ethnographic descriptions in text and pictures; another author who didn’t sign the articles concentrated on the political and social circumstances, which make the *Illustrirte Zeitung* an interesting source. Metaphors used in this weekly newspaper contributed to the narrative of the uncivilized and rough people in the Balkans, which is reflected in descriptions of the landscape. In this narrative the element of Serbian roots stated by ethnographers like Felix Kanitz competes with Austria’s aim to repress the feeling of belonging together within the region.

*“Now the powder keg explodes,  
on which we have sat a long time,  
Almost forgotten that the oriental misery  
still exists. [...]*

*The [...] hero is the Serb ‘Black Peter’ [...]  
He hauls out the crown of a bloody swamp. [...]*

Wiener Caricaturen (Viennese Caricatures), October 27, 1912, p. 2<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy exploited the myth of “barbarian Serbs” and constructed the narrative of the Serbian hereditary enemy, who posed a danger to the integrity of the neighboring, multi-ethnic monarchy (Dvořák, 2015, p. 167). Especially after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo, newspapers in Vienna circulated the metaphor of the “troublemaker” (*Reichspost*, July 17, 1914, p. 1; *Illustrierte Kronen-Zeitung*, July 28, 1914, p. 7) in the Balkans to mobilize for war against them, to destroy and disaggregate the sovereign and independent Kingdom of Serbia, and to legitimize

atrocities disguised as bringing order and peace to the region and to Europe (Leidinger & Moritz, 2014, p. 17, p. 54ff, p. 162ff). Austria-Hungary was determined to silence the troublemaker, as shown by Franz Joseph’s rapid decision to start a “punitive expedition” only a day after the shots were fired in Sarajevo (Rauchensteiner, 2013, p. 92ff, 127).

Another popular metaphor for the Balkans or Serbia before 1914 was the “European powder keg”, which seemed to have exploded in the Balkan Wars in 1912/1913. In 1913, the Viennese satirical newspaper, *The Flea*, published

<sup>1</sup> Original poem in German: “Nun explodiert das Pulverfaß,  
/ Worauf wir so lange gegessen; / Wir hatten die orientalische  
Qual Beinahe schon ganz vergessen. / Der [...] unter den

Helden ist / Der Serben ‘schwarze Peter’, [...] / Er holte die  
Krone aus dem blutigen Sumpf [...]”.

a rhyme with the title “The European powder keg” about the countries rebelling against the Ottoman Empire, stating that the “Balkan vermin”, despite a cease-fire between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire, are ready for war like they are always ready for robbery. The last verse translates roughly as: “We can only hope that the powder keg doesn’t explode, but if it does there’s no forgiving the vermin!” Although the Balkan Wars of 1912/13 had an impact on European politics, the unrest and fighting was confined to the region. This paper aims to question when and for what reason this metaphor began to appear and to compare it with metaphors of so-called Western Europe, which was not considered as a potentially explosive region. What follows is an analysis of the metaphors for “the Balkans” as propagated by Western Europeans.

Metaphors are defined as parts of historical narratives (Jeismann, 2002, p. 13ff) and can be seen as phrases or words that belong to a concept; they borrow from different subjects, for example, there are many metaphors of buildings (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 52; Wojcik, 2013, p. 72ff; Schröder, 2012, p. 27). This approach is implemented and adapted to identify concepts of historical narratives. Historical narratives contain ideas and beliefs of the past and may consist of a mythical potential as well (Jeismann, 2002, p. 14). Those narratives can be also seen as a concept, which perpetuates stereotypical metaphors or images of the so-called others (Kirchhoff, 2010, p. 138).

In order to trace the beginning of the “powder keg” metaphor, or other metaphors describing the Balkans, the reports of the year 1858 in the *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* were analyzed. First and foremost it is the reportage of the travel journalist Felix Philipp Kanitz in the *Illustrierte Zeitung*, who is presented as “the Columbus of the Balkans” in some scientific papers (firstly used by Rady, 1999, p. 75; Krok, 2015, p. 41), as well as some of his egodocuments on which this analysis is based. Kanitz’s entire body of work is composed of articles in the press and journals, as well as travel guides in the form of monographs. This analysis focuses on the first trip by Felix Kanitz to Southeastern Europe in the year 1858, when Montenegro defeated Turkish troops in the Battle of Grahovac. It was the beginning, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, of a long-lasting uprising against the Ottoman rule, and in Serbia the “Svetoandrejska

skupština” (assembly on Holy Andreas Day) displaced prince Aleksandar Karađorđević and claimed the unity of all Serbs in one state as well as full independence from the Ottoman Empire (Sundhaussen, 2007, p. 80, 129ff; Dašić, 1999, p. 115; Zimmer, 1971, p. 111). These events fomented the “Oriental issue”; a term that was first used in 1822 and specified the crises due to the instability of the Ottoman Empire and the fight for its territorial heritage, especially between Austria and Russia (Sundhaussen, 2007, p. 131).

## The Narrative of Europe as a Political and Cultural Union

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Europe was imagined not only as a continent, but also as a political power. After the Congress of Vienna in 1814/15, the metaphor of the “European Concert” was very dominant. The narrative of a political European Union wasn’t a new one, but after the Congress of Vienna, the European powers followed the path of the balance of power in order to rescue Europe after the Napoleonic Wars. The notion of political, economic, social, and cultural European integration was created since the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. This time is known as the “Sattelzeit” (transition period), because of the reinterpretation of political life, cultural life, and social life during the formation of nation states in Western Europe. First and foremost, the national character was highlighted in this process, but necessarily the nation states had to cooperate with each other and were forced to start a system of integration (Thiemeyer, 2010, p. 29).

Of course, not all countries or monarchies were meant to be an active part of Europe; only the “great” European powers belonged to the Congress, which included Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, France, and Austria. These empires established a network of courtesies under international law, including the concept of solidarity within the European powers. European affairs were discussed under a common diplomacy. Stipulated during the Vienna Congress was the common agreement on accepting states instead of political systems. The union was dynamic, and also Italy played a role after 1870, but while the Habsburg monarchy had lost some of its relevance at the end of the century (ibid., p. 30ff), it became more important as Serbia’s counterpart.

The foreign minister of Austria and later chancellor, Klemens Wenzel von Metternich, was responsible for masterminding not only the international Congress of Vienna, but also the foreign policy to morally conquer the Balkan people at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Tischler, 2000, p. 375ff). As ambassador and foreign minister, he tried to integrate the Serbs and the Montenegrins into Europe because he wanted them to form a “region of culture”. In 1810 he recognized his failing due to the first uprisings in the Balkans against the Ottoman Empire which he called a transformation process and which soon would become a European problem (ibid., p. 377).

There are two metaphors of a united Europe, which were highly circulated throughout the nineteenth century. On the one hand, there was the notion of Europa as protection against wars imagined as the “European Concert”; on the other hand, there was the notion of a European family. Both metaphors were shown in Article One of the “Holy Alliance” between Russia, Austria-Hungary and Prussia, signed on September 26, 1815. According to “Christian values” the three monarchs agreed to maintain a brotherhood among them (amusingly so, since they were actually related in one way or the other); and saw themselves as the family fathers of their countries and armies (Thiemeyer, 2010, p. 36).

Within the narrative of European integration, the image of Europe’s cultural predominance shows up strongly. The awareness of the possible future superiority of Northern America based on economic influence in the 1870s strengthened the political and economic decisions for a common European performance. Also the consciousness of a European culture in the nineteenth century was highly popular (Schmale, 2000, p. 91ff; Thiemeyer, 2010, p. 37). The historian Wolfgang Schmale (2000, p. 148ff) has shown how the historiography around 1800 described the region of Christian Europe: The philosopher Conrad Friedrich von Schmidt-Phiseldek for example, in his text publicized in 1821, included the following elements: The equality of institutions and constitutions, the equality of bourgeois lifestyle, the communication network all over Europe (i.e., transportation connections, language connections with French as the main language, and the letterpress – especially the improvements in printing technology in the form

of mass production), the equality of intellectual and mental development, and the idea rooted therein of Europeans as the standard of mankind. The last element, Christianity, was not like the notion of a Christian Republic during the sixteenth century, but the birth of the occidental myth. From elements of the Schmidt-Phiseldek text and the concurrence of the events around 1900, the notion of a European culture can be deduced. In addition, the notion of belonging to civilized – as opposed to primitive – people was seen as something that had to be achieved and was not naturally given. Therefore, the term culture was linked to a belief in progress, and moreover to the notion of a Christian culture, which didn’t stress religiousness as much as highlight the cultural history of Christianity. Both the idea of a special culture as well as the belief of being part of a civilized world breathed life into the narrative of “Western Europe” (which did not include Russia and “European Turkey”) (ibid., p. 93). The metaphor of European cultural predominance was omnipresent, as was the perceived threat of the emergence of other strong cultures and nations, especially the North American economic boom.

## The Narrative of European Turkey

In his book *Inventing Eastern Europe*, historian Larry Wolff stated that Eastern Europe was invented in the eighteenth century by travelers who were on their way to Constantinople or to St. Petersburg (Wolff, 1994, p. 43). Wolff argued that it

*“was Eastern Europe’s ambiguous location, within Europe but not fully European, that called for such notions as backwardness and development to mediate between the poles of civilization and barbarism. In fact, Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century provided Western Europe with its first model of underdevelopment, a concept that we now apply all over the globe.”*

(Wolff, 1994, p. 9)

The historian closely investigated the reports from philosophers, cartographers, natural scientists, and diplomats. An early example is the travel report by the English medical doctor Edward Brown (Todorova, 2009, p. 22), who started his journey from Vienna to travel through Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Macedonia. He wrote afterwards “before he comes to Buda

[Budapest]” he “seems to enter upon a new Stage of the World, quite different from that of these Western Countries” (Brown, 1685, p. 46). Wolff summarized that Hungary seemed like a gateway to Eastern Europe. The border between the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire was the “precondition for discovering and identifying the lands of Eastern Europe”, so Wolff (1994, p. 41ff).

The sources from Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who described her journey in 1717 from Vienna to Sublime Porte, showed beneath Hungary another accession point to Eastern Europe: Serbia. Especially Belgrade seemed to be a portal to Eastern Europe. Zemun was located along the Austrian border to Serbia, a region that is today a part of Belgrade. Lady Mary had stayed in Belgrade on her way to Constantinople, where her husband was the English ambassador. She described her impression of the city as oriental and dominated by Arabian culture, while the people she observed she assigned to the Greek Orthodox Church (Wolff, 1994, p. 38ff). It could be argued that the distinction between the land and people contributed to the narrative that the Balkan countries under Ottoman rule were seen as located in between Turkey and Europe and were identified as the “European Turkey” until the eighteenth century; the other parts of the Ottoman Empire were termed as “Asian Turkey” (Schmale, 2000, p. 53). The eastern and southern border of the Habsburg Monarchy represented the entrance to another world, which was pictured as different, oriental, and arousing curiosity and fascination as well as the need to discover “otherness”.

## Felix Kanitz's Ethnographical Studies in the *Illustrierte Zeitung*

Born in Pest, Hungary in 1829, Felix Philipp Kanitz travelled for five decades in the Balkans and became a popular writer of travelogues. Hence, he was one of the best adepts of Southeast Europe (Kostić, 2011, p. 39), and had a huge influence on the perpetuated image of the Balkans in Western Europe, especially of Serbia and the Serbs (Cvjetičanin, 2011, p. 147ff).

Felix Kanitz started travelling to “European Turkey” (Kanitz, n.d., around 1863) when the region was rising up against the Ottoman

Empire. The Greek War of Independence (1821-1832) and the Serbian Uprisings (1804-1815) had ended. While a monarchy was established in Greece, Serbia was still repressed by the Ottoman authorities. At the same period, ideas and concepts of the pan-Slavistic movement began to circulate in the Balkans, since Russia started presenting its empire as their protecting power, which was well absorbed by the population (Sundhaussen, 2007, p. 199). The pan-Slavic discourse helped to construct the notion of Western Europe (Schmale, 2000, p. 93), while the expanding Russian Empire was identified as Eastern Europe, displacing the Ottoman Empire – the “sick man of Europe”. The terms “occident” and “the Western” were noted before the year 1000 in order to distinguish between the Roman Empire and Byzantium. “The Western” popped up again in the nineteenth century as a result of imperialism and conflicts in countries favoring orientalism, (ibid., p. 161) like those in the Balkans.

However, Turkey and not Southeast Europe was the focus for travellers. There was just a “handful of Balkan researchers” as historian Bernard Lory wrote (2011, p. 71), meaning Ami Boué, Georg von Hahn, Heinrich Barth, and Guillaume Lejean. For Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina it was Felix Kanitz who described and illustrated the region and its people in the middle of the nineteenth century (Cvjetičanin, 2011, p. 148). Little was known about those countries. As Felix Kanitz wrote in his handwritten autobiography (Kanitz, n.d., around 1863) after his first journeys in these countries.

*“I have found on this trip [to Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1858] how the description of political and social conditions, as well as the ethnography and cartography of Turkey need to be complemented. I took the decision to help in contributing to fill existing gaps; and I decided to address myself to this task with the aid of pistil and pen.”*

(Kanitz, n.d., around 1863)

Felix Kanitz was an accomplished illustrator. After he had finished his apprenticeship, he moved to Vienna in 1847. In the year of the revolution, he started working for the newspaper *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, although he wasn't very interested in political affairs (Horel, 2011, p. 18). He never took part in the revolution nor did “the tumultuous time swallow him like other aspiring young men”; this was due to a girl who caught



his attention, as Felix Kanitz commented about the year 1848 (Kanitz, n.d., around 1863). After a few years in Vienna, Felix Kanitz had deepened his illustrating skills and art historical studies in Munich, Dresden, and Nurnberg before he moved back to Vienna in 1856 (ibid). In these years he had continued to report and illustrate for the *Illustrirte Zeitung*.

The *Illustrirte Zeitung* was situated in Leipzig, but employed “special illustrators” in Switzerland, Russia, Belgium, Austria and other lands, as well as in war situations such as the Prussian-Austrian War of 1866. Founded in 1843, it was the first illustrated weekly newspaper in Germany, and was also distributed in Vienna, Budapest, Zurich, Milan, and New York. The Swiss founder Johann Jakob Weber imitated the successful *Illustrated London News* (Krause, 1992, p. 312ff), established in 1842, which had an attested circulation of 41,000 in 1843; 57,000 in 1848, and as much as 123,000 in 1854 (Law, 2015, unpag.). In comparison, the *Illustrirte Zeitung* had a circulation of 7,500 in the end of its first year 1843 (Krause, 1992, p. 232). Certainly, the circulation rose in the following years. Gebhardt listed a circulation of 12,500 for the year 1868,

and of 22,600 in 1897 (1983, p. B42). Since the German newspaper market is not easily compared with the British, a glance at the circulation of some popular German daily newspapers during these years may give a better picture. In 1843 the *Kölnische Zeitung* had a circulation of 17,000 (Dussel, 2011, p. 48). At the beginning of the 1840s the *Allgemeine Zeitung* had a circulation of about 9,000, while the circulation of the *Vossische Zeitung* increased in 1847 to 20,000 (Requate, 1995, p. 129). The *Illustrirte Zeitung* had a high circulation from the start: at least the character of the newspaper was a new one, although due to new technical requirements (for example, imported printing plates) the price was comparatively high. The readership must have been well situated. On the other hand, Gebhardt draws attention to the so-called “Lesezirkel” [“reader circles”], which were also common. Some publishers offered a subscription of illustrated newspapers. The copies were delivered in a bound wallet to families at home, restaurants, cafés, libraries, hotels or barbershops and left there for a few days. The circulation is an important indicator of widespread readership, but the “Lesezirkel” functioned as multipliers. Therefore, we should acknowledge that the illustrated newspapers were



Picture 1: “Pictures of Montenegro: The Montenegrins brought looted Turkish guns from Grahova to Cetinje on June 27”. Original by Felix Kanitz, published August 14, 1858, p. 105. Felix Kanitz often adverted to the Montenegrins all-around use of guns in joyful situations like celebrating or returning in his texts. (picture source: Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, Druckschriftensammlung)



not read just as a source of information, but also of entertainment due to their “special illustrators” who captured images from popular or unknown places (Gebhardt 1983, p. B48ff; Faulstich, 2004, p. 73ff) as well as events that seemed exotic, different, and fascinating (Picture 1).

The success and popularity of the *Illustrierte Zeitung* is owed to the new opportunities of mass production and image printing (Timotijević, 2011, p. 93). The aim of the newspaper was to use the new technology to provide the readers with pictures from all over the world, “from the great actions of the princes to the hidden results of research” (Weber, *Illustrierte Zeitung*, first issue, July 1, 1843, p. 1ff). The editor Johann Jakob Weber informed his readers that without pictures “the studies of country and people, as well as the description of manners” would be half as interesting. It would be clear that the *Illustrierte Zeitung* could not inform the readers at the same level as the news in daily newspapers, but the aim would be to give an overview of ongoing politics and, interestingly, not to report one-sidedly. Weber wanted to take the side of the “repressed” and the “weak” and to circulate also the opinions of the “lowest classes”; he therefore wanted to avoid the use of prejudices (ibid). Hence the Swiss

publisher Johann Jakob Weber shared solidarity with the people who fought for independence in their country; he and Felix Kanitz shared the common interest to collect information in the form of textual description (“ethnographical studies” according to Felix Kanitz) as well as illustrations about them (Krause, 1992, p. 325).

By accident, Felix Kanitz became an eyewitness of the turmoil in Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. While he was visiting Italy pursuing his interest in art history in 1858, the “fight on the northern border of the ‘black mountains’” started. Kanitz decided to take a close look at the event and the country Montenegro, too (Kanitz, n.d., around 1863); from July to December 1858, he published his observations and illustrations in the *Illustrierte Zeitung*. Later on, those impressions were also published in journals like *Globus. Illustrierte Zeitschrift für Länder- und Völkerkunde*, as well as in Austrian and German daily newspapers (ibid.).

While Felix Kanitz’s reports were not released in every issue, the weekly newspaper published the news about the uprisings in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Montenegro on a regular basis after February of 1858; the events, not least because of the Christian element involved in the uprising,



Picture 2: “The Austrian-Turkish-Montenegrin border ... [Left:] the last Austrian post towards the South.”

Original artist unknown; published in April 24, 1858, p. 1.  
(picture source: Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, Druckschriftensammlung)

interested the European public (Timotijević, 2011, p. 95). Slavicist and former director of the *Berlin State Library* Friedhilde Krause (1992, p. 324) stated that some reports published without an assigned author were written by Felix Kanitz. She noticed that Kanitz's first article of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro was in April, which is possible because it reflects his style, but this is not documented. In this issue the front page shows an unsigned illustration of the "Austrian-Turkish-Montenegrin border" (Picture 2), which is not very remarkable, but could be seen as an image of the often-described entrance to another world (April 24, 1858, p. 1). Though Felix Kanitz took part in the celebrations of the defeated Turkish troops in Cetinje, which was in May, it is unlikely that the illustration is from his trip.

## It's All about "Rajahs", Mountains, and Europe

Under the Ottoman rule, Christians in Herzegovina started a revolution against the foreign rule. The people required to pay taxes under the Ottoman Empire were named "Rajahs" in the weekly reports of the *Illustrirte Zeitung*, which is a term found often during the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In Bosnia-Herzegovina typically "Rajahs"<sup>3</sup> were non-Muslims, as those who converted to Islam were allowed to keep their property and to claim taxes from the people who did not own land (N. N., August 7, 1858, p. 83) and who thus formed the underclass of the country. As the term was often used for Herzegovina, it implemented a certain image of the "Rajahs", namely that they were Serbs due to their language and religion. Felix Kanitz also described the "Rajahs" as the "Turkish Christians" (n.d., around 1863).

One of the first stories by Felix Kanitz in the *Illustrirte Zeitung*, which has an obvious political bent, is about the meeting of "Rajahs" in Trebinje and the "Mudir". The illustrator drew this scene and explained in his article what fascinated him about it. The Christian people

*"waited reverential, [...] while the secretary counted a lot of [...] coins. During this long lasting operation both Rajahs remained humble, then the 'Mudir' asked questions about the township and released them in a friendly way."* (Kanitz, July 24, 1858, p. 54)

This eyewitness meeting caused Kanitz's following argument. He tells that, others, for example Germans, had explained to him that the problems of the "Rajahs" were mainly an invention and not bad in reality. The people there, he described, are like people in Dalmatia; they have no idea of a state's rights and duties (ibid). In his autobiography, Kanitz referred to this scene as an epiphany – it shows the tenuous situation of the "Turkish Christians", he wrote. Kanitz remembered it as the initial point of feeling sympathies that had been "unchanged until today". What makes this example interesting is the published illustration by Felix Kanitz, which shows the scene that he had attended. In the picture, the "Mudir" looks arrogant and dislikeable, while in the text Kanitz talks about the man's hospitality (Picture 3). The two people who came to pay their taxes look to be in low spirits, so the picture tells something that is left out in the text. It seems that Kanitz would not reveal himself as a sympathizer of people who are revolting against an empire, the disintegration of which would raise problems in Europe. The difference between the way of presenting the "Rajahs" in the written reports published in the newspaper and in his unpublished documents can be explained by analyzing the metaphors with which the Balkans were charged.

In the case of Montenegro, the *Illustrirte Zeitung* shared some sympathies with the rebels by publishing Ivo Ranko Radonitsch's portrait, who was the leader of the Montenegrin rebels in Herzegovina. The picture shows a strong-willed, armed, military-decorated man in flashy dress resolved to fight against the Ottoman rule. Like other leaders in Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, he had travelled to and sent his sons to be educated in Vienna and Paris. The reason for his positive characterization might be found in his

<sup>2</sup> See also: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, for example, the issues 03-05-1858, 08-01-1858; *Wiener Zeitung*, for example, the issues 02-25-1858, 07-23-1858; *Fremden-Blatt*, for example, the issues 02-20-1858, 06-25-1858, 07-23-1858; *Die Presse*, for example, the issues 06-24-1858, 07-23-1858.

<sup>3</sup> Literally "Raja" or "raya" means a flock (Arabian/Turkish). It meant those people who had to pay taxes and didn't serve the military or work in administration services, so mainly the non-Islamic inhabitants (Vetter, 1999, p. 571).



military decorations earned in Austria and Russia (N. N., May 8, 1858, p. 294). Although the unknown illustrator [who was not Felix Kanitz, nor did Kanitz draw the rebel leader's portrait] intended to recognize the events in Herzegovina and Montenegro, it was also important to calm the uprisings down before involving "finally, all parts of Turkey where Bulgarian or Serbs live". The article about the rebel leader was released after Montenegro decided to support Herzegovina's uprisings under Radonitsch's command. Prince Danilo of Montenegro was presented as a pro-Austrian ruler who tried to calm down the rebels. The historian Miomir Dašić from Montenegro stated that it was Danilo himself who organized the revolts in Herzegovina (1999, p. 116).

The "black mountains"<sup>2</sup> served as a metaphor for describing the Montenegrin country and the people as dangerous, but daunting. As soon as the Montenegrins appeared in front of the mountains, it seemed like a threat because of the participation in (or organization of) the neighboring revolts (May 8, 1858, p. 294). One article about Montenegro was published after an attack on a Turkish camp. Before the attack, Prince Danilo negotiated a cease-fire, which was brutally broken

by the Montenegrins. The *Illustrierte Zeitung* released parts of the "Montenegrin battle report" that said that in attacking the Turkish camp, the heroes of the Battle of Kosovo were avenged. The "Kosovo myth" not only served as a motivating narrative in the Serbian (Asboth & Nadjivan, 2014), but also in the Montenegrin uprisings. The picture on the front cover illustrated the attack. On it you can find a Montenegrin who chokes his enemy; another one holds up the severed head of a Turkish soldier (June 12, 1858, p. 1 and p. 374ff). This picture seemed to be published because of its sensation-seeking character. It also underlined the metaphor of the "mountain people" who didn't respect the rules of a cease-fire.

Articles written by Felix Kanitz showed another style of writing and content. In fact, he followed his aim to be seen as an ethnographer and avoided talking about political issues. His articles are full of topographical descriptions and detailed observations concerning the landscape and the people. With a closer look at these descriptions, one could find some stereotypes and elements of the narrative portraying the Balkans or the European Turkey as uncivilized and rough:



Picture 3: "Pictures from Herzegovina: Bosnian Rajahs pay their taxes to the Mudir from Trebinje."

Original by Felix Kanitz, published in July 24, 1858, p. 53.

(picture source: Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, Druckschriftensammlung)

<sup>2</sup> "Crna Gora" ("black mountains").

*"If the circumstances were more calm, the variation of the landscape [...] would be ample compensation for the travels by the researcher or artist; but as soon as [...] Montenegrins or similar thieving flocks show up, he has to travel with a hand close to the gun"*  
(July 24, 1858, p. 54).

The Montenegrin people were illustrated and described as armed, thievish, and bound to the mountains, which also confined the people within. The mountains formed a border; behind them was a fascinating but dangerous world. The trip from village to village was challenging to Kanitz, because of the steep mountains. He arrived in Njegusch, where an old and blind singer sang a "song of heroes" and played on the *gusla* in the middle of the "wild landscape", which sounds more romantic and fascinating than dangerous. Kanitz was invited to a house, which he described as plainly furnished. Therefore, he was very surprised when the host showed him another room, in which a factory for patrons was established (August 14, 1858, p. 104ff).

While Felix Kanitz gave a detailed impression about Montenegro and its people, another unknown author reported in the *Illustrierte Zeitung* about the people and the history of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The claim of the newspaper that it did not produce biased reporting, but took the side of the weak in society, seemed to have been in vain. According to the reportage, the "Rajahs" would not fight against the Porte, but against the ruling class in Bosnia, the Muslim Bosnians. The distinction between the "Serb Muslims" (or "Bosnian Muslim") and the "Ottomans" was explained by the oppositional self-perceptions. While the Bosnian gentry were proud of their aristocratic origin, the Turks living there were proud of their oriental origin. Under the "disguise" of the Koran, the "Bosnian Muslim" followed a lifestyle that disturbed the traditional Bosnian or Serbian family life. Although Serbian civic life was not possible anymore, it was also impossible to govern the country (N. N., July 10, 1858, p. 83). On the contrary, Felix Kanitz did not pass judgment about the different people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, nor did he discuss the topic of the gentry and landowners – at least not officially. As Krause stated, Kanitz was not credited as author of some articles he had written. One can assume that parts of some articles about Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro reflected Kanitz' descriptive style; additionally, after his return they were

often released together with illustrations drawn by him. Maybe he didn't want to release articles under his name, which didn't follow the style of ethnographical documents. If these reportages were not written by Felix Kanitz, they were strongly influenced by his experiences, his stories, and his observations and suitable completed to the prevalent narrative about Balkan states:

Montenegro is a

*"minor object, hence, somebody needs less than three days to cross the wretched country, which has inside nothing to provide than poverty and hunger crises; and their people ... who are rough, cruel and excellent robbers. The Greek Christianity [...] has given them the name of Christians, while nothing is left of a Christian mind"*  
(N. N., July 3, 1858).

This example shows how journalists and travellers distinguished between civilized and uncivilized Christians, and that it is not about religiosity, but culture and progress. In this issue, one of Felix Kanitz illustrations showing the transport of Turkish troops in Herzegovina is published.

The *Illustrierte Zeitung* took any opportunity to point out that the Ottoman Empire must not disintegrate. After the uprisings in the Balkans, Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina developed the feeling of unity with the people in Serbia who developed ties to the Russian Orthodox Christians. As stated in the *Illustrierte Zeitung*:

*"If Serbia, supported by Russia and possibly France, would become an independent state, it could unify with the clan related Bosnia, Herzegovina, Turkish Serbia and Montenegro."*  
(N. N., July 10, 1858, p. 83)

Austria saw it as imperative to interfere in the Montenegrin issue since, first of all, people coming from the black mountains regularly robbed subjects in Dalmatia. Again, the metaphor of the black mountains as a danger popped up. Secondly, after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the European powers could not refuse the annexation of neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina with the "strategic appending" of Serbia and Montenegro. Therefore, Austria rejected the formation of an independent Serbian state. The aim of the annexation was seen not just in expanding the territory, but also in expanding

the German culture, and Austria could count on Germany to do so (ibid).

## The Narrative of Serbia as a "Troublemaker"

On October 2, 1858, the *Illustrierte Zeitung* reported on the "situation in Serbia" stating: "it seems that Serbia is now the center of agitation" (N. N., October 2, 1858, p. 210). Serbian politicians planned to re-install the displaced Miloš Obrenović (Sundhaussen, 2007, p. 129). These politics echo that of the "half-savage people" who are "bristling with weapons", which the Skupština assembly considered in its decisions (October 2, 1858, p. 210). The politics of Serbia were regularly observed, which indicated that it was working on its nation-building process, as reported in the newspaper (N. N., May 1, 1858, p. 279; N. N., December 11, 1858, p. 379). One of the leading figures was the minister of interior, "Garaschanin" and his "national party" (N. N., May 1, 1858, p. 279). The newspaper could not acknowledge the process of implementing an assembly and constructing a system of parties, because this was a sign of progress and state-independence.

The Serbian politicians were determined to release their country from foreign influence. This was clear since Ilija Garašanin formulated a secret program ("Načertanije") in 1844, stating that an independent Serbia must be the leader state for all southern Slavs in order to defend the region – especially Bosnia-Herzegovina – from territorial claims of Austria and Russia in the case of the Ottoman Empire's downfall. This program was known to Serbian politicians and served, according to Holm Sundhaussen as a "mental map" for an imagined future Serbia (2007, p. 116ff). At the end of the year 1858, the *Illustrierte Zeitung* reported that the elected ruling party claimed their program:

*"Independence for Serbia, no influence from abroad, vast independence from the Porte, order and thriftiness in the state system."*  
(N. N., December 18, 1858, p. 399)

This quote shows not only the offensive political aims, but also the need to be spotted as more occidental than oriental. In order to change the

image of their country, Felix Kanitz was invited by the Serbian Prince and ministers to visit Serbia and report about the progress and their efforts to come closer to Western Europe (Kostić, 2011, p. 40). The book "Serbia. Historical and ethnographical travel studies", which Kanitz wrote after his travels to Serbia in the years that followed, was financially supported by the Serbian government (Timotijević, 2011, p. 101). Kanitz observed Miloš Obrenović, who introduced a criminal code and a code of civil procedure while he was elaborating new bills (Sundhaussen, 2007, p. 80).

Although Serbia tried to improve its image as a country willing to adopt its political standards to those of Western Europeans, which now seems very familiar, the plan never had a chance. The broad agreement of the balance of power was unable to counter the uprising of nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century within Western Europe (Schmale, 2000, p. 91). This is exactly the time when another metaphor of Europe was raised. The image of the internal disruption was circulated, mainly in caricatures and satires. A well-known example is the illustration of the European map, in which every nation owned a piece of the continent and which shows satirical representations with stereotypical characteristics. This suggests that Europe was a collection of national states, (Thiemeyer, 2010, p. 37) and the notion of a European union disappeared (Schmale, 2000, 179ff).

## The Narrative of "Oriental Europe" as a Strategy of Repression

The self-image of German-speaking Europe broadcasted in the *Illustrierte Zeitung* is clearly the opposite of the narrative of uncivilized European Turkey. Even more, as a member of the "European concert" the newspaper's authors communicate the self-perception of being responsible for the people living in European Turkey due to an affiliation with Christianity. Beyond this narrative, there was also the image of being threatened by the south-Slavic rebellions, which could possibly radiate to the neighboring countries if the uprisings could not be stopped. Additionally, there was the threat from Eastern Europe, namely from Russia, which often demonstrated sympathy and cultural commonalities towards



the Balkan countries (N. N., April 17, 1858, p. 247). The series of newspaper articles on “The Bosnian deputation in Vienna” demonstrates how important the events in the Balkans were, especially for Austrian policy. In this article, the journalist aimed to cover not only the news, but also to explain the circumstances and the history of “Bosnia, a province of the Ottoman Empire, which is the least known to the Occident, but very close to it” (N. N., April 10, 1858, p. 230). The author tried to describe the actual situation:

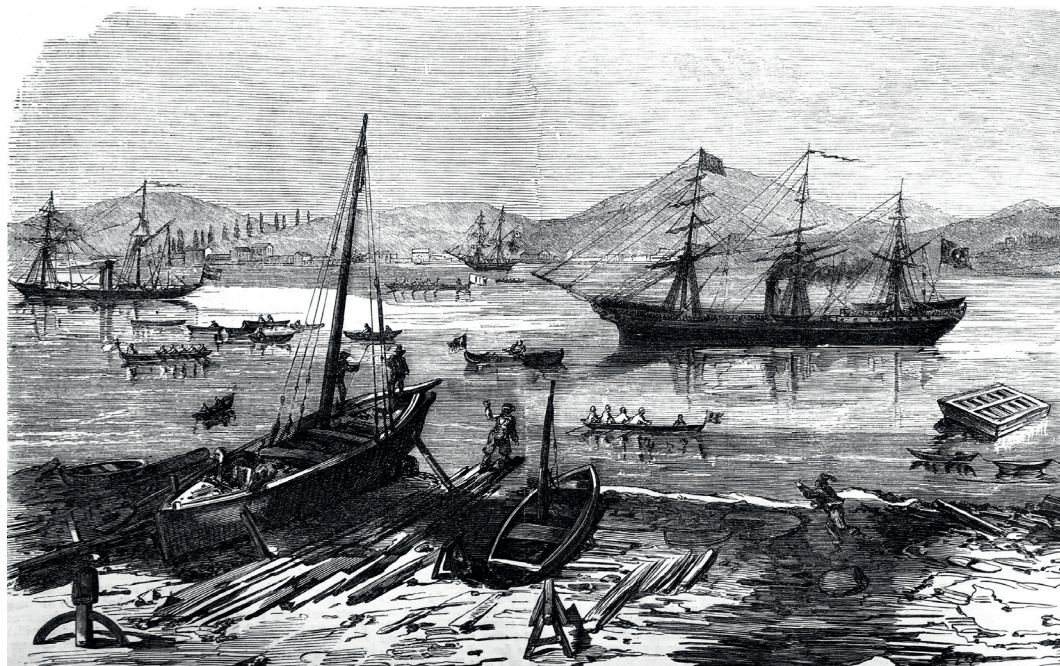
*“Very close to a civilized and humanely-governed state such as Austria, one could think that European behavior [Gesittung] has influenced the neighboring state and that the situation is quite similar there. It is not like that. Once you have passed the Save, which marks the border, you have in a sense left Europe [...] the Turkish regime practices the worst governance there [in Bosnia-Herzegovina], offers the Christian people no protection, no laws, and only despotism and crude fanaticism. By this I hope to give a little insight into the circumstances.”*

(N. N., April 10, 1858, p. 230)

The problems are homemade and not the result of the government in Constantinople, summarized

the author, because of the repression against the Christian people by the “Muslim Turks”, who are “in truth” Serbian people. Hence, a Bosnian deputation came to Vienna, hoping to find help in Austria for sending a petition to the Sultan in Constantinople. The visit of the Bosnian deputation in Vienna should be recognized as a warning to all European great powers (ibid.) – again it is the metaphor of a European tribunal, which has a duty to uphold the European balance, also in the farthest frontiers of the imagined union.

To underscore that Europe and the Ottoman Empire were resolved to ease the uprisings in Herzegovina and Montenegro, the *Illustrirte Zeitung* published a few illustrations drawn by Felix Kanitz that showed Austrian and Turkish ships (Picture 4), as well as a big Turkish war camp in front of the black mountains (July 10, 1858, p. 18ff). In fact, new revolts had started in Bosnia in November 1858 when “Rajahs” or “Christians butchered several Turks”, at the same time as groups of rebels made the countries of Herzegovina and Montenegro still more unstable (November 6, 1858, p. 226). In December, the *Illustrirte Zeitung* published a picture after the original from Felix Kanitz in which “Turkish



Picture 4: “Austrian Warboat ‘Vulkan’.”

Original by Felix Kanitz on June 11, 1858, published July 10, 1858, pp. 24-25  
(picture source: Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, Druckschriftensammlung).

pacifist troops” entered a Bosnian village. Kanitz didn’t describe this scene in his text, which again shows that he intended with his drawings to record the awkward political events, while he focused in his written descriptions on the landscape, the traditions of the people, their education, and their system of justice. Felix Kanitz himself saw his reports about the Balkans as a contribution to the studies of ethnographic and cultural studies, as well as art history. Using his illustrations, he hoped to conserve the buildings, the knowledge, the architecture and the people’s surrounding in the perambulated regions (Kanitz, n.d., around 1863). In some cases, his illustrations served also to supply the wants of the curious readers for portrayals of the “otherness” or the “oriental”. In other cases, one could find some hints of the politically tense situation.

In order to distinguish between Western Europe and the Balkans, consideration has to be given to the view of a repression of the uprising countries, which accounts for the dichotomous descriptions of occidental and oriental. Already in 1717, when Prince Eugene conquered Belgrade, the

*“victory [...] and even the surrender of 1739, were important for publicizing the idea of Belgrade, with Serbia as a detachable part of Ottoman Europe.”*  
(Wolff 1994, p. 42)

It was not the aim to circulate the idea that Serbia could be an independent state; on the contrary, Austria was also bolstered in strengthening this great power, which had to be also the “wish of Germany” (N. N., August 7, 1858, p. 83). The interdependence between the Austrian Empire and the uprising countries can also be surmised by reports that rebels had consistently fled to the neighbor (N. N., November 11, 1858). Austria presented itself in this case as a protective zone for persecuted Christians. Austria’s influence

in the “Southeast” would be more natural than Russia’s, wrote the *Illustrirte Zeitung* (August 7, 1858, p. 83).

In sum, Felix Kanitz’s reportages, published in the *Illustrirte Zeitung* about Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, were quite perplexing. He mainly described the people in Montenegro, but he mixed in pictures from Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Kanitz’s reportages, the people from both countries were described as Serbs; also the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina were named “Muslim Serbs”. This finding was also shown in “ethnographical maps” summarizing regions – parts of the Habsburg Empire, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Montenegro – where “Serbo-Croats” lived (“Ethnographische Karte der Europäischen Türkei”, Sax, 1877; “Populations de la Turquie D’Europe”, Lejean, Kanitz, de Czoernig, 1876).

Imagined as one region with similar traditions (the people were always considered as “Serbs”, which was the most common denominator), the description “European Turkey” lost its significance, since it was already imagined as a part of Europe that had to be captured. Generally, the label “Balkan states” appeared more frequently in the first and second decades of the twentieth century in literature (Kostić, 2003, p. 4). Although the “Congress of Paris” in 1856 again tried to balance the powers in Europe, the uprisings of 1858-62 and 1875 (Zimmer, 1971, p. 111) alarmed the Austrian Empire. In this sense, it was important to uphold the narrative of the “oriental” part of Europe, which could not stand on its own feet. The self-fulfilling prophecies came to be when the Balkans were labeled as the “European powder keg”, at least in the Austro-(Hungarian) press. The prophecies, narratives and strategies that other great powers circulated about the Balkans would make an interesting point of departure from this study.

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# New Crisis, Old Perception?

## The “Balkan Route” in the German-Language Media

Nedad Memic

Since last summer, Southeast Europe has been in the focus of international politics and the media. This time, the reason does not originate from the region itself, but was imposed on the Balkan countries, beginning with Macedonia and Serbia. The influx of refugees from the Near and Middle East region reached its peak in the autumn months, being accompanied by pictures, ranging from unpleasant to horrific, of people trying to find a safe haven in some of the Western European countries. As mentioned in the articles in this volume, the terms *Western Balkans* and *Western Europe* are political instruments used by the latter for purposes of distinction, as are the images of the *Balkan Route* in the German-language media, which is investigated in the present paper.

The following comment is based on analyzing the media coverage of the so-called *Balkan Route* taken by refugees, as described in selected German-language media in 2015 and 2016. The central questions are: What does the perception of the *Balkan Route* and the situation of refugees look like in selected, highly frequented German-language media? Is the perception of the *Balkan Route* influenced by the general perception of the region in the German-speaking countries and the EU? Can we draw historical parallels with the perception and the dealing of some past crises in the *Balkan* region from former European powers? The majority of the refugees coming to the EU in 2015 went through the *Balkan Route*. The refugee flow on the *Balkan Route* has changed since last summer: the first route ranged from Greece via Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, Austria, and ended up for the majority of refugees in Bavaria, i.e., Germany. After Hungary decided to put up fences on the border to Serbia and Croatia last October, the direction changed: the refugees came to Austria and Germany via Croatia and Slovenia. At the beginning of March 2016 (when this article was written), the *Balkan Route* has been mostly closed for refugees leaving a large number of them in Greece and at the Greek-Macedonian as well as the Macedonian-Serbian border. In 2015, about

850,000 people passed through the *Balkan Route* and reached the EU that way, and about 150,000 came to the EU via Italy. In the first two months of 2016, an additional 51,400 refugees came to Germany (*Focus online*, “Flüchtlingskrise im News-Ticker”), again mainly via the same route.

## The Embodiment of Chaos

The *Balkan Route* has been omnipresent in the German-language media during the last months. This media coverage can be expected as the vast majority of refugees and immigrants arriving in Austria and Germany came via this route. In order to show the scale of this coverage, the two large and most frequently visited media platforms in Germany and Austria – *bild.de* and *derStandard.at* – are considered in this article. Both platforms differ from each other, *bild.de* being a tabloid, and *derStandard.at* having the reputation of quality media. The news platform *bild.de* registers 219 search results for articles on the *Balkan Route* since August 12, 2013. However, the majority of the articles refer to the period since summer 2015. The news platform *derStandard.at* deals with the German term *Balkanroute* in 365 articles. The *Balkan Route* is one of the central components in reports about the refugees that have been represented in all types of media consumption with a comparably high intensity. The same phenomenon can be registered considering the treatment of the situation on the *Balkan Route*. Analyzing the report’s headlines, one can assume the following interpretations: the situation on the *Balkan Route* is unpredictable. Nobody is actually in charge of controlling it; it is a dangerous and inflammable situation, which can explode at any moment, and which needs to be taken care of, mostly by the European Union, although the EU as an institution with clear competencies has been a pretty vague term throughout the whole refugee issue so far. Such a situation obviously produces chaos, which is reflected in the media coverage, too. The media in the German-speaking countries don’t hesitate to describe this chaos to their readers,

which can be shown by using the term “chaos route” in some reports, e.g., “Flüchtlinge auf dem Balkan: Die Chaos-Route” (Refugees in the Balkans: A Chaos Route; *spiegel online*, October 20, 2015) or “Balkan-Route: Hilflosigkeit und Chaos” (The Balkan Route: Helplessness And Chaos; *ZDF heute*, October 20, 2015).

Uncertainty and lack of problem-solving mechanisms: all of these circumstances can be interpreted as triggers for chaotic situations, medially covered to a high extent. The representation of the *Balkan Route* in the German-language media could be summarized exactly in this order. By analyzing the media coverage of EU politicians’ statements, it is possible to establish causality in the perception of the *Balkans* in the EU public. This causality has three steps, which we will try to document using headlines in the newspapers: a) The situation on the *Balkan Route* is precarious.<sup>1</sup> b) The precarious situation on the *Balkan Route* is a danger for the stability of the European Union.<sup>2</sup> c) This situation provokes the actions taken by the European Union.<sup>3</sup>

If we try to analyze the political attitude as the second important instance in forming public opinion, we will see similar results. The *Balkan Route* is portrayed as dangerous and must therefore be dealt with it. An excerpt from Angela Merkel’s speech published on *zeit online* on November 12, 2015, reads:

“After all, I don’t want a situation there in which military conflicts will be necessary again’, Merkel said. She didn’t want to condemn the situation. But it can happen faster than we think. Quarrels can produce acts of violence and no one would want these developments.”  
(*zeit online*, 11-12-2015)

Merkel’s words show that Southeast Europe, especially those countries that are waiting to become EU members, are still perceived as an instable post-conflict region by the EU. This “concern” of the EU can be interpreted in different ways: as a further consequence, the Balkan countries still don’t have

a democratic capacity to handle an international crisis like this one.

A similar position is seen in the statement by Serbia’s Prime Minister, Aleksandar Vučić, when he “warns about a destabilization of the Balkans due to the refugee crisis” (*Tiroler Tageszeitung Online*, 01-27-2016). His statement reflects the aim to signal that the *Balkans* is still an instable region, which can be disturbed by any crisis. But Vučić’s statement also has another dimension: it is directed at EU politics and the possibility of transferring his and his government’s responsibility to the EU should the *refugee crisis* escalate. By the way, this attitude from politicians in Southeast Europe is nothing new. Using the fact that the region is burdened with a difficult recent past, the political elites there try to minimize their responsibility or transfer it to more powerful EU or global countries (in this case, Germany). The *Balkan* politicians thereby close the “vicious circle” of the *Western* perception of the *Balkans* in the EU and the global context.

## A Short Look Back at the History

It is highly interesting that similar patterns in perceiving crises in the *Balkans* can be observed during the last 150 years.

Demonstrating this attitude at an early stage was, for example, *The Congress of Berlin*. It was summoned in 1878 in order to determine the borders in the *Balkans* following a deep crisis, which was perceived as a threat to the great powers’ geostrategic objectives at that time (Glenny, 2012, p. 136ff). The Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina – one of the consequences of the European great powers’ Congress – was a diplomatic move to silence the *Balkan* problems. The instability and economic neglect in the Ottoman province of Bosnia and Herzegovina was seen by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as, amongst other things, a “civilizing mission” (*Zivilisierungsmission*) which had to be imposed in a top-down process (Sundhausen, 2014, p. 175). The British prime minister Winston Churchill stated, “The Balkans produce more history

<sup>1</sup> N. N. (02-23-2016). EU-Kommission befürchtet eine humanitäre Krise, vor allem in Griechenland (The EU Commission fears a Humanitarian Crisis, especially in Greece). In: *tagesschau.de*, accessed on 03-14-2016; N. N. (02-24-2016). Verloren und verzweifelt auf der Balkanroute (Lost and Desperate on the Balkan Route). In: *Tagesanzeiger*; N. N. (02-24-2016). Der Nervenkrieg auf der Balkanroute (War of Nerves on the Balkan Route). In: *Tagesspiegel*.

<sup>2</sup> N. N. (02-19-2016). Sorge vor Überforderung auf der Balkanroute (Concern about an Overload on the Balkan Route).

In: *Der Standard*; N. N. (02-13-2016). Ungarn, Polen, Tschechien und Slowakei wollen Balkanroute abriegeln (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, and Slovakia want to close the Balkan Route). In: *Der Spiegel*.

<sup>3</sup> N. N. (02-24-2016). Österreich schafft Fakten auf der Balkanroute (Austria Creates Facts on the Balkan Route). In: *Bayernkurier*; N. N. (02-08-2016). Analyse: Balkanländer fordern Konzepte von der EU (Analysis: Balkan Countries Demand Concepts from the EU). In: *Frankfurter Neue Presse*.

than they can consume”, demonstrating that the perception of the *Balkans*, as a region that constantly generated instability in Europe, has been observed throughout the twentieth century and still continues today. Let us illustrate this using two historical references, one from the beginning and the other the end of the century. The examples and the protagonists involved are not connected to each other in any way and should not be brought into any historical or social causality.

First, after the assassination in Sarajevo, which was delivered with assistance from Serbia (the *Black Hand* society as the supplier of arms and training for the assassins through the movement *Young Bosnia*), Austria-Hungary put itself into an active position of solving and remodeling the situation in the *Balkans*, this time by promoting a “prevention war” against Serbia which has been accused of backing the assassins. This decision came immediately after the murder and was backed by the highest political and military officials, including the Austro-Hungarian Army’s Chief of the General Staff, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, or the Finance Minister Chevalier Leon de Bilinski (Clark 2012, p. 391). The war aims were expressed very clearly: a “neutralization” of Serbia as a “factor in the Balkan” as a means to make Austria-Hungary safe, as is visible from a letter from Austria-Hungary Emperor Franz Joseph to the German Emperor Wilhelm II (Clark, 2012, p. 401).

Secondly, at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries, Southeast Europe was still perceived as needing a correcting intervention from the outside: this time not due to war directly, but to make the region permanently stable and conflict-free. The European Union’s diplomatic service (European Union External Action, EEAS) defines the role of the EU in the *Western Balkans* through an aim “to secure stable, prosperous and well-functioning democratic societies on a steady path towards EU integration” (EEAS, 2016, n.p.). This time it seems to be the EU, which necessarily has to transform the instable, non-prosperous *Balkan* societies, due to their lack of a democratic tradition. The reason is clear: if the region is democratically and militarily instable, this will have an impact on the stability of the EU itself. In this process, it is still highly problematic that the EU has often intervened in the local political powers in the *Western Balkans* whose democratic capacity and the will for reforms are questionable. The same pattern is observable in the recent political initiative to close the *Balkan Route*. Vedran Džihčić, political scientist

and Southeast Europe expert from Vienna states:

*“The local strongmen are now buying their loyal assistance from this union, with Austria on top, and agitate in a more authoritarian way.”*  
(03.03.2016, n.p.)

It is obvious that the EU is interested in making the *Balkans* a stable and prosperous region, but at the same time, the politics from Brussels is still willing to make compromises with local politicians whose actions are often not democratic and aim at conserving the instable situation in the region to retain their power. After the financial and the so-called *refugee crisis*, the reputation of the European Union has been strongly impacted in the region. Other global players, especially Russia, have gained in popularity in the region, first of all in Serbia and in the Serb-dominated entity of Republika Srpska in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey has also tried to stabilize its role in the *Balkans*, culturally and economically backing the Bosniaks in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Serbian region of Sanjak. Large investments from the Gulf countries and Saudi-Arabia have also been critically observed by some *West* European media.

At the same time, if the EU is interested in a permanent stabilization of the *Balkans* and their acceptance into the Union, it must back political forces and civil initiatives aiming at reconciliation, strengthening of the legal state institutions and empowering citizens to participate in the political processes.

## Conclusion and Outlook

The lack of democratic institutions and political stability in the *Western Balkans* define its relationship to the European Union. This relationship reflects on the reporting of the refugee issues and the subject of the *Balkan Route*. At the time that this article was written, the arrival of refugees continues, although the Route, initiated by Austria and the *Balkan* countries, was closed in March 2016. The negative perception of Serbia and Macedonia still continues, too.

While the political elites try to roll the problems of the *Balkan Route* off onto the EU-politicians, the Serbian and Macedonian media try to avoid the impression that their countries cannot handle the situation. Reports on helping the refugees and civil society’s commitment show that, beyond shifting the responsibility onto the EU, another aim was to appear able to control the chaos on site as a reaction to *Western* Europe’s perception.

The image of the *Balkan Route* in the German-language media has doubtlessly been influenced by the general perception of this region in the *Western* European media. On the other hand, examples from some countries like Serbia and Croatia show that those countries, despite a heavy historical burden and occasional conflicts, have been able to manage this unprecedented influx of people travelling through their countries. It is very important to mention that no serious racist attacks on (predominantly Muslim) refugees have been perpetrated so far in Southeast Europe. This aspect has not been raised sufficiently in the German-language media's reports. Analyzing the political processes during the refugee crisis, it became obvious that the refugee politics of

the *Balkan* countries has been heavily influenced by the politics of some EU countries, in the first place by Germany and Austria. This circumstance underscores once again that the *Balkan* countries are still dependent on a certain amount of political assistance from the EU on the one hand, but are still perceived as a region in need of this assistance on the other hand. This dependency benefits the local political elites who speculate with attaining EU accession and gaining enough time to stabilize their power. In this situation, the overall political, economic, and social situations in the region have not improved significantly; the result is that high numbers of young and educated persons continue to leave the region.

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## Research Corner

# The Political Element in Serbian Public Discourse

Or: Where to Look for Political Involvement in a Seemingly Apolitical Society

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### Abstract

The political system in Southeast Europe has a long and complicated history. Former citizens of Yugoslavia are not only used to comprehensive manipulation and exploitation of history by politicians, but also to the silencing of stories in a private and public context. It is hardly surprising that the overwhelming majority of studies examining the political activities and participation among the population in this region conclude that there is a rather low involvement in democratic processes by citizens. Focusing mainly on Serbia, this paper takes a different approach. The present paper aims to demonstrate that the political field is closely entwined with cultural, artistic, and civil activism. Hence, a vast amount of political competence lies in an often-overlooked, so-called non-political area. A recognition and integration of this political potential could be an important step towards a unified and equal Europe.

By Western observers the “Balkans” are often described as a region of political instability and democratic weakness. Moreover, Balkan citizens are characterized as politically disorientated, sullen, and simply disenchanted (see, for example, Todorova, 2009; Voinea, 2007; Greenberg, 2010). This paper demonstrates the imbalance and one-sidedness of this argument, mainly because of a narrow perspective on political activities that risks ignoring social realities. In a recent interview, the retired ambassador and High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1999 and 2002 Wolfgang Petritsch recommended closely observing cultural and artistic life to detect the political and social habitus appearing in Southeast Europe:

*“During the time that I was president of the European Culture Foundation in Amsterdam, we brought together artists from the region with the goal of processing the conflicts and wars together with the separations and divisions. Early on it became clear that the*

*lines of the recent conflict followed the historic conflict lines. The continuity of ethnically perceived conflict is striking. However, at this meeting I realized that it is precisely the arts community – the commonality of artistic experience – that makes it possible to approach one another, to re-connect and to be able to work together while having differences as well. Artistic and cultural approaches facilitate especially a ‘different’ look at the ‘other’. That is the first step towards not merely perceiving but also accepting difference – which is limited in the Yugoslavian cases – and in integrating this into one’s own life. Slowly, the traits in common are rediscovered and begin to be integrated in experience, for example, ‘Bosnian’ begins to include the various ethnic and religious elements.”*  
(Gries, Asboth & Krakovsky, 2016, p. 61)

As Petritsch demonstrates, the specific historical background that can be found in the successor states of former Yugoslavia, must be considered carefully, since this is the key to understanding the



current political situation. Otherwise, academic work risks misunderstanding, misinterpreting, or, worse, not even recognizing political activities proceeding in front of our eyes.

## Management of Memory

The first step to investigating the political attitudes of citizens in Southeast Europe, particularly in Serbia, is to broaden the horizons and to consider as many ways as possible for social life to develop a general idea of political participation. Additionally, the historic dimension must be included, because the more or less discreet political influence in the daily life of citizens plays a crucial role in different interpretations and attempts at explanation of people's fundamental views. Former Yugoslavia has always known manipulation with regard to the remembrance of historical events. This becomes particularly clear, if political interference in the public space and cultural memory is reflected. A comprehensive process of rewriting history, including World War II, intends to create a distorted perception of memories regarding the Yugoslavian experience (and regarding communism in principle) and "encompassing media narratives, educational curricula, official policies, etc." (Radović, 2011, p. 113). The extent to which historical developments were encroached is illustrated by historian Dubravka Stojanović, from the University of Belgrade, when she states: "history has even ceased to be a mere provider of myths necessary for creating national identities" (2011, p. 45). The implementation of this historic revision

*"included the management of memory in public space, primarily monuments, memorials and museums created up until the 1990s, and urban commemorative toponymy which either erased and destroyed the proscribed monuments and changed the street, square or institution names, or marginalized and neglected others (with attempts of reification of the new prevailing memory culture)."*  
(Radović, 2011, p. 113)

The influence and manipulation of past events starts already in early childhood. In several revisions since the 1990s, school curricula changed drastically. In each case facts were re-written, re-interpreted and adapted to meet the

particular policies of the contemporary ruling elite. How profoundly these processes took place is described by Dina Iordanova, Professor of Film Studies at the University of St. Andrews:

*"Everybody in the Balkans fought everybody else and at some point practiced the business of assimilation and then conveniently obliterated wrongdoings from memory. The history books of each Balkan nation tell the past in a way that uses idiosyncratic and often self-serving approaches to reconciling records of contested events. Each one stresses what has been done to them, while simultaneously remaining silent on what they have done to others."*  
(Iordanova, 2008, p. 9)

However, such practises did not stop with the end of the wars. In Serbia, for example, these practises are apparent in dealing with public space: "politics of space and spatial design in the 2000s show textbook cases of ideological management of place(s)" (Radović, 2011, p. 114). The main issue is that the interference with the cultural memory proceeds without adequate reflection of the past. Streets and squares are re-named and memorials are built for persons without consideration for or even in ignorance of their history. The critical approach of the "Grupa Spomenik" (Monument Group) in Belgrade points to the problematic situation. Even though the group included mainly artists it was a civil initiative established in 2002 to analyse a proposed monument by the Belgrade City Council to commemorate the victims of the wars that took place on territories of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s (Piotrowski, 2012, p. 176). What remained unclear was how the term "victim" was conceived, if only Serb casualties should be remembered or if others, such as Bosnians, were included, or if the monument was dedicated only to soldiers who fought for a Greater Serbia. A series of critical debates, which were led by Grupa Spomenik, revealed that the City Council was in fact only interested in Serbian victims. Grupa Spomenik managed to question successfully the erection of the monument but more importantly "the entire official 'politics of memory', which are particularly complicated in Serbia" (ibid., p. 177).

These ideas of the ruling elites are emphasized also by Radović when she notes that Serbian elites are still trying to "generally ignore the most recent past (wars in former Yugoslavia), focusing

on narratives and images of previous historical eras" (2011, p. 115). This poses the risk of manipulated "false memory": Memories are unreliable and may be formed by active forces. The reconstructive nature of memories requires that memory is constantly subordinated to the imperatives of the present (Assmann, 2009, p. 265). All memory is thus a product of the present. The intervention in public space gains additional importance in the context of visibility of the past and, moreover, the physical and repeated appropriation by citizens. Places are of outstanding importance for the construction of cultural memories, in particular as these places of memory are part of systematic politics of memory and influenced by a particular party. Not only do places strengthen and certify memories by anchoring them locally; they also embody a continuity of time that outlasts the comparatively short period of individual memory, epochs and even cultures (ibid., p. 299). The citizens are literally shaped by surrounding space and places (Halbwachs, 1967, p. 130).

In Serbia, the political system has altered and re-altered the public space. Mostly, it has not grown with the different social groups inhabiting these places; it is a political top-down act without including civil society. Given the prevailing attempts of the population's manipulation after World War II as well as during and after the collapse of Yugoslavia, the citizens' scepticism of the political elite is not surprising.

## Today's Political States

Since the wars resulting from the disintegration of Yugoslavia, not much time has passed. During the previous twenty-five years, the population of the emerged states has again been confronted with the misuse of political power and with economic crises. This not only interrupted processes dealing with the traumatic events of the wars, disallowing the steps to overcome them, but it also aggravated existing mistrust towards political institutions.

*"Indeed, a series of traumatic experiences has shaped a deep scepticism towards current and future promises, while a distinct distrust of the political leadership further complicates the emergence of a strong civil society."*  
(Wunsch, 2007, p. 5)

To understand the political attitudes of citizens

in Southeast Europe it is crucial to figure out their current mind-set, positions, and living conditions. Especially when it comes to young adults, their political attitudes and potential have far-reaching consequences. This generation of young people will shape not only the face of Southeast Europe, but also of the continent in general. The questions that inevitably come to mind are: What do they perceive as political culture, as the political itself? What exactly do they mistrust or reject? And eventually, are they socially engaged and is there a mutual exchange between social life and political participation?

The example of Serbia gives insight into the uncertain future that young people have to face: the majority of young adults cannot afford to live on their own. Everyday life for the majority of young adults consists of financial support of their families, which at the same times means economic difficulties in separating from their families and starting a life on their own: young people "see their existence as a choice between being hungry and cold or living with parents" (Labaš & Ljubičić, 2012, p. 282). There is little hope at present for social advancement or for sustainable economic development, however living in poor, unemployed, or even middle-class living conditions together with parents demonstrably results in a deceleration of the "internal process of forming the adult identity, especially when referring to emotional independence" (Labaš & Ljubičić, 2012, p. 284). Such difficult living conditions shape how one approaches life. On her research journey, Natasha Wunsch, from University College London, noted the frequent use of the phrase "Šta ćeš, takav ti je život" (What can you do, such is life), which she found to be a "core belief of the population" (Wunsch, 2007, p. 5) leading to the assumption that individuals or even collective actions are insufficient to truly change the mismanaged, maladministered, and corrupt system. As a result the political attitude is marked by utter apathy.

Taking a closer look at the region in Southeast Europe in general, the dimension of mistrust in politics is astonishing. Following political scientist Dane Taleski and historian Bert Hoppe, only one fifth of youth trust in fundamental political institutions such as parliament or the government and only 17% of the youth is satisfied with the state of democracy in Southeast Europe. Young people don't feel represented properly by the political elites and feel they

have no say or opportunities to influence the political sphere (Taleski & Hoppe, 2015, p. 1). Consequently, they disengage from politics; first and foremost, they don't vote and they are only involved in political parties as a route to future employment or better socioeconomic opportunities (ibid., p. 2). The political parties are seen as sheer employers but internal resistance against the official politics is likely to remain unchanged even if people are involved in a political party. On the other hand, activities in social contexts and civil society is more attractive, because "civil-society institutions are not so connected to the abuse of power" (ibid.). However, the experiences gained in Serbia show that if civil-society institutions are reproducing political agendas people become suspicious and perceive these institutions as "NGO elites" that act in compliance with ruling elites to meet own (Greenberg, 2010, p. 58). However, the role of media has the potential to help accelerate building viable and vivid democratic structures due to the fact that institutions are more trusted "which perform a control function, especially in the media and the judiciary, than in those which perform an executive function" (Taleski & Hoppe, 2015, p. 2). The positive image of media is disenchanted easily, when it comes to media perception. Usually campaigns and performances, which are not connected with specific political party actions, find it very difficult to "effectively break this solid political and media barrier" (Radović, 2011, p. 121) to be accessible to a wider audience. Most commonly, political parties raise public initiatives and occupy issues supported by non-political groups without providing the necessary scope for civic groups (ibid.).

The view of domestic political affairs and conditions is rather disillusioning, however, the view towards the European Union is at least ambivalent. Whenever an inclusion in the European community is sought the expectations for positive change due to the accession appear confident even though exaggerated. "Most young people in aspirant and candidate countries have high expectations and think they stand to gain from EU membership" (Taleski & Hoppe, 2015, p. 3). The desired change is clear: better economic opportunities are expected as well as free movement. For those who already joined the European Union, the mostly unfulfilled expectations for changes lead to

rising disappointment. According to Taleski and Hoppe, the standard of life, employment, and economic development usually do not improve as anticipated, especially after the troubles that international financial markets have faced since the outbreak of the financial crises in 2007/2008 (ibid.).

Furthermore, the EU's communication strategy is perceived as unnecessarily aggressive, especially due to "the strong pressure for reform [...] which has lead a great number to feel rejected rather than encouraged to move forward" (Wunsch, 2007, p. 4). The frustration due to exclusion is a well-known condition and reflects a long tradition of Western distance towards the "Balkans". In an essayistic manner, Raluca Voinea argues that the legacy of the wars in Yugoslavia in the 1990s lies in the perception of the entire region as a threat to the security of its Western neighbours. Consequently the "Balkans" are excluded from the European communities. Due to its political divisions, Voinea reveals a uniform perception by Western Europe of the Balkans as a perpetually unstable region, as "the other".

*"Unlike 'the former East' the Balkans have never been fully accepted as part of Europe but always confined to its margins, somewhere close to the Orient."*  
(2007, p. 148)

This traditional cynicism and doubt regarding Southeast Europe inhibits the creation of a common Europe that regards the value of each member state as equal. An actively democratic system and a common identity cannot arise from a patronizing position towards the region. As art critic and curator Raluca Voinea expresses:

*"although the Balkans' wars are over and the 'other' is now moving further East, the EU still decides, as in a sort of über-school, who will pass the grade and become first-class Europeans."*  
(2007, p. 151)

To combat the political passivity it needs political action at eye level coupled with understanding and acceptance of the prevailing situation in its historical context but without condemnation. Jessica Greenberg suggests another way to look at nonparticipation or self-exclusion form political agency through the example of Serbia: In claiming one's own powerlessness towards

political actions, people have the chance to deal with their past, which is not addressed by the political elites, and to blame political powers for those atrocities without judging themselves or being judged by the Western gaze (2010, p. 44):

*“The European Union’s democratization discourse signals power relations that many people in Serbia experience as alienating. Democracy programs mobilize local participation as a neutral path to a post-nationalist democratic politics. But the theoretic of democratic participation silences, rather than resolves, questions about national belonging and its relationship to civic life.”*  
(Greenberg, 2010, p. 54)

Participation began to lose its political purpose, as the indicator of democratic process was seen less in substantive political programs or commitments but instead a very formal understanding of attendance. In the media landscape, the political consequences as a result of elections have become less important than the voting itself. Greenberg concludes:

*“The implications of nonparticipation are twofold: Serbia will not be seen as a serious and responsible state that has achieved democratic stability, and real resources and membership in international associations will be denied on the basis of electoral ‘failure’.”*  
(2010, p. 57)

In the examination of the political framework in Southeast Europe and Serbia in particular, the lack of political participation may not declare a troubled democratic will. Attention must be paid to the to the actual meaning of nonparticipation and not only to measurements created to assess a very specific kind of political involvement such as the signing of petitions, boycotts, and attendance at lawful and peaceful demonstrations.

For the EU, diversity in Europe must become a more valid and positive aspect. Following Erhard Busek, the former coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, we have to learn to live with ‘otherness’, because diversity is the truly exciting element of our continent. Even though the economy plays a key role, it is useless without the diverse face of Europe (Busek, 2005, p. 12). Opposing normative acts performed

by the EU and the western neoliberalism and capitalism must be recognized in a democratic system. The rejection of capitalist structures might also be due to the fact that in former Yugoslavia, the trauma did not occur under communism, like in other eastern European countries, but resulted from the series of wars that erupted in the 1990s (Piotrowski, 2012, p.176). According to Anthony Gardner

*“democracy has become the master signifier of global geopolitics. In the aftermath of both the Cold War and the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, democracy has served as a signifier legitimizing whatever is conducted in its name.”*  
(2015, p. 5)

Gardner notes that the neoliberalization of the world’s economies goes hand in hand with the ideal of Western democracy. Accordingly, the aim of the “in transition” processes is not a transition towards democracy, but “capitalist democracy” (ibid., p. 7). Volcic points out a previously heightened vigilance towards “the premature celebration of the rule of democracy and capitalism” in former Yugoslavia

*“has been followed by collective anxiety, fear, helplessness, disorientation and disenchantment, leaving these societies particularly vulnerable to the rise of populism and authoritarianism.”*  
(2013, p. 336)

The current situation is therefore worrying, be that based on living conditions in the region, be that based on (disappointed) expectations towards the EU and its paternalistic attitude, which could lead to disturbing consequences for Europe as a whole: all the more reason to take existing political tendencies seriously.

## The Political Subject

Unfortunately, there is a persistent propensity to overlook political participation whenever it appears apart from the political state system. A profound explanation can be found in the works of Jean-François Lyotard, philosopher and leading figure in the intellectual movement known as postmodernism. In his studies on the pragmatics of narratives Lyotard concludes that in Western culture, among an infinite number



of discourses, certain stories exist that have developed a predominance over other narratives (méta-récit). These other stories (so-called petit récit) consequently perish or get actively suppressed (Wachholz, 2005, p. 75). Although Lyotard designs a comprehensive theory, which should not be investigated in detail here, the key point is to strengthen petit récits, in order to achieve a more just society and policy (Lyotard, 1994 [1979], p. 193). A similar argument also cites philosopher and historian Michel Foucault when he says that history must not be used to construct a linear, continuous development (Foucault, 1976, p. 43). Both Foucault and Lyotard detect a potential to undermine hegemonic discourses by the search for hushed and repressed stories (Wachholz, 2005, p. 136). For the societies in Southeast Europe this means a close look towards non-political or unofficial stories. According to Mariana Gržinić, Professor of Conceptual Art and video artist, there is a possibility to develop a sustained community rather than just an economic agreement; correspondingly, if we want a society “in which social alliances are important we have to make a turn towards histories” (2007, p. 204). As will be demonstrated in the following, such a turn has to pay attention to civil society but must also include contemporary art and culture as suppliers of narratives, the petit récits, as indicators of social and political interest and activity.

As said before, Southeast Europe, as well as Serbia, shows mistrust in their political elites and party system, however slightly more trust in civil society and even more in media as supervisory authorities. According to Lynne Chisholm, Chair for Education and Generation at the Leopold-Franzens-University in Austria, and sociologist Siyka Kovacheva the consequences for elections are clear: While participation in the first free and democratic elections were high, the turnout has fallen after politicians did not meet the expectations of citizens (2002, p. 36). However, the rise of scepticism towards political and administrative machineries does not mean that the political potential disappear. On the contrary, particularly young people are more likely to engage in „protest politics“ (2002, p. 7). To find these mobilized groups it makes sense to explore political activities outside of the official party system and to become familiar with the historically developed political potential and structures in the region. Recent studies occasionally consider the factor of civil society

– although a rather narrow definition is used, usually only in reference to activities in NGOs and grassroots organizations, rarely also informal education, sports, and cultural activities (for example, Taleski & Hoppe, 2015, p. 2).

Indicators to propose a broader definition of a political understanding in Southeast Europe are referring to the tradition of political activism at universities and in the arts. For example, the opposition to the corruption of history by political exploitation mostly emerged from academic and artistic circles (Radović, 2011, p. 113). Also cultural scientist Zala Volcic points to “the close relationship between activists, cultural creators, and academics” (2013, p. 337). Not only the connection of art and culture with political activity is worth mentioning because of the intensity, but also the degree of mutual influence is remarkable. Thus, for example, “a considerable numbers of artists have adopted the methods of the political activists” (Piotrowski, 2012, p. 10) and both aim at strengthening civil society.

Media theorist and video artist Mariana Gržinić demonstrates the historical roots of this interdependence. A flourishing underground scene in Yugoslavia of the 1970s and 1980s “and the struggle for a civil society, the radical improvement of the social position of gays and lesbian, and with ecological and peace movements” (2007, p. 200). This scene was characterized by its close connection to the “conceptual and post-conceptual art production” (ibid.) of this time and can be traced until nowadays. As an Serbian example Gržinić mentions the group *Teorija koja Hoda* (TkH, Walking Theory) that describes its main object on their webpage “to reinforce the critical and experimental practices / discourses in contemporary performing arts in the local context, as well as to affirm them in a wider, regional and international context” (*Teorija koja Hoda*, 2016). The group achieves its aims through several programs including educational projects, journals, online platforms, programs dedicated to a critical reflection on the local scene, inter-disciplinary performances, and hosting, presentations and lectures by artists and theoreticians (ibid., Gržinić, 2007, p. 200).

The following examples are intended for illustration purposes to demonstrate the different levels of the political in typically cultural or artistic spheres.

## Titostalgia

The so-called “Titostalgia”, “Titoism” or “Yugostalgia” and the like, refer to a tendency among adolescents and young adults to evolve a picture of Yugoslavia and Broz Tito in a romanticized way. This phenomenon can certainly be seen as a result of the incomplete history taught in schools, the positive political staging of the former Yugoslavia (if it is seen as a useful policy) as well as the difficult current desolate living conditions. In all of the successor states of former Yugoslavia, portraits of Tito from olden times can be found, even in factories and buildings, “not out of apathy but signalling a conscious and active political stance calling to mind the years when [...] the entire region were in a better shape” (Petrović, 2008, as cited in Velikonja, 2008, p. 65). The rediscovery of Tito, quite as clear criticism of the current political elite is also seen in the public space such as street culture, graffiti and street art (Velikonja, 2008, p. 69). Specifically the step out into the public space is notable. Conceptual artist Mel Bochner elucidates the essence of public artworks that often remain anonymous: “a wall painting negates the gap between lived time and pictorial time, permitting the work to engage larger philosophical, social, and political issues” (Bochner, 2009, p. 140). It is essential, that the emphasis shifts from the artwork or artist to the viewer, as “these works cannot be ‘held’; they can only be seen” (Bochner, 2009, p. 138). The political attempt behind the phenomenon “Titostalgia” becomes visible and tangible for the cultural, collective memory and identity. In the collective remembrance of Tito, but also in other supra-regional cultural phenomena, such as music, common ground can be found that overcomes the national borders in Southeast Europe and can incorporate the potential to reinterpret itself as a conjoined, self-defined region. The joint history of the region could eventually be the point of a mutual understanding and coping with the past, maybe even towards reconciliation. In addition, an empowered and legitimate self-image can be formed, which allows a critical reflection of Western capitalist maxims. Once again primarily cultural activities need to be highlighted, as the “frustration with the failure of capitalism’s unfulfilled promises has not (yet) faded into resignation or wholesale acceptance” (Volcic, 2013, p. 337). Apart from a romanticized escapism “Titostalgia” is deemed a form of political articulation that manifests itself

in the public space and must therefore be taken seriously as criticism of the current system.

Although the phenomenon “Titostalgia” is recognized as an important social expression, it cannot fulfil any specific confrontation with politics. For this purpose it is useful to dig deeper into the sphere of art and culture.

## Hushed (Hi)stories

Due to the complex history and, as shown before, the different versions through writings and re-writings of history many areas in the Balkans are sites of intercultural memory. “Wherever one turns, one encounters the same story: sole private pictures against a wealth of records that tell a different story and obliterate the clandestine realities recorded on these old single documents” (Iordanova, 2008, p. 7).

At this point the contribution of arts and culture is most important, as Iordanova points out, in contradicting official history and remembering different private stories, *petit recits* after Lyotard par excellence. Intercultural film appears to be a huge reservoir of contradictory narratives, leading to the “politically inconvenient, touching on topics that even today are met with hushed awkwardness or open aggression” (2008, p. 11). Thus, contemporary film reveals unresolved approaches from the past and therefore fulfils the function of the reappraisal of history. At the same time, a problem that directly affects private life is addressed: Many families of the region usually don’t speak about their actions, lives, and the personal consequences of war. Reasons for migration and the consequences of displacement are often kept silent and stories of scattered families and lost friends go untold (Iordanova, 2008, p. 6). These “hushed stories”, as Iordanova continues, are processed in contemporary film and therefore contribute to dealing with the past on a personal and social level.

The dichotomy of forgetting or influencing certain parts of (Serbian) history as well as politically controlled remembrance can also be observed in the video art shown in Milica Tomić videos, for example, in “XY UNGELÖST – Rekonstrukcija zločina, 1996/97” (xy ungelöst – Reconstruction of the Crime, 1996-97). This title alludes to a German television series “Aktenzeichen XY ... ungelöst” (file reference xy unresolved), dedicated to the reconstruction of unsolved crimes. In her piece Tomić openly

refers to the massacre in Kosovo committed by the New Yugoslav army under Milošević and kept silent by the political elite of 2008 (Piotrowski, 2012, p. 180).

Where politicians ignore dealing with an often painful past, artists, particularly of film and video, engage to draw attention to the deplorable state of affairs or even to fulfil the task of historical consideration.

### Direct Intervention and Creative Protest

An impressive example of direct confrontation of artists with politicians was set by Serbian playwrights and dramatic advisors Milan Marković and Maja Pelević. In the context of a performative act “Oni žive (u potrazi za nultim tekstom)” (They Live (In Search of the Primal Text)) both artists enrolled in nine political parties at the time being without disclosing that it was an art initiative. Soon invited to become members of the party’s boards, the artists sent a programme of cultural policy and political marketing entitled “Ideja, strategija, pokret” (Idea, Strategy, Movement) to the party leaders. The text received excellent reactions in the party seats. For their programme, Pelević and Marković used the 1928 text of the German Nazi politician Joseph Goebbels “Knowledge and Propaganda”, in which they changed just three words: “propaganda” was replaced by “political marketing”; “National Socialism” became “democracy, socialism, or liberal democracy” – depending on the party’s orientation; while “Hitler” was changed into the name of the particular party leader (Marković & Pelević, 2012). The bold and direct intervention with politicians of high rank distinguishes the performance of Pelević and Marković and clearly shows the political involvement of contemporary theatre.

Another example of direct engagement in political action is shown by the movement Biro. In response to the planned naming of a public place after the well-known Zoran Đinđić, a liberal, Western-oriented politician of the modern Democratic Party who was assassinated in 2003, a group of right-wing activists proposed renaming a street as “Mladić boulevard” after the fugitive warlord Ratko Mladić, and consequently improvised and installed street tables with Ratko Mladić’s name on them. After a few days,

certain city streets were covered with another kind of street-table patterned leaflets, this time promoting different kinds of popular heroes. Streets and squares in Belgrade were suddenly named, for example, Eric Cartman street, Papa Smurf street, Teletubbies street, Rocky Balboa street, Homer Simpson street, etc. by the artist group Biro under the motto “Zalepi svog heroja” (Place your own hero) (Radović, 2011, p. 119). Members of this group stated that their

*“campaign comes at a much needed time when members of certain extremist organizations, because of their own lack of education and valid information, and because of their distorted system of moral values, try to present murderers as being heroes.”*

(Radović, 2011, p. 119)

Street actions that countered the previous street actions cleverly utilized the same means of performance and practice implemented by their opponents, as to highlight the arbitrary nature of political proclamation of social virtues. The Biro movement’s street-name performance tackled precisely the problem of commemoration, that is, the identity and memory politics which in this instance tried to legitimize recently defined nationalist discourse through – unofficial or potential – symbolic urban design (Radović, 2011, p. 119).

Maurice Halbwachs suggests that the connection between the material aspects of inhabited space (one’s city, specific district or neighbourhood), is tied even more closely to the citizens; emotions than precise religious, political or national incidents. Attempted intervention or even attack in what is one’s materialistic living space is followed by protest – that is what Halbwachs predicts (Halbwachs, 1967, p. 131ff). Exactly that happens in Belgrade in protest of the “Beograd na vodi” (Belgrade waterfront), a 3.5 billion euro project of condominiums, hotels, offices, residential units, etc. developed by Mohamed Alabbar, who built the world’s largest shopping mall and tallest building in Dubai (Wright, 2015):

*“Protesters and civic groups took to the streets of Belgrade clutching toy ducks to denounce a controversial, government-backed project along the banks of the Sava river which they fear will change the look of their city forever.”*

(BBC, 2015)

Apart from interfering in the cityscape, protesters understand the project as a result of corrupt politic. The founder of Belgrade Design Week, Jovan Jelovac, refers to Belgrade Waterfront as an area that should not be developed and which “Belgrade deserves after 20 years of corruption” (Wright, 2015).

What else is this protest if not the citizens’ claim for their part in society, raising their voices as democratic subjects, as defined by Chantal Mouffe (2000, p. 10), even though participating groups and subgroups may not be politically affiliated with a party.

## Public Broadcasting

The TV channel Radio B92, known for its anti-Milošević resistance, anti-war stance, and pro-European agenda began a series called “Mile vs. Transition” in 2003 (Zivkovic, 2007, p. 597). The polemical series ran for several years and is a prime example of social debate about political realities. The hero, “Mile from Cubura” (Cubura is an urban neighbourhood of Belgrade and became known as synonym of the city’s bohemian life) was created to be a periodic example and warning for a mentality without reflection that “became a great communicative resource – a way for many to nuance their own position in the Serbian ‘quality space’” (Zivkovic, 2007, p. 599). In the opening scene Mile, against a blue background, experiences a recurring battle with yellow stars – a reference to the European flag.

*“The choice is clear for Mile, and for Serbia: either you get them, or they get you. In the either/or context implied by the alignment of democracy and Europe against Serbia and democratic failure, there is no other choice.”*  
(Greenberg, 2010, p. 55)

Mile plays satirically with the “for” or “against” dilemma in which the European Union puts Serbia. While the presentation of political challenges on TV reproduces the discursive frame, the popularity of the series nevertheless shows the need and public willingness for political debate.

## Conclusion

In 2013 historian and anthropologist Karl Kaser invoked the humanities and the social sciences to eventually recognize the visual turn in Southeast European Studies and consequently

included visual culture and arts into his future research proposals (2013, p. 70f). This is based on the realization that the political sphere in this region clearly should not be limited to official and conventional organizations. A considerable amount of political engagement in Serbia does not happen in the field of local politics, because citizens distrust political institutions and because they refuse to be judged by Western perspectives and are sceptical of reproducing capitalist political systems and continued repression of their opinions and ideas, as well as overlooking politically active groups (see also Ther, 2014).

This does not mean that the state of democracy in Serbia is problem-free. As explained above the political elite still abuses their power in a corrupt system. They still are not able to establish a functioning structure to sustainably change the widespread, miserable living conditions and one hardly ever hears an open approach to their own past. It is not surprising, after a long and troubled history of political manipulation, that citizens have the need to distance themselves from this political system that is still perceived as corrupt. There is still a reluctance to even identify with political activism.

However, a vivid political potential in culture and the arts must be addressed. Efforts should be directed at empowering the existing political competences and potential and to re-establish, re-invent, or redefine the political sphere in order to create a more balanced democratic system with a valuable historical heritage. It is absolutely necessary to understand and appreciate diverse political areas within culture and the arts as a chance for improvement and truly democratic diversity as a uniting idea. According to political theorist Chantal Mouffe this political potential does not belong to the field of “politics” but to “the political”:

*“By ‘the political’ I refer to the dimension of antagonism that is inherent in human relations, antagonism that can take many forms and emerge in different types of social relations. ‘Politics’, on the other hand, indicates the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions, which seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimension of ‘the political’. I consider that it is only when we acknowledge the dimension of ‘the political’ and understand that ‘politics’ consists in domesticating hostility and in trying*



to defuse the potential antagonism that exists in human relations, which is to address the central question for democratic politics. This question, pose the rationalists, is not how to arrive at a consensus without exclusion, since this would imply the eradication of the political. Politics aims at the creation of unity in a context of conflict and diversity; it is always concerned with the creation of an 'us' through the determination of a 'them'. The novelty of democratic politics is not overcoming this us/

them opposition, which can be considered impossible, but finding the different ways in which it is established. The crucial issue is to establish this us/them discrimination in a way that is compatible with pluralist democracy." (Mouffe, 2000, p. 15)

It is about time to explore the field of "the political" in order to promote an equal and truly democratic Europe.

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## Rezensionen

WILKE JÜRGEN (Hg.): *Die frühesten Schriften für und wider die Zeitung*. Christophorus Besold (1629), Ahasver Fritsch (1676), Christian Weise (1676), Tobias Peucer (1690), Johann Ludwig Hartmann (1679), Daniel Hartnack (1688). Mit einer Einführung von Jürgen Wilke. (= Reihe ex libris kommunikation. Klassische Texte über Medien und Kommunikation, Bd. 17) Baden-Baden: Nomos 2015, 208 Seiten.

Mit dem jüngsten, inzwischen siebzehnten Band der von Hans Wagner und Philomen Schönhagen herausgegebenen Reihe *ex libris kommunikation. Klassische Texte über Medien und Kommunikation* legt Jürgen Wilke eine Textsammlung neu auf, die mittlerweile wohl nur noch fachhistorisch Interessierten sowie Kennerinnen und Kennern der Frühgeschichte der Presse bekannt ist. Es handelt sich um *Die frühesten Schriften für und wider die Zeitung*, die zuerst Karl Kurth 1944 als erstes und letztes Heft der von ihm konzipierten Sammlung *Quellenhefte zur Zeitungswissenschaft* herausgab. Sofort mit der nationalsozialistischen Machtübernahme Anfang 1933 trat Kurth als einer der Protagonisten der Ideologisierung und Instrumentalisierung der Zeitungskunde als NS-Führungswissenschaft hervor. 1941 war er von Walther Heide zum Leiter des Instituts für Zeitungswissenschaft an der Universität Wien ernannt worden. In diesem Zusammenhang entstand diese Quellenedition, in der Kurth zentrale Texte der sogenannten Zeitungsdebatte des 17. Jahrhunderts zusammenstellte. Kurth machte diese Texte dem zeitungskundlichen Fachpublikum im lateinischen Original und in einer von dem Studienrat Josef Pavlu besorgten deutschen Fassung zugänglich. Wilke hat sich in der Neuausgabe auf die deutsche Übersetzung der Beiträge von Christophorus Besold (1629), Ahasver Fritsch (1676), Christian Weise (1676) Tobias Peucer (1690) beschränkt und sie um die Schriften von Johann Ludwig Hartmann (1679) und Daniel Hartnack (1688) ergänzt. Erstmals sind damit alle von der Forschung dokumentierten selbständigen kleinen zeitungskundlichen Texte aus der Frühzeit des Zeitungswesens an einem Publikationsort versammelt. In der neu verfassten,

ebenso material- wie kenntnisreichen Einleitung erläutert Wilke auf der Grundlage des aktuellen Forschungsstandes den kommunikations- und medienhistorischen Entstehungszusammenhang sowie die Publikations- und Rezeptionsgeschichte der Texte, gibt biografische Informationen zu deren Autoren und skizziert die Grundpositionen der Schriften im Einzelnen.

Die frühesten zeitungskundlichen Schriften entstanden im medienhistorischen Kontext der quantitativen Expansion der periodisch erscheinenden gedruckten Zeitung als publizistisches Medium und diskutierten die Gefahren und den Nutzen der Zeitungen, kurzum: das ‚für und wider‘ dieses neuen Mediums. Im Laufe des 17. Jahrhunderts erreichten die Zeitungen einen immer größeren Leserkreis. Mit den neuen billigen Zeitungen waren Informationen und Nachrichten nicht bloß potentiell jedem zugänglich, sondern die Menschen hatten in einer vom Dreißigjährigen Krieg und seinen Nachwehen zerrissenen Zeit zugleich ein enormes Bedürfnis, jederzeit das Neueste zu erfahren und zu wissen. So war ein gewichtiger Anlass der Zeitungsdebatte, ob denn wirklich „Menschen jedes Standes und jeder Stellung“ Zeitungen lesen sollten oder ob es nicht eigentlich mehr „im öffentlichen Interesse [liegt], die wahllose Verbreitung und Bekanntmachung von Neuen Zeitungen im Staate nicht zu gestatten“ (S. 52, 56), wie es der Rudolstädter Hof- und Jus-tizrat Ahasver Fritsch, Vertreter des Lagers ‚wider die Zeitungen‘, in seinem *Diskurs über den heutigen Gebrauch und Missbrauch der ‚neuen Nachrichten‘*, die man „Neue Zeitungen“ nennt (1776) forderte. Fritsch machte Buchdruckerkunst und gedruckte Zeitungen verantwortlich, die sündhafte Neugier der Menschen anzustacheln und brachte mit der „neuen Zeitungs-Sucht“ (S. 51) einen Begriff in die Debatte, den die Zeitungsgegner immer wieder gegen die Zeitung bemühten:

„Ja einige sind so schrecklich neugierig und auf Neue Zeitungen so erpicht, dass sie sich nicht scheuen, sie sogar in den Kirchen während der heiligen Handlungen zu lesen oder zu hören sowie in Amtsstuben bei noch wichtigeren Beschäftigungen. Kaum haben sie den Fuß aus dem Haus gesetzt, so pflegen sie die, die ihnen begegnen, zu fragen: ‚Was gibts Neues? Was gibts Neues?‘“ (S. 52)

Gleiches berichtete der Rothenburger Pfarrer und Superintendent Johann Ludwig Hartmann drei Jahre später in seinem Pamphlet über die *Unzeitige Neue-Zeitungs-Sucht und Vorwitziger Kriegs-Discoursen Flucht* (1779):

„In allen Städten / in allen Dörffern / ja fast in allen Häusern / durch Veranlassung jetziger elender Kriegsläufften / da reisset die Begierde / was neues zu hören / aller Orten am stärckesten ein / wann man viel von Kriegen und Geschrey von Kriegs-Sachen höret. Wo ihrer zwey von einander von ohngefehr begegnen und grüssen / ist diß gemeinlich die erste Frage? Was gibts guts neues?“ (S. 140)

Und genauso, fuhr Hartmann fort,

„erwartet man der Kriegs-Curriern / der Posten / der Zeitungen / der Nouvelles / der Avisen / der Extra, und was man sonst für Namen erdencket und gebrauchet / mit hohem und schmerzlichen Verlangen / umb zu hören und zu vernehmen / wie es auf einen oder den andern Weg mögte abgelauffen seyn.“ (S. 141)

Mit solchen Passagen gibt die Zeitungsdebatte auch Einblicke in die Pressennutzung des 17. Jahrhunderts und liefert zahlreiche Belege, dass der Rezipientinnen- und Rezipientenkreis der neuen Zeitungen durch Vorlesen und Zuhören weit über den recht kleinen Kreis der Lesefähigen hinausging. Vor diesem Hintergrund spielen die Texte auch für die öffentlichkeitshistorische Forschung eine zentrale Rolle, wenn es darum geht zu zeigen, dass der für Jürgen Habermas erst im 18. Jahrhundert und im Zeitalter der Aufklärung angesetzte Strukturwandel zur bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit schon in der Frühneuzeit einsetzte. In der Vehemenz, mit der die Zeitungsgegner die Sucht nach Neuigkeiten anprangerten und als ernste Konkurrenz und Gefahr für die repräsentative Öffentlichkeit der Obrigkeiten und ihre Arkanpolitik ansahen, spiegeln sich die zaghaften Strukturen einer frühbürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit, getragen von Raisonement und Teilhabe aller an öffentlichen Dingen.

Ganz in diesem Sinne und im scharfen Kontrast zu den Gegnern der Zeitung erkannten die Zeitungsbefürworter die Zeitung als ein Stände übergreifendes Kommunikationsmittel (S. 39), das erste Konturen einer neuen und ebenso die Stände übergreifenden publizistisch vermittelten Öffentlichkeit hervorbrachte. So vermerkte Chri-

stian Weise in seinem *Interessanten Abriss über das Lesen von Zeitungen* (1776):

„Mögen nämlich Hofleute, Gebildete und alle, die mit hohen Kosten Neuigkeiten über Vorgänge im Ausland auffangen, sichere Nachrichten aus vertrauter Beschäftigung mit Literatur kennen lernen; weil jedoch das über die Kenntnisnahme weniger nicht hinausgeht und auch nicht jedermann in der Lage ist, die Gesamtlage auf Erden durch Freunde, die von überallher Mitteilung machen, zu erfassen, so ist es leicht klar, warum die Mehrzahl zu diesem öffentlichen und gemeinsamen Hilfsmittel, die Neugierde zu befriedigen, ihre Zuflucht nehmen.“ (S. 64f)

Weise belegte in seiner Schrift nicht nur den hohen Wert gedruckter Nachrichten für die Kenntnis der verschiedensten Gebiete (Geographie, Genealogie, Geschichte, Politik etc.), für Juristen, Kaufleute, Mediziner, Theologen usw. usf., sondern entwarf wie nach ihm auch Daniel Hartnack in seinen *Erachten von Einrichtung Der Alten Teutschen und neuen Europäischen Historien* (1688) geradezu ein „Bildungsprogramm“ (S. 29) zur Frage: „Welchen Nutzen Zeitungen haben und durch welche Hilfsmittel ihre Lesung gefördert zu werden pflegt“ (S. 64)? Neben der Informationsfunktion der Zeitung sprach Weise aber auch schon davon, dass auch diejenigen beim Zeitungslesen auf ihre Rechnung kommen, „die die Zeitungen zur Kurzweil lesen“ (S. 102), kurz: die sich einfach nur unterhalten wollen.

Neben Weise war Tobias Peucer einer der engagiertesten Zeitungsbefürworter, dem in diesem Zusammenhang zudem das Verdienst zukommt, dass er der Verfasser der ersten Dissertation zum Zeitungswesen ist. Für seine Schrift *Über Zeitungsberichte* (1690) wurde ihm an der Universität Leipzig der Dokortitel verliehen. Auch wenn Peucer auf eine schon mehrere Jahrzehnte währende Diskussion zurückblicken konnte, ist es sicher auf diesen besonderen akademischen Kontext zurückzuführen, dass er die „theoretisch am weitesten gediehene“ (S. 40) unter den frühesten zeitungskundlichen Schriften verfasst hat, die die vorangegangenen „an deskriptiver Systematik und analytischer Tiefe“ weit übertrifft (S. 31). Peucer stellte „menschliche Neugierde“ und „Gewinnsucht“ als funktionale „Gründe für die Entstehung der jetzt besonders häufig gelesenen Zeitungen“ (S. 112) heraus; er entwickelte vor dem Rollenbild des „ernsteren Geschichtsschrei-



bers“ (S. 115) Normen und Qualitätskriterien einer journalistischen Ethik mit Elementen wie „Glaubwürdigkeit und Wahrheitsliebe“ (S. 114), Sachverstand und Urteilskraft sowie Relevanz und Richtigkeit von Nachrichten und mahnte, dass jeder Zeitungsschreiber besser tut, „wenn er es unterließe, offenkundig Unwahres mitzuteilen, oder wenn etwas ungewiss ist, doch [eine] Warnung hinzufügte“ (S. 115); er gab unter dem Stichwort „Ökonomie und Lexis“ (S. 121) Hinweise zum journalistischen Stil sowie zu Anordnung und Aufbau des Nachrichtestoffes; er skizzierte ebenso eine „Theorie der Nachrichtenauswahl“ wie eine „Typologie der nachrichtenswürdigen Ereignisse“ (S. 33, 34); und schlussendlich systematisierte er auch Nutzungsmotive: Neugier, Orientierungswissen, Bildung, Unterhaltung und Zeitvertreib.

Die obigen Bemerkungen deuten es schon an: Wer sich auf die in Form und Stil oftmals sperrigen, weitschweifenden Beiträge der Zeitungsdebatte des 17. Jahrhunderts einlässt, die den Sprachgewohnheiten und der Vorstellung von wissenschaftlichen Texten unserer Zeit so gar nicht entsprechen, kann Einiges entdecken. So schimmert schon in der Zeitungsdebatte ein multidisziplinärer Blick auf den Gegenstand Zeitung und das „boundary-working“ (Thomas F. Gieryn) um mediale Phänomene durch, aus dem sich auch heute noch die kognitive Identität der Kommunikationswissenschaft speist. Die frühen Zeitungstheoretiker waren Kameralwissenschaftler, Juristen, Theologen und Peucer sogar Mediziner und sie wirkten als Erzieher, Lehrer und Universitätsprofessoren. In der zeitgenössischen Debatte um das ‚für und wider‘ der Zeitungen spiegeln sich aber auch prototypisch „Standardsituationen“ (Kathrin Passig) der Medienkritik, die bis heute jede mediale Innovation begleiten:

„Was die zeitungskundlichen Schriften des 17. Jahrhunderts vorexerziert hatten, sollte sich später bei der Entstehung neuer Medien der Massenkommunikation wiederholen.“ (S. 41)

Eingeflochten und vorformuliert sind in diesen Diskurs jedoch nicht zuletzt viele Denkmotive, Fragestellungen, Theorieelemente und Themen, die die Kommunikationswissenschaft nach wie vor beschäftigen. Schlussendlich kann man diese Neuausgabe der frühesten zeitungskundlichen Schriften aber auch einmal zum Anlass nehmen,

sich anzuschauen, worüber Besold, Fritsch, Hartmann, Hartnack, Peucer und Weise eigentlich diskutiert haben und in die früheste Epoche unserer modernen Medienwelt eintauchen. Dank des von der Bremer Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek und der Deutschen Pressforschung Bremen unternommenen Digitalisierungsprojektes der Zeitungen des 17. Jahrhunderts (zu finden unter <http://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17>) bekommt man nämlich seit kurzem auch die ersten Zeitungen wieder frei Haus.

Erich Koenen, Bremen

**ANTON TANTNER: *Die ersten Suchmaschinen. Adressbüros, Fragämter, Intelligenz-Comptoirs.* Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach 2015, 173 Seiten.**

Stellen Sie sich vor, Google wäre ein Mensch. Wenn Sie eine Suchanfrage stellen wollen, und sei sie noch so banal oder peinlich, müssen Sie sich damit persönlich an einen griesgrämigen Herrn wenden, der an einem mit Papieren bedeckten Schreibtisch hinter einer Tür mit der Aufschrift „Google“ sitzt. Auf Ihre Frage kramt er in seinen Unterlagen und überreicht Ihnen die gewünschte Auskunft auf Papier – schiefer Blick, entnervtes Seufzen oder harsche Zurechtweisung inklusive. So oder ähnlich wie dieses Szenario, das unter dem Titel *If Google Was A Guy* in einer Reihe von Youtube-Videos humorvoll durchgespielt wird, funktionierten im Prinzip auch frühneuzeitliche Adressbüros. Diese Einrichtungen, die unter verschiedensten Namen wie zum Beispiel Adresscomptoir, Frag- und Kundschaftsamt oder Intelligenzbüro firmierten, sind Gegenstand von Anton Tantners Buch *Die ersten Suchmaschinen*. Damit sind Büros gemeint, an die sich Menschen, wenn sie eine Auskunft brauchten, wenden konnten. Gegen eine Gebühr verschaffte ihnen ein Mitarbeiter Einblick in die Bücher und Register, die verschiedene gesammelte Daten enthielten.

Den Urvater dieser Institutionen sieht Tantner in Michel de Montaigne, dem schon im 16. Jahrhundert eine Vernetzung vorhandener Informationen vorschwebte, die an heutige Internet-Verkaufsplattformen, Job- oder Mitfahrbörsen erinnert. In seinen *Essais* (zwischen 1580 und 1595 erschienen) malte sich der französische Philosoph aus,

„dass in den Städten eine bestimmte Stelle eingerichtet würde, an die alle, die irgendetwas brauchten, sich wenden könnten [...] – zum Beispiel: ‚Ich suche Perlen zu verkaufen‘ oder ‚Ich suche Perlen zu kaufen‘. Der und der möchte eine Reisebegleitung nach Paris; der und der hält nach einem Diener mit den und den Eigenschaften Ausschau, der und der nach einem Dienstherrn, der und der nach einem Arbeiter; der eine sucht dies, der andere das, jeder nach seinem Bedarf. Offensichtlich würde ein solches Mittel zum Austausch von Informationen die Beziehung zwischen den Menschen wesentlich erleichtern [...]“. (S. 17)

Ganz in Montaignes Sinn rief der Arzt Théophraste Renaudot 1630 das erste *Bureau d'adresse* in Paris ins Leben. Es folgten ähnliche Gründungen in England und Preußen. Im 18. Jahrhundert erhielt auch das Habsburgerreich solche Institutionen.

Da es sich um eine „vergleichende, vorwiegend empirisch orientierte Darstellung der europäischen Adressbüros“ (S. 140) handelt, nimmt die quellennahe, mit zahlreichen Zitaten aufgelockerte Dokumentation und Beschreibung der einzelnen Projekte breiten Raum ein. Diese gerade aus heutiger Sicht faszinierenden Institutionen wurden bisher nur wenig erforscht. Mit seinen Recherchen in diversen Archiven in Wien, St. Pölten, Innsbruck, Graz, Paris, Bratislava, Brno, Prag, Schleswig und Berlin leistete Tantner Pionierarbeit – zumal die Quellenlage mehr als schwierig ist. Da die meisten Adressbüros zwar privilegierte (also von der Obrigkeit mit einem Privileg ausgestattete), aber private Einrichtungen waren, ist nur spärliches Material erhalten. Bei den aufgefundenen Dokumenten handelt es sich außerdem teilweise um Selbstaussagen der (potentiellen) Betreiber, die naturgemäß ein geschöntes Bild zeichnen.

Dass sich in der Darstellung dieser Büros viele Aspekte wiederholen, ist keineswegs redundant, sondern Teil einer wichtigen Erkenntnis, die dieses Buch liefert: Viele Phänomene, die wir heute für typische Probleme der Internet-Ära halten, traten bereits in der Frühen Neuzeit in Zusammenhang mit dem Informationsgeschäft regelmäßig auf: Datenschutz, Überwachungsgelüste der Obrigkeit, Angst vor Sittenverfall etc.

Es ist zwar schade, dass es ein nur sehr kurzes Theoriekapitel als *Conclusio* gibt, aber das schmälert die Arbeit nicht, die ja vorderhand den Anspruch hat, eine solide Grundlage an historischer Quellenforschung zu diesem Thema zu liefern und dem auch gerecht wird.

Tantners Buch ist nicht nur ein Beitrag zur Wissens- und Informationsgeschichte, sondern auch zur (u.a. aufgrund der Quellenlage nach wie vor noch nicht genügend erforschten) Zeitungsgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit. Viele Adressbüros standen in Zusammenhang mit journalistischen Unternehmungen. Die im 18. Jahrhundert in den meisten deutschsprachigen Städten entstandenen Einrichtungen waren in erster Linie Redaktionen, die sogenannte Intelligenzblätter mit Anzeigen, amtlichen Verordnungen, Totenlisten etc. herausgaben. An der Wende zum 19. Jahrhundert gingen die Fragämter nach und nach in den Redaktionen auf und wurden schließlich von diesen übernommen.

Ein besonderes Beispiel für die Verzahnung von Adressbüro und Zeitung ist das 1707 in Wien gemeinsam mit dem Versatzamt (heute Dorotheum) gegründete Fragamt, das ab 1721 eine Kooperation mit dem seit 1703 existierenden *Wien(n)erischen Diarium* (der heutigen *Wiener Zeitung*) einging. Die im „Diarium“ veröffentlichten Negotienlisten, Registerauszüge der im Fragamt verzeichneten Protokolle, sind ein wichtiger Schritt in der Entwicklung des Inseratenwesens hierzulande.

Ein Verdienst Tantners ist es auch, an den Wert dieser Dokumente als Quelle für HistorikerInnen zu erinnern. Schon Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz hatte das diesbezügliche Potential erkannt: Ein solches „diarium der dienlichen fergefallenen dinge“ hätte den angenehmen Nebeneffekt, dass es „der nachwelt zur nachricht in gedächtniß erhalten werden“ könne (S. 76).

Bei dem schlanken Bändchen (133 Seiten Text, 34 Seiten Anhang) handelt es sich um eine gekürzte und leicht überarbeitete Version der 2012 an der Universität Wien angenommenen Habilitationsschrift<sup>1</sup> (198 Seiten Text, 36 Seiten Anhang). Im Vergleich mit dieser hebt die bei Wagenbach erschienene Publikation die Parallelen zum Internet-Zeitalter stärker hervor, was ja schon am Titel zu erkennen ist: *Aus Adressbüros im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit, so die Hochschulschrift, wurde Die ersten Suchmaschinen*.

<sup>1</sup> Online abrufbar unter <https://uscholar.univie.ac.at/view/o:128115>

Freilich passt der Begriff der „Suchmaschine“ für die Adressbüros nicht hundertprozentig. (Historiker Peter Burke, der auch einer der Gutachter der Habilitationsschrift Tantners war, hatte Renaudots Adressbüro in den 1990ern noch als die *Gelben Seiten* des 17. Jahrhunderts“ (1996, S. 11) bezeichnet). Tantner argumentiert mit dem Begriff des

„kontrollierten Anachronismus“, der versucht, aus der Reibung, die aus der Unzeitgemäßheit eines Begriffs [...] in einer bestimmten Epoche [...] resultiert, Erkenntnis zu gewinnen.“ (S. 133)

Zweifelloso ein Vorteil ist, dass so das Interesse einer breiteren Leserschaft für eine – durchwegs unterhaltsam geschriebene – historische Arbeit über die Frühe Neuzeit geweckt werden konnte. Umgekehrt könnte man freilich auch heutige Suchmaschinen als „digitale Fragämter“ bezeichnen. Zukünftige SuchmaschinenentwicklerInnen mit Geschichtsbewusstsein können sich bei Tantner einige Anregungen für die Namensgebung ihrer Online-Plattformen holen.

Übrigens: Auch wenn das Buch sehr übersichtlich gegliedert und von relativ geringem Umfang ist, hätte einem Werk über das Suchen und Finden jenes Instrument wohl angestanden, das Zedemaier „als Suchmaschine[n] der frühneuzeitlichen Wissensapparate“ (S. 133) bezeichnete: ein Register.

Bei allen Unterschieden zwischen der heutigen und der frühneuzeitlichen Gesellschaft – man denke nur an die strenge Hierarchie – sind die Parallelen zwischen der Ära der Adressbüros und jener des Internets tatsächlich frappant. Man vergleiche zum Beispiel die damals wie heute auf Hochglanz polierte, blendende Werbesprache: Einem frühneuzeitlichen Projekt schwebte es vor, „die Welt (...) zusammen an einen Platz zu bringen“. Googles Selbstbeschreibung lautet: „Das Ziel (...) ist es, die Informationen der Welt zu organisieren und für alle zu jeder Zeit zugänglich und nützlich zu machen.“ (S. 60)

Auch die dunkle Seite des Informationsgeschäfts erinnert stark an heutige Diskussionen rund um Überwachung und Datenschutz: So kam die Obrigkeit immer wieder auf die Idee, die Adressbüros zur Kontrolle der Bevölkerung heranzuziehen. Im Falle von Renaudots Pariser *Bureau d'adresse* wurde z.B. 1639/1640 angeordnet, dass sich alle in die Stadt kommenden arbeitssuchenden Fremden binnen 24 Stunden einzuschreiben und die ihnen angebotene Stelle anzunehmen hätten. Auf

Zuwiderhandeln stand die Galeerenstrafe. Tantner vermutet jedoch zu Recht, dass dieses System in der Praxis kaum funktioniert haben dürfte. Auch von der Schwierigkeit, die Register aktuell zu halten, wird berichtet – selbst die seriösesten Klienten würden es z.B. verabsäumen, dem Büro eine bereits getätigte Vermittlung zu melden.

Ist dieses Buch für die Erforschung der Frühen Neuzeit, insbesondere der Mediengeschichte, ein Schatzkästchen mit einer Vielzahl bisher unbekannter, von Tantner ausgegrabener und zusammengetragener Preziosen, so mag es für besorgte ZeitgenossInnen auch ein ganz kleiner Trost sein. Denn der allumfassenden Kontrolle durch die Anhäufung von Daten kann – das zeigt der Blick in die Vergangenheit – oft etwas entgegengesetzt werden, und sei es nur Schlamperei, die bekanntlich so manches Übel zu mildern vermag.

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Andrea Reisner, Wien

**TOBIAS CONRADI: *Breaking News. Automatismen in der Repräsentation von Krisen- und Katastrophenereignissen*. Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 342 Seiten.**

Unter dem aufsehenerhaschenden Titel *Breaking News. Automatismen in der Repräsentation von Krisen- und Katastrophenereignissen* wurde nun die von Tobias Conradi im Rahmen des Graduiertenkollegs „Automatismen“ verfasste Dissertation publiziert. Dem an der Universität Paderborn angesiedelten Kolleg ist der Verdienst zuzuschreiben, mit „Automatismen“ einen neuen Begriff in die Medien- und Kulturforschung eingebracht zu haben. Automatismen können dabei kurz gefasst als Techniken zur Reduktion von Komplexität, die Strukturen hervorbringen, dabei aber kaum bewusster Kontrolle zugänglich sind, verstanden werden. Conradi geht in seiner Arbeit davon aus, dass Krisen- und Katastrophenereignisse sowie deren Repräsentation Momente der expliziten Sichtbarkeit des im „Normalfall“ eingespielten Funktionierens gesellschaftlicher Zusammenhänge sind, dass an diesen diskursiv konzeptualisierten Umbruchsituation also Auftre-

ten, Ablauf, Abruf und Funktionsweise ebensolcher Automatismen besonders gut nachvollzogen werden kann. Dementsprechend widmet er sich Beispielergebnissen, die massenmedial als Krisen bzw. Katastrophen eingeordnet wurden. Die zentrale Forschungsfrage lautet dabei:

*„Lassen sich bezüglich der Repräsentation von Krisen- und Katastrophenereignissen wiederkehrende Schemata und Konventionalisierungen analysieren, die in ein Modell diskursiver Automatismen überführt werden können?“ (S. 17)*

Neben der diskursiv erzeugten Ereignishaftigkeit von Krisen und Katastrophen, nimmt die Analyse auch die Auswirkungen der Medienberichterstattung auf nicht-diskursive Praktiken „sowie deren Einbettung und Funktion innerhalb eines dispositiven Zusammenhalts“ (S.17) in den Blick. Wenngleich die Klassifikation von Ereignissen als „krisenhaft“ oder „katastrophal“ als diskursive Zuschreibung gesehen wird, wird keineswegs außer Acht gelassen, dass nicht-diskursive Elemente den Diskurs beeinflussen, dass also tatsächlich „etwas“ passiert ist. Dem kritischen Anspruch einer Diskursanalyse wird unter anderem durch die Definition von Krisen- und Katastrophenereignissen als Gegenständen „eines je historisch spezifischen Macht-Wissens“ (S.12) oder durch die Absicht mit Hilfe der analytischen Intervention „vermeintlich Selbstverständliches zu entselbstverständlichen“ (S.48) Rechnung getragen.

Der untersuchte Materialkorpus umfasst die Berichterstattung der deutschen Nachrichtensendungen *ARD Tagesthemen*, *ZDF Heute Journal* und *RTL Aktuell* zum Hurrikan „Katrina“, der Ende August 2005 an der nordamerikanischen Südküste und insbesondere in New Orleans wütete, zu den terroristischen Anschlägen bzw. Anschlagversuchen in London im Juli 2005 und zum Absturz der Air-France-Maschine des Passagierfluges AF447 vor der brasilianischen Küste am 1. Juli 2009. Untersucht werden somit jeweils eine Naturkatastrophe, ein menschlich indiziertes Krisenereignis und ein Technikunfall. Bei dieser Vorababordnung der Ereignisse orientiert sich Tobias Conradi am Common Sense einerseits, und an der modernen Unterscheidung zwischen Natur – Kultur – Technik andererseits, er macht sie zum Ausgangspunkt der Analyse, unterzieht sie innerhalb dieser aber zugleich einer kritischen Reflexion. Die Kon-

zentration auf Fernsehnachrichten ergibt sich aus der Annahme, dass diese nicht nur die erste ausführliche Informationsquelle über Krisen- und Katastrophenereignisse darstellen, sondern auch für die

*„Vorstellung davon, was Krisen- und Katastrophenereignisse sind, worin sie bestehen, welche Auswirkungen sie für Kollektive unterschiedlicher Größenordnung zeitigen und welche Folgen ihnen im Nachhinein zugeschrieben werden“ (S. 12)*

besonders prägend sind.

Das 342 Seiten starke Werk gliedert sich in 12 Kapitel und teilt sich, ganz klassisch, in einen theoretischen und einen empirischen Abschnitt. An die umfassende Einleitung anschließend wird im zweiten Kapitel die mit dem Konzept der Automatismen verbundene Forschungsperspektive näher erläutert und somit die theoretische Auseinandersetzung eingeläutet. Im Mittelpunkt des dritten Kapitels steht die Beschäftigung mit Stuart Halls konstruktiven Ansatz zu Repräsentation als kultureller Praxis der Bedeutungsproduktion sowie eine erste Annäherung an Diskurs und Diskursanalyse. Der Diskurs zu Foucaults Diskursen, das heißt die deutsche Rezeptionsgeschichte Foucaults, wird sodann in Ausschnitten im vierten Kapitel dargestellt, in dem auch der Zusammenhang von Wissen und Macht diskutiert und nach der Notwendigkeit und/oder Möglichkeit einer Grenze des Diskurses gefragt wird. Durch die Kombination der theoretisch-analytischen Ansätze von Hall und Foucault erhofft sich Conradi eine Perspektive einzunehmen, aus der heraus die Verschränkung symbolischer und außersymbolischer Praxen untersucht werden kann. Im fünften Kapitel wird der Blick mit Stuart Halls Encoding/Decoding Modell auf Fernsehkommunikation als Teil eines umfassenden, gesellschaftlichen Prozesses gerichtet und mit Bezug auf Hartmut Winklers Diskursökonomie das Verhältnis von Kontinuität und Dynamik diskursiver Entwicklung theoretisch diskutiert. Zudem wird mit der, ursprünglich aus den Science and Technology Studies stammenden, Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie eine produktive Ergänzung zu dem diskursanalytisch ausgerichteten Forschungsansatz eingeführt und sichergestellt, dass die Rolle der in Repräsentationen implizierten Akteure nicht unberücksichtigt bleibt. Die Wechselbeziehung von Medien und Ereignis-

nissen sowie der Begriff des Medienereignisses geraten in den Fokus des sechsten Kapitels, in dem verdeutlicht wird, dass Medien für die Produktion von Ereignishaftigkeit unabdingbar sind und eine Verbindung zwischen (Medien-)Ereignissen und Diskursbegriff hergestellt wird. Diese umfassende theoretische Grundlegung wird vom Autor in Folge nicht in Form eines starren Maßnahmenkatalogs angewandt, sondern vielmehr als eine Art Brille zur Schärfung des Blicks genutzt. Eine Hinführung zur Analyse bietet das siebte Kapitel: hier wird nicht nur fein säuberlich die Auswahl des Untersuchungsmaterials und -zeitraums dargelegt und das konkrete diskursanalytische Vorgehen beschrieben, sondern auch die Schwerpunktsetzung der Einzelanalysen in Thesenform vorgestellt. Das empirische Herzstück des Werkes ergibt sich aus den Kapitel 8 bis 10, in denen die konkreten Einzelanalysen durchgeführt werden. Mit der ausführlichen Entfaltung seines Materials bietet Tobias Conradi den Lesenden hier die Möglichkeit,

*„die Herstellung des Untersuchungsgegenstandes nachzuvollziehen und möglicherweise auch zu anderen Ergebnissen zu kommen oder Widerspruch einzulegen.“ (S.164f)*

Die Analysen bestechen jedoch nicht nur durch ihre Ausführlichkeit und Transparenz, sondern auch durch den scharfen Blick, mit dem es Conradi gelingt Details und Wendungen der Fernsehberichterstattung aufzuzeigen und mit Bedeutung zu versehen. So verdeutlicht der Autor bei der Untersuchung der Berichterstattung zu Hurrikan „Katrina“ beispielsweise wie sich dieses spezifische Ereignis der stereotypen Erwartungshaltung, wie in Amerika auf Wirbelstürme reagiert und deren Folgen überwunden werden, widersetzt und wie dieser Bruch die Naturkatastrophe „Katrina“ immer mehr zu einer sozialen Katastrophe werden lässt. Darüber hinausgehend arbeitet er aus, wie auf visueller Ebene der Nachrichten-Berichterstattung die Alterität der notleidenden afroamerikanischen Bevölkerung besonders hervorgehoben wird, die möglichen rassistischen Hintergründe der überdurchschnittlichen Betroffenheit dieser Bevölkerungsgruppe auf sprachlicher Ebene jedoch aus dem Diskurs ausgeschlossen bleiben. Struktureller Rassismus, als dem Wirbelsturm vorhergehende gesellschaftliche Dysfunktionalität, wird, wie die Analyse zeigt, in dem Moment, in dem er sichtbar wird, schon wieder normalisiert und aus der expliziten Wahrnehmung ver-

drängt. Die Repräsentation des Hurrikans „Katrina“ bezeichnet Conradi als

*„ein Musterbeispiel dafür, wie mediale Repräsentation ‚Wahrnehmung‘ und ‚Wahrheit‘ eines Katastrophenereignisses formt und die Praxen im Umgang mit dem Ereignis präfiguriert.“ (S. 185)*

Aufbauend auf den Ergebnissen der Einzelanalysen werden im elften Kapitel in einem zweiten Analyseschritt „weitergehende Strukturentwicklungen, Mechanismen, Schlussfolgerungen als ‚diskursive Formation‘ in den Blick genommen“ (S.163). Besondere Aufmerksamkeit erhalten hier die Basisoppositionen „Diskontinuität und Schock vs. Kontinuität und Einordnung“ und „Ordnung“ vs. „Notstand“ sowie die Bildlichkeit und Ikonizität der Repräsentation als „Prinzipien struktureller Verkettung“. Zudem setzt Conradi die Repräsentation von Krisen- und Katastrophenereignissen am Ende des Kapitels zumindest kurz in Bezug zu einer gouvernementalen Regierungspraxis und führt sie auf Un/Sicherheitsdispositive zurück. Eine Rückbindung der aus der Verbindung von Theorie und Analyse gewonnenen Erkenntnisse an das Konzept der Automatismen findet abschließend im zwölften Kapitel statt.

Im Laufe der Auseinandersetzung erinnert Conradi immer wieder daran,

*„dass innerhalb der Durchführung der Analysen Schwerpunkte gesetzt wurden, die durchaus auch anders hätten gesetzt werden können: Es folgt also aus dieser Betrachtung ein spezifischer Blick auf die Repräsentation von Krisen- und Katastrophenereignissen [...] zu einem bestimmten, historischen Moment.“ (S. 279)*

Es ist gerade dieses beständige Hinweisen auf die eigene Positioniertheit, auf den Ort, von dem aus gesprochen wird, die den aus der Analyse gezogenen Schlüssen ihre Stärke verleiht. Tobias Conradi's exzellentes Werk zeichnet sich durch ein hohes Maß an Reflexion aus und ist keineswegs nur an Personen zu empfehlen, die sich der Beschäftigung mit Krisen- und Katastrophenjournalismus verschrieben haben. Vielmehr ist es „Muss“ für all jene, die sich für Diskursanalysen begeistern und das Zusammendenken komplexer Theorien schätzen.

Barbara Metzler, Wien



**BERNHARD PÖRSKEN & ANDREAS NARR:**  
*Die Idee des Mediums. Reden zur Zukunft des Journalismus.* edition medienpraxis. Köln: Halem Verlag 2015, 219 Seiten.

Viele deutsche „Großjournalisten bzw. -journalistinnen“ sind hier versammelt: Ulrich Deppendorf/ARD, Matthias Döpfner/Springerverlag, Hans Leyendecker/*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Giovanni di Lorenzo/*Die Zeit*, Miriam Meckel/*Wirtschaftswoche*, Frank Schirrmacher (verstorbenen Feuilletonchef der FAZ), Cordt Schnibben/ehemals *Spiegel*, EMMA-Gründerin und -Leiterin Alice Schwarzer und der jüngst verstorbene Fernsehproduzent und Dokumentarfilmer Roger Willemssen. Sie redeten Großteils vor und für Studierende der Universität Tübingen: Die Beiträge entstammen der 2003 erstmals entstandenen „Tübinger Mediendozentur“: Aus einer Kooperation der Universität Tübingen mit dem SWR Studio Tübingen entstehen Gastvorträge prominenter Medienvertreterinnen und -vertreter, im Rahmen von Workshops, studentischen Projekten und Praktika wird der dortige studentische Nachwuchs gefordert und gefördert. Für diese studentische Zielgruppe ist der Band auch zugeschnitten ebenso wie er für die „journalistischen Praktiker“ als Reflexionsanregung zu empfehlen ist.

Dies obwohl oder auch weil die vertretenen Inhalte durchaus erwartbar sind: Qualitätsjournalismus ist für die Demokratie unverzichtbar und wir dürfen uns da nicht selbst krankjammern und auch nicht vor den Zumutungen der digitalen Kommerzialisierung zurückweichen. Die Texte sind – wie man es aus dieser journalistischen Ecke auch nicht anders erwarten würde – zumeist blendend formuliert. Die Plädoyers für einen Journalismus mit Haltung (Leyendecker, Schwarzer) wird jeder gern unterschreiben, vor allem wohl in dieser abstrakten Form. Differenzierungen ergeben sich zwangsweise dort, wo die Autorinnen und Autoren konkreter werden.

Das betrifft vor allem die digitale Disruption der Medien. Für den Optimismus des Springer-Managers Döpfner, in den nächsten Jahren werde sich bei digitalen Nachrichten ein Bezahlssystem durchsetzen, welches Qualitätsjournalismus profitabel mache, fehlen bislang empirische Anhalts-

punkte. Recht hat er vermutlich mit der Beobachtung, Redakteurinnen und Redakteure würden hinkünftig „Dienstleister des Users“ (S. 57). Die Chefredakteurin und Medienökonomin Meckel erklärt in ihrem Beitrag durchaus affirmativ, worauf sich diese Serviceorientierung stützt: Reader Tracking ermöglicht „predictive analysis“ journalistischer Beiträge. Welche Headlines erregen Aufmerksamkeit, welche Stories werden wie lange konsumiert, welche Themen werden in Sozialen Netzen geteilt? (*BuzzFeed* arbeitet schon seit längerem mit mehreren Versionen einer Story, um dann jene mit den meisten Test-Clicks ins Rennen zu schicken, ist dabei höchst profitabel, allerdings nicht qualitäts- sondern reichweitenorientiert.) Geradezu entgegengesetzt argumentiert Hans Leyendecker von der *Süddeutschen Zeitung*: „Die ganz großen Gefahren entstehen dort, wo die Aufmerksamkeit die Relevanz auffrisst.“ (S. 82) Frank Schirrmacher verweist auf die Macht der digitalen Aggregatoren *Google*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, die durch ihre Algorithmen zunehmend darüber entscheiden, welche Nachrichten „ankommen“. Dem setzt er die Hoffnung entgegen, dass geistige Arbeit – im Journalismus wie an der Universität – als gesellschaftliche Leistung besser honoriert werde. Noch ein Stück weiter geht Roger Willemssen, für den Qualität der Medieninhalte darin bestünde (sie besteht seiner Meinung nach eben kaum), Komplexität nicht zu reduzieren, sondern darzustellen. Letztlich läuft sein Beitrag auf ein Plädoyer für einen elitären Qualitätsbegriff hinaus, dessen Verwirklichung an der Ignoranz sowohl der Macher wie des Publikums scheitert. Und worin besteht nun zusammengefasst die Pointe dieser „Reden zur Zukunft des Journalismus“? Als Kommunikationswissenschaftler hat man nach der Lektüre einerseits die zweifelhafte Befriedigung, dass auch „die Praxis“ keine Ahnung hat, wie journalistische Qualität in Zeiten zunehmenden ökonomischen Effizienzstrebens durchsetzbar ist. Andererseits wird – häufig bei diesem Themenbereich – auch hier die Definition journalistischer Qualität von einem Grundton von Kulturpessimismus getragen, den der ehemalige Ö1-Chef Alfred Treiber den „Hofratswitwen beiderlei Geschlechts“ zuordnete.

Roman Hummel, Salzburg



## CALL FOR PAPERS

under.docs - Fachtagung zu Kommunikation

Kategorien, Typen und Stereotype in Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften

Deadline: 11. Juli 2016

Hohe Einstiegsbarrieren, prekäre Arbeitsverhältnisse und eine schwierige Förderungslage erschweren dem wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchs in der scientific community Fuß zu fassen. Dem gilt es entgegenzuwirken. Daher veranstalten wir, das under.docs-Team, von **20. bis 22. Oktober 2016** bereits die zweite Fachtagung an der Universität Wien. Die von Studierenden organisierte Fachtagung richtet sich an StudentInnen vor und auf prae doc-Niveau, die sich aus sozial- und geisteswissenschaftlicher Perspektive mit dem Themengebiet **Kategorien, Typen und Stereotype** Bezug nehmend auf Kommunikation und/oder Medien auseinandersetzen und eine wissenschaftliche Karriere anstreben. Die Tagung versteht sich als Plattform für junge Wissenschaft, auf der abgeschlossene oder laufende Bachelor- bzw. Masterarbeiten, Dissertationen oder andere wissenschaftliche Projekte, Seminar- und Forschungsarbeiten vorgestellt, diskutiert und weiterentwickelt werden können. Wesentlich ist dabei der produktiv-wertschätzende und professionelle Austausch, der auch Möglichkeiten zur Vernetzung über die Veranstaltungstage hinaus bietet.

### Themen und Inhalte

Für die zweitägige Vortrags- und Diskussionsreihe freuen wir uns auf Einreichungen, die unterschiedlichste Aspekte von Kategorien, Typen und Stereotype in Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften beleuchten, gerne auch mit inter- und transdisziplinärem Fokus oder unkonventionellem Forschungszugang. Dabei soll der thematische Schwerpunkt der Fachtagung eine gemeinsame Perspektive bieten und kann sowohl als inhaltlich-theoretischer wie auch als methodischer Ausgangspunkt begriffen werden.

Bereits zu diesem Zeitpunkt ist eine Publikation in Form eines Tagungsbandes in Planung.

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Die Fachtagung bietet drei unterschiedliche Plattformen zur Präsentation der eingereichten Arbeiten.

**Vorträge** zu gegenwärtigen Medien- und Kommunikationsstrukturen sind ebenso erwünscht wie die Beleuchtung historischer Entwicklungen und (Dis-) Kontinuitäten. Dabei kann der Tagungsschwerpunkt breit gefasst werden.

**Workshops** richten sich an StudentInnen und JungforscherInnen, deren wissenschaftliche Projekte noch im Arbeitsprozess stehen. Die Leitung der jeweiligen Workshops wird von Post-docs sowie ProfessorInnen aus dem Fach übernommen. Thematische Schwerpunkte sind (1) Zwischen Tradierung und Dekonstruktion: Einsatz bestehender sozialer Kategorien im Forschungsprozess, (2) Machtverhältnisse als Mehrebenenthematik: Intersektionale Perspektiven auf mediale und kommunikative Phänomene sowie (3) Arbeiten mit Kategorien(systemen): Methodenmix in der sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung.

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Extended Abstracts können bis zur Deadline am **11. Juli 2016** eingereicht werden. Genaue Angaben zur Fachtagung und Einreichung finden Sie unter: <http://underdocs.univie.ac.at>



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## JOURNALISTISCHE PERSÖNLICHKEIT

Fall und Aufstieg  
eines Phänomens.  
Wolfgang Duchkowitsch,  
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Anlässlich der Emeritierung von Wolfgang R. Langenbucher (Wien) wurde im Oktober 2006 den Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Journalismus, Person und Werk nachgespürt. Davon ausgehend kommen in diesem Sammelband Autorinnen und Autoren aus Wissenschaft und journalistischer Praxis zu Wort, um den Stellenwert von Persönlichkeit im Journalismus, den Werkcharakter von journalistischen Leistungen sowie deren Kanonisierung zu erörtern.

»Journalismus« wird in diesem Band als spezifische Kulturleistung verstanden. Entgegen der herrschenden Lehre erlangen dann (wieder) Personen und ihre Biografie wissenschaftliches Interesse. Dabei gilt es auch journalistische Werke als solche (wieder) zu entdecken, die alles andere als tagesgebunden sind und die deshalb nicht einfach der Literatur (und ihrer Wissenschaft) zugeordnet werden sollten.

So mag das Postulat von Max Weber aus dem Jahre 1919 eingelöst werden, dass »eine wirklich gute journalistische Leistung mindestens so viel »Geist« beansprucht wie beispielsweise irgendeine Gelehrtenleistung«, damit unterschieden werden kann von den täglichen Mediendienleistungen – Journalismus stellt einen stabilen Eigenwert moderner Gesellschaften dar.

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Erscheinungsort Wien,  
Verlagspostamt 1180 Wien,  
2. Aufgabepostamt 1010 Wien