

ABSTRACTS & CONCEPTS

I. MEMBERS OF THE PROJECT'S TEAM

AUSTRIA:

Andrea Komlosy & Hannes Hofbauer:

Identity construction in the Balkan region – Austrian interests and involvements in a historical perspective

Our contribution will consist of the following parts:

Conceptual part:

Inter-relationship between cultural identities and the social and economic conditions (social gaps, regional imbalances, class and stratification).

Manifestations of cultural identities: ethnicity, language; ethnicity, religion: dynastic, multi-cultural understanding of cultural identity; social, revolutionary understanding of cultural identity.

Our considerations include inhabitants of the regions, (foreign) rulers (Habsburg legacy, Ottoman legacy) as well as perceptions and constructions from outside.

This part will end in a research hypothesis, which will be discussed in the second part.

Historical part:

Cultural identities in the Balkan region with regard to Austria:

- On Austrian perception of the region

- On Austrian economic and (geo)political interests and involvements in the region.

The text will be structured by major historical moments, which serve as turning points. These moments will allow us to discuss historical change without giving a complete chronological overview. We will start with the year 1878 with a short recapitulation of the preceding decades.

1878 Occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina – 1881 Abolition of the Military Border against the Ottoman Empire.

1914 Sarajevo attack – 1918 New states – new borders between Austria and SHS-Yugoslavia

Carinthian plebiscite; close economic cooperations between Austria and SHS-Yu.

1938 Ostmark expansion into Slovenia – population policies and transfers along ethnic lines (Slovenes, Gottschee people) – re-definition of the Balkan along ethnic lines and its failure in 1945; as a result of the post-WWII-order: in spite of normalization, decline of economic cooperation between Austria and Yugoslavia; at the same time Austria hosting and integrating former Ustasha-members into politics and media. Discovery of Yugoslavia as a holiday paradise and of supplier of migrant workers (Yugo guest-workers).

1990 Re-emerging Austrian interests and activities in Yugoslavia (interests following regional imbalances, cultural and historical proximities): Adoption of Slovenia as 10th Austrian federal state, Austrian interference in Slovene and Croatian affairs (energy systems, international representation, personal involvement of Austrian politicians ...), support of nation state building against Yugoslav federation and unity; Austria opening and preparing the Yugoslav market for Austrian and German firms.

2000 Austrian and (EU) shift from supporting national identities and the foundation of nation-states to the demand to “Europeanize”.

Questions to be dealt at each moment:

Austrian interests; Austrian activities (political, military, economic, cultural); Conflicts, clashes and cooperations with local (social and national movements, state and republic governments) as well as with competing international actors (Ottoman Empire, other European states); Austrian perception of cultural/national/ethno-religious identities; Impacts on internal and external perception of identities of Balkan region inhabitants.

CROATIA:

Paško Bilić:

How Social Media Enforce Glocalization

This article deals with interactions between technological, social and cultural factors through the perspective of globalization and glocalization (Robertson). In more precise terms, the process of cultural change enforced through the use of social media and seen from a global perspective is the main focus of the article. Through theoretical arguments and statistical data the article is focused on questions of redefining cultural identities through two prominent but diametrically opposite social media: Facebook and Wikipedia. We define Internet and social media as specific types of disembedding mechanisms (Giddens) which create the communication backbone of the globalization processes. The global process of media and communication change through digitalization influences our understanding of what a medium is. In an institutional (meaning the social role and function of a specific medium) and the technological dimension, it is difficult to delineate precisely the traditional and mass from social media. They are also increasingly interacting within the space opened up by the World Wide Web. This space should not be seen as a reality apart from the "real" but as an integrated part and a supplement to the media and communication environment that humans use. The case of Facebook clearly demonstrates this as the specific technological preconditions of the platform enable users to make their offline social networks visible online. In that process people re-negotiate their existing identities in an online environment. As a global-repository of human knowledge and as global memory place (Pentzold) Wikipedia also influences the process of identity re-establishment. However, it does this in an entirely different manner than Facebook. While Facebook is based on personal social networks and micro group identity management, by dealing with historical and cultural topics of national and global interest, Wikipedia redefines national identity and produces content which is publicly available in an online environment.

Jaka Primorac:

Culture of Hits vs. Culture of Niches. Cultural industries and processes of cultural identification in Croatia

Transition and transformation of the post-socialist societies have brought a shift from the homogeneous model of national cultural identity towards models that promote individual choices and tastes. The new identitarian models open towards multiplicity of value orientations as well as to the plurality of choices inside one's own culture. Cultural

deterritorialisation, translocality and cultural globalization are discussed in order to identify the context of the recent cultural changes in Croatia. An analysis of cultural consumption and cultural production then outlines the culture of hits and the niche cultures as newly emerging cultures in Croatia and in the SEE region. They emerge under the influence of new technologies and cultural industries, particularly those developed in the contemporary Western cultures.

Nada Švob-Đokić:

Cultural Identities in Southeastern Europe: A post-transitional perspective

This article addresses some aspects of cultural identification in Southeastern Europe in a post-transitional perspective. The period of post-transition is interpreted as a context of multiculturalism, cultural diversity, human rights observance and political and economic liberalism. In this context the analysis is concentrated on the structural elements of cultural space ('institutional' culture, 'independent' culture and 'market oriented' culture) that illustrate the on-going cultural changes and changes of cultural values. These occur through influences that spread from European cultures and global cultural trends which are ever more present because of new technologies, cultural industries and medialization of culture. The regional cultural communication reflects such influences and it is ever more shaped by the observance of cultural diversity and cultural industrialization. Cultural relationships are now increasingly defined through the concept of 'global multiculturalism' (Nederveen Pieterse), while cultural identification is more individualized. In all Southeastern European societies cultural identities tend to be less based in memories and histories and ever more interpreted as a confluence of the economic (market and cultural industries), the cultural (cultural heritage and history) and the political (democratization introduced through transition from socialism to a kind of liberal capitalism).

SERBIA:

Milena Dragičević Šešić:

Monument policies as cultural policies from the perspective of identity reconstruction and representation

I will work on politics of memory, its structures of remembering, repressing and forgetting as forms of "predatory nationalism" (Appadurai 2000) through the public cultural and educational system. Modified historical discourses became the norm as well as "the invention of tradition" (via construction of new ceremonies, celebrations, etc.). In different historical movements with emphasis on the period of transition (Milosevic governments - where quasi historians had been in the first ranks of publicity and mediatization, and where the press, especially the popular press de-constructed (in fact destroyed) Yugoslav secular identity as the most dangerous, threatening to the safeguarding of traditional "ethnic" Serbian identity. Still, Milosevic politics of identity construction and representation had not been successful; relying on methods and formats of socialistic representations and as such more conformed to the tastes and needs of the elderly

population (celebrations and events had absolutely had the spirit of “50” - from Gazimestan in 1989 to his inauguration as federal president in 1997).

This raising Serbian and other Balkan nationalism within official identity politics and politics of representation, especially through cultural policy methods and instruments, was questioned by numerous independent artistic and cultural projects. But, alternative, radical discourse has to find public platforms – mostly alternative media and public spaces within multicultural cities, to be communicated to the wide population but also to official cultural policy, by introducing those ideas in the public sphere. The research will focus on the contribution of the radical art movements on critical examination or creation of new identities through specific artistic discourses. The analyzed period will comprise the period of nationalism, the start of radical art movements at the beginning of 90` and then all the relevant manifestations (from Belef festival in Belgrade in between 1997-2000 and from 2001-2005) till independent group practices.

This approach will encompass three phenomena:

- New concepts of public arts policies (within cultural policies and politics of representation);
- Hybridization of concepts & uses of public spaces within urban policies and practices;
- Spread of politics of memory & musealisation in Balkan cultural policy but also in arts and life practices (Huysen, A. 2001).

Through analysis of different performances & installations, exhibitions... whose main aims were to be acts and practices not only of memory representation, but of warning, integrating the traumatic side of history in collective memory – thus, creating new identity. Starting with the hypothesis that the public arts in Belgrade throughout 90s had an ambiguous and ambivalent role, depending on the organizers' (producers') intentions, we will focus on those aspects of public arts which questioned on official policy of remembrance and representation as well as usually, by new official urban policy, suggested a concept of public space as space for entertainment and consumption.

Svetlana Jovičić:

Re-shaping of identities through youth/children cultural education policies

This contribution will be focused on cultural and educational context: re-shaping of identities through policies toward children (but also through production and cultural practices of children), mostly in Serbia, but with reference on some other practices.

SLOVENIA:

Maja Breznik:

Cultural identities from the bottom up

The rise of new nation-states in the region ironically falls in the historic moment of general dissolution of nation-states due to economic globalisation. The state is no more “the omnipotent master of its territory” (Bauman), but one field is exempted which relates control over people and determination of labour relations where “civic stratification” is paving the way for “social stratification”. The main motive behind is a reduction of labour rights in order to gain global competitiveness of a certain state in respect to “human resources”. For this reason, we have decided to approach re-questioning of cultural identities from the bottom up, from the perspective of labour

relations, taking as a subject of our examination “authors” or, in short, “creative class”. Accordingly, we will rephrase the initial question by inverting the original phase of “cultural identities” into “identity of cultural workers” and ask ourselves what would be the identity of cultural workers due to their present labour relations.

Aldo Milohnić:

Performing identities: national theatres and re-construction of identities in Slovenia and SFR Yugoslavia

In this text the author examines the role of national theatres in construction of identities in Slovenia and, rather sporadically, in other countries of the former Yugoslavia. This research question is contextualized in a historical overview, starting from first historical examples in a wider European context, followed by establishing of first national theatres in Zagreb, Novi Sad, Ljubljana and Belgrade in mid 19th century and continuing with national theatre reforms in the last century: introduction of a threefold system of state, regional and municipal national theatres after collapsing of the Habsburg Empire and establishing of the Kingdom of SHS, emerging of many new national theatres in SFR Yugoslavia after the WWII and the role imposed on national theatres by cultural politics of new national states after dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. This historical approach is combined with analysis of cultural, social and political position of national theatres in rather turbulent and nationalistic atmosphere dominated by exclusivist, radical political forces. Besides this critical reading of theatrical “identity politics” in newly established states, predominantly in Slovenia, some other aspects are briefly discussed, i.e. relations between national theatre and so-called ‘independent’ (or ‘non-institutional’) theatre, subsidies and other financial incentives of national theatres on several examples of national theatres in Slovenia and Croatia, etc.

Brankica Petković:

Instrumentalisation of language and media policies for re-positioning of Ex-Yugoslav cultural identities in Slovenia

With the gaining of independence and the adoption of the new constitution, all provisions that pertained to other nations of the former Yugoslavia, including the provision on language, were left out of the new legal and formal framework in Slovenia.

Although many of these people (to be more precise, 171,132 persons) acquired Slovenian citizenship on the grounds of permanent residence in Slovenia, and despite the commitment on the part of the Assembly of the RS stated in the Declaration of Good Intentions preceding the plebiscite in December 1990 that the Slovenian state would ensure “to all members of other nations the right to multifarious cultural and linguistic development,” the status and the situation of other languages of the former Yugoslavia remained unregulated. The language policy of the newly formed state simply did not take into account this language situation.

If we regard language policy as one of the mechanisms of national integration and take into account Močnik’s thesis that “national identification occurs as an identification with the subject of national language competence” (Močnik 1998), it is possible to conclude that peoples of the former Yugoslavia in Slovenia along with their languages are those non-integrated “remnants”

which were excluded from the internal cultural and social division in the process of the construction of the Slovenian national identity and national state and remained outside the cultural borders.

The dominant viewpoints, ideologies and practices contribute to the invisibility of these communities and their resources, particularly their cultures and languages. To borrow from Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1995), for these communities their resources have been turning into non-resources. Although their knowledge of a mother tongue should be an asset and part of their credentials, in the present social circumstances and linguistic reality, this is almost a handicap and a source of stigma.

The situation has been accordingly reflected in the media policy through absence of measures and actions aimed at regular production of media program content that would reflect specific social and cultural situation of these communities.

Our paper will examine how language situation of other nations of the former Yugoslavia in Slovenia has changed with independence of Slovenia, how it affected specific post-Yugoslav reconstruction and re-positioning of cultural identities, and how it is supported by the media system in Slovenia.

II. GUEST SPEAKERS / DISCUSSANTS

Sezgin Boynik:

Cultural policy of art collectives

In my presentation I will deal with the contemporary approaches (Chantal Mouffe, Charles Esche, Maria Lind) on the collective and collaborative art practices. The main thesis of my presentation is that the non-antagonistic relations of collectives, which is the common nominator of these approaches, have crucial ideological and political implications. I will discuss this approach regarding to the collective art practices in the post-Yugoslavian states (mostly in Croatia), and their ideological implications related to the conception of self-management socialism and transition from socialism to capitalism.

Vladimir Davčev:

How modern technology shape-shifting our identity

In modern society, virtual reality is part of our social reality. For most people, the Internet is more of a medium than a technology. Moreover, it is a shape-shifting, borderless medium firmly in the hands of ordinary citizens bent on turning it to extraordinary ends. The anonymity of cyberspace enables an endless space of possible identities that humans can construct in online communication. Online characters are an expression of real-world experiences, desires, fantasies, and ideas; they are connected to the offline world. If we know the endowment of an individual with the different types of capital, we can't deduce

his or her online identities. Thus, cyberspace offers a niche for each of these specific facets of selfhood. Some people even talk about how we can "deconstruct" ourselves online. The desire to remain anonymous reflects the need to eliminate those critical features of our identity that we do NOT want to display in that particular environment or group. The desire to lurk – to hide completely – indicates the person's need to split off his entire personal identity from his observing of those around him: he wants to look, but not be seen.

Jasmina Husanović:

Culture of trauma and identity politics: Critical frames and emancipatory lenses of cultural and knowledge production

This presentation reflects on the ways forward in recent knowledge production encircling the gestures of repoliticisation within the cultural politics of memory in the (post)Yugoslav space. It builds on several critical insights and important heuristic tools provided in the respective analyses by panel speakers concerning visual and performative cultural production (monuments, theatre...) in the wider context of identitarian regimes of managing affect in the Yugoslav successor-states, caught in a complex 'transitional' ethnonationalist-neoliberal dynamics. The author's aim is to focus on the emancipatory potentials for challenging the culturalisation of trauma within the therapeutic paradigm of governance as an ideological mechanism for the perpetuation of sovereign and identitarian terror (inter)nationally (using select empirical lenses of current conundrums of memory and identity politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina). In this regard, the presentation will attempt to gear the discussion towards the importance of artistic and scholarly interventions interrogating the politics of abject, affect, revolt and collectivity in the SFRY and post-SFRY context which traverse petrified ideological straitjackets of cultural politics today.

Svetlana Racanović:

Repetition of difference – search for instable identity

Transition from a cultural paradigm strongly marked by traditional and national values toward international, global cultural context as well as post-transitional situation which follows, is a process marked by many cracks, twists, quakes and ambiguities which make this transfer of values less smooth, less certain and less successful in terms of constitution of stable, coherent and controllable cultural identity. Creation of identity as a state of free floating, of unstable liaisons, unexpected couplings, and of constant production of Difference, recommends itself as a strategy for "New Age".