

CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE BALKANS: Convergence vs. Divergence Abstracts

Centre for Southeast European Studies (Ghent)

General informations:

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Linguistic Approaches

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Turkisms, Balkan Identity, and Balkan Linguistic Ideologies

Although the concept of ›substratum influence‹ was crucial in the initial theorizing of the Balkan linguistic league, and morpho-syntactic convergence is taken by linguists today as the chief defining factor, it is arguable that the shared lexical component which entered the Balkan languages from or via Turkish is a more salient unifying factor in terms of the way ordinary people think about language. At the same time, the status of Turkisms has risen and fallen and risen again in response to external events. I shall examine the symbolic deployment of Turkisms as signs in various types of identity formation and in linguistic ideologies, i.e. in the ideas that people have about language and language use. I shall show that Turkish continues to be a site for the exercise of lexical and symbolic power and contestation in the Balkans even ninety years after Turkey in Europe was reduced to the territory of eastern Thrace, but the symbolism changes according to a number of variables. The object of puristic movements during nation-state formation (even in Turkey itself, since many of these words were of Arabo-Persian origin), this same vocabulary was used to signify democracy in post 1989 ex-communist Balkan countries. Among the exceptions to this trend are former Serbo-Croatian-speaking Yugoslavia, where Turkisms became entangled in the Wars of Succession, and the newly emerging Aromanian and Romani standard languages, where Turkisms have become symbolic capital not in anti-establishmentarianism but in its opposite, namely, the construction of an establishment. There is also the question of the interface between Turkish and the Christian/Muslim divide, which is not a matter of simple one-on-one mapping. Furthermore, despite the usual emphasis on Turkisms as a shared component in the Balkan linguistic league, there are also important divergences in the selection of Turkish vocabulary in the individual languages. Thus, for example, an examination of the best dictionaries of Turkisms in Serbo-Croatian and Bulgarian shows that over a third of the Turkish vocabulary in one language is not shared with the other. Finally, I shall also discuss how ideology affects scholarship on Turkisms.

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Linguistic Divergence and (Re-)Convergence in the Macedonian Standard/Dialect-Continuum

This paper compares the linguistic development in Vardar- and Aegean Macedonia diachronically by using the model of divergence and (re-)convergence: The historical region of Macedonia after 1913 was divided by culturally highly ambiguous political borders which tended to create new linguistic borders, when Serbian (in Vardar-Macedonia) and Greek (in Aegean Macedonia) became the umbrella languages for the local vernaculars. This asymmetry was aggravated by the most important step of Macedonian nation building after 1944, the implementation of the Macedonian standard language, which only by means of the Communist partisan press spilled over into Greece during the Greek Civil War.

After 1989 we observe osmotic interrelations between the two existing Macedonian identity models, the national Tito-Yugoslav and the local one of the Slavic-speaking minority in Greece (where Macedonianness is a synonym of indigeneity).

The crucial point is to work out the mechanisms (language, symbols, politics of memory) of the Macedonian cross-border cohesion which in the last 10 years has led to a slow and partial ethnicisation and even nationalisation of Greece's Slavic minority towards the Republic of Macedonia, especially in the centre of the ›ethnic revival‹, i.e. the border region of Florina.

Public transport coming from the railway station: Main station Ghent St. Pieters: tram 1-10-11-12 to the Korenmarkt. General information about public transport: www.nmbs.be

Coming by car: Ghent is on the cross of the E17 and the E40. Take the B401 into Ghent. When you come from the coast or from Bruges it can be confusing. Don't take the turn Gent St. Denijs (14) or the turn Gent-Zwijnaarde (15) but follow the direction Gent-Antwerpen. If you enter Ghent via the B41 and this will lead you right to the center. Follow the yellow P(arking)-route. P7, the St-Michielsparking is situated at 50 m. from the conference center.

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A map of Ghent and useful information on accommodation and hotels in walking distance from the conference venue can be found on <http://www.gent.be/gent/english/>. For additional information, contact Mrs Inge Claerhout: e-mail: inge.claerhout@UGent.be; tel.: +32 / 9 / 264 38 46; fax +32 / 9 / 264 38 10).

This can be seen from the publications of the *RAINBOW-party of National Macedonians* which officially started in 1989 as a typical indigenous movement with an exclusively local frame of reference, whereas the movement's publications during the 1990s are brought into line with the press of the Canadian and Australian Macedonian diaspora, joining the global ethnic network (described by Danforth 1995 and representing a prototype case of Appadurai's ethnoscares 1996). The message of this paper is to contest the functioning of language as the central symbol of ethnic boundaries, since the subjective feeling of social exclusion is at the very core of Macedonian identity in Greece.

On the northern side of the border, the political and cultural revisionism of the pro-Bulgarian government of Ljubco Georgievski (VMRO-DPMNE) 1998-2002 brought to an end the ideal of linguistic equidistance followed by Blaze Koneski after 1944: This openly anti-Serbian linguistic policy (e.g. the daily TV emission *Govorete makedonski* 2000-2002) corresponds to the phenomenon of post-communist language planning corrections (comparable to Clyne 1997 *Undoing and Redoing Corpus Planning*), in our case it leads to a linguistic rapprochement with the Bulgarian standard and the roofless dialects, too.

This paper resumes some results of my habilitation project *Linguistic Convergence and Divergence in the Macedonian Standard/Dialect-Continuum. Language Planning, Language use and Language Attitudes in Vardar- and Aegean Macedonia during the 20th Century*, including impressions of several fieldwork stays in the region between 2000 and 2003 as well as results of the conference *Minorities in Greece. Historical Perspectives and New Issues*, organised by Sevasti Trubeta and me in Berlin in January 2003.

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Language Ideology of Serbs in Bela krajina: Between Balkan Values and European Modernity

In the Slovenian southern region Bela Krajina there are four Orthodox Serbian speaking villages: Bojanci, Milici, Paunovici, and Marindol. These villages are inhabited by Serbs – descendants of Uskoks, renegade refugees from the Ottoman Empire, who have settled down since 1526 in several migration waves. Most of them were included into the framework of the Habsburg Military Border, while the major part of Bela Krajina became the border's hinterland. These villages are settled near to the Croatian border and are surrounded by Slovene speaking settlements.

Although outside of the area which is commonly designated as the Balkans, these four villages in Slovenia are considered to be part of »Balkan patriarchal culture«, both for the cultural heritage and shared social values and norms prevailing among their inhabitants. The Orthodox, Serbian-speaking population of the four villages have managed to preserve their native vernacular, and religious and cultural identity for more than five centuries, mainly because of very strict social rules restricting interactions with the surrounding Slovene-speaking, Catholic population. Significant social changes that took place in the middle of 20th century caused by industrialization and deagrarianization, resulted increased mobility of population emergence of intermarriages and consequently in a rapid decline in use of the native vernacular among these Serbs, which is being replaced by the dominant Slovenian idiom. The present situation indicates a contact-induced language shift: only the oldest generation of inhabitants has a full, native-like competence in Serbian, the middle generation speaks it occasionally, mainly in communication with their parents, while children in these villages understand their Serbian speaking grand-parents, but almost always respond to them in Slovene.

On the basis of a number of narratives recorded among Serbs in Bela Krajina, I will try to outline basics of their language ideology, i.e. explicit or implicit representations of language read out from community's linguistic practice, metapragmatic discourse by which speakers interpret their own language behavior, and from shared representations related to power structures.

Understood as a cultural conceptualization of language which has the social dimension and is necessarily related to social power, the language ideology of the Serbian community in Bela Krajina can clearly show the way in which its members deal with dialectic relationship between a positive cultural stance towards the native language, which advocates the integrity of the language and speech community, and a pragmatism concerning sociocultural and linguistic change which adopts a course of action in which modernization and the urban developments take priority over traditionalism.

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Vlaski language and Vlaski Identity in the Vidin Region (Bulgaria)

The paper shows the relation between identity and the spoken language/(s). The people from the Vidin region are connecting their identity with their use of two different languages (Bulgarian and a Romanian dialect called Vlaski).

It seems that the people from the villages (Kapitanovti and Pokraina were we had the fieldwork) can be grouped in three categories upon how they connect their identity with their Vlaski use.

The relationship between »to be« and »to speak«

- I. In several cases, the two verbs are overlapping. Those who declare themselves as Romanians based on their Romance language belong to the peripheral categories of system constructed on the bases of national symbolical order, in our case Bulgarian nation. In this category, we include the persons that were not socialized in the Bulgarian educational system (generally speaking, the ones who were born in inter-war period or earlier). Still, their connection to urban life has not been permanent, their main occupation being agriculture and other adjacent activities (the selling of agricultural products at the market was/is a secondary one).
Urban space belongs also to official system of power represented by office-workers and strangers.
- II. On intermediary level, there are the ones who distinguish between to be and to speak and have a problematic identity. Though they use the language, they perceive such a linguistic identity as a factor of exclusion even for their children from the social structure. Therefore, the use of Vlaski language may correspond to a danger of social exclusion; that's why the younger generations keep their children apart from Vlaski dialect. At the discursive level this matter is expressed through »not to spoil childrens' language«. To spoil the language meaning to pollute one's language symbolically represents a potential of exclusion that can decrease one's chances of access to the state social system.
- III. There is the third category of subjects, for whom to speak it doesn't have any link with to be. To speak in Vlaski or Romanian is, at discursive level, just another language that can be used or not in utilitarian way. For those people to speak Vlaski doesn't interact at all with to be Vlaski, and for this reason they don't perceive any danger to their national identity. They are declaring themselves as Bulgarians though they use the Vlaski dialect in different proportions compared with the older generations. In this category, I enclosed both people who were active in urban centers, in this way they were/are separated from the community of their parents, and children who have learnt to speak Vlaski from their grandparents as a curiosity. Their parents are probably Vlaski speakers who don't use it, even in the family.

Thus a specific connotation of the Vlaski language system is strongly connected with the symbolic system to which a person is involved in.

People use many systems of signs (signification systems) more or less connected for dealing with different linguistic, ethnic, or some identities like Romanian/Bulgarian, villager/city man, old/new, traditional/modern.

The three categories determine them to make connections between Vlaski language and self-identity (defined as the relationship between the two verbs to speak and to be) correspond to three ways of manage with two symbolical systems.

A local community, a specific dialect, and the peasant life style define one. The other defined by modern institution of the national state, national language and urban space as politic and economic center.

What remains to discuss is the relationship between the symbolic system of Romanian national state and Vlachs communities. What turns out from our study is the absence of any dispute over the relationship, we didn't meet people having a feeling of belonging to Romanian nation.

Despite the attempt of homogenizing made by Bulgarian national state the local and

previous symbolic system still survives. However it is re-signified under the new social interactions that emerge across local and national boundaries. The relatively recent re-implication of the politic and economic power of the national states as well as the supra-national organizations (i.e. the European Union) concerning the re-structuring of these new re-signification processes can be study and approached.

Anthropological Approaches

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Cultural Identities in the Borderlands of the Balkans

This paper deals with cultural and social identification and group formation in the borderlands of the Balkans, where the existing ethnic and religious lines of division have always been felt most accutely. Ger Duijzings will draw from his own research in areas such as Kosovo and (eastern) Bosnia , and he will demonstrate how processes of both convergence and divergence, fission and fusion, have been at work here. Furthermore, he will show that in borderlands (or »ethnic shatter zones«) identities tend to be less fixed and more fluid, and that processes of cultural divergence and convergence are more salient here than elsewhere. One of the examples which will be used to illustrate these phenomena of shifting and multiple identities is the case of the Albanian crypto-Catholics. This case also shows that new principles of identification or »groupness« have emerged in the Balkans, and that there has been a general shift from religiously defined identities during the Ottoman period to ethnically defined »national« identities in the 20th century.

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Convergence and Divergence in Balkan Folk and Local Professional Music

One of the first scholars to deal with the interaction between the Balkan languages was Kristian Sandfeld. Similar interactions, affecting larger or smaller areas, can be observed in other spheres of culture. They are due to contacts between neighboring or intermingled peoples or language groups, or to the influence of powerful cultural and political centers in the Roman, Byzantine and later Ottoman, Habsburg and Russian Empires and the Italian lands. As concerns music, the resulting common features can be described in terms of metres, modality, harmony, instruments, the use of vocal and instrumental techniques, and textual elements.

With the gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire and the spread of Enlightenment and Romanticism to the various Balkan areas, there developed a trend towards an own identity and political, religious, linguistic and cultural autonomy or even independence. Within this framework belongs the production of dictionaries, grammars, textbooks and even alphabets of the various languages, and the collection of folklore in its manifold manifestations. An important ideological role in nationalism, both political and scholarly, was attributed to old memories which were recovered, reconstructed, or even newly invented. This resulted in competing claims on territory or cultural heritage.

The tendency towards delimitation of national identity, in most Balkan countries for decades combined with Socialist nationalism, but simultaneously countered by reverse trends of unification and regional or even global openness, has remained actual until the present day. And it has so on different levels (from states to individuals) and in numerous fields. In this paper I want to discuss its consequences for what we generally call post-war »Balkan music« – a term which already implies some sort of unification.

1. Many scholars, writers, composers, arrangers and players had to work in difficult circumstances, but tried to offer the best of the talents they had.
2. In the new, postwar Socialist states and some new Soviet republics, a number of State Folk Ensembles were formed, adapted to an existing Soviet model. They created a normative »national folk culture«, and had some image building value for export. One of their typical characteristics is the »scaling up« of traditional ensembles to symphonic

dimensions. Simultaneously, existing rural and urban traditions managed to survive in various degrees, and new ones developed, often seeking (or restoring?) contacts with neighbouring countries or the West. Western genres were adopted and imitated, and fusions between Balkan and Western music appeared.

3. Textual themes which fitted national conscience were placed on the foreground, newly composed pieces glorifying the national past, socialist society or national unity appeared. Similar developments took place in the new states of former Yugoslavia, where people have always been sensitive about the origin of tunes and the associations they bear.
4. Pre-existing musical instruments were adapted and claimed as national. In the 1870's, this happened in Hungary. More recent examples are found in Russia and postwar Bulgaria.
5. Ancient 'transnational' elements were claimed as purely national. In times of territorial tensions songs from beyond the disputed frontier were incorporated.
6. On a local scale, folklore – as any other form of culture – was firmly directed and controlled by 'culture houses'.
7. Research by foreigners was subjected to strict regulations, and in the 1970's Romania declared the music of the Transylvanian Hungarians a state secret, in order to avoid Hungarian revivalists stirring up national feelings. But the right contact could always create unexpected possibilities, as people tended to hover between conformism and hospitality.
8. In non-Communist Greece, the (uncontrollable) rebetiko tragoudi was dealt a severe blow when it was forbidden by the colonel regime of 1967-1974. Singing in (Slavic) Macedonian often proved hazardous.

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La magie chez les populations balkaniques: convergences et divergences

Travaillant depuis quelques années dans le cadre de mon séminaire de l'EHESS de Paris (*Histoire moderne et contemporaine des musulmans balkaniques*) sur la magie chez les musulmans des Balkans, j'ai eu l'occasion de regarder une très importante documentation sur la magie en général dans cette région – concernant donc non seulement les populations musulmanes, mais également les populations catholiques et orthodoxes de la Péninsule.

Parmi les premières constatations qui ressortent de cet examen en cours, la principale est que la magie dans le monde musulman, et en particulier chez les musulmans balkaniques, montre une sophistication incomparablement plus grande que chez les chrétiens. Elle repose sur une littérature à la fois ancienne et abondante et sur des pratiques très variées et très élaborées, liées notamment à des croyances dans la valeur numérique des lettres et dans l'existence des djinns. Cependant, il existe des éléments similaires. Et il n'a jamais été rare de voir des fidèles d'une religion venir consulter des spécialistes d'une autre religion.

Dans la communication annoncée, je voudrais aborder rapidement ces phénomènes et essayer de présenter quelques remarques sur ces divergences et ces convergences, tant sur le plan des théories et systèmes, que sur le plan du «matériel» et du rituel magique, à travers la documentation concernant les XIXe et XXe siècles.

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Christian and Muslim Converts from the Balkans in Early Modern Venice: Patterns of Social and Cultural Mobility and Identities

After the consolidation of the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century, the Republic of Venice maintained strong commercial links to the Ottoman Balkans. Early modern Venice became a popular destination for individuals and groups, ranging from itinerant merchants to mercenaries from the Balkans. Throughout the same period, Venice witnessed the influx of individuals and families from the Balkans, of such diverse religious background, as Christian Orthodox, Muslim and Jewish, who reached Venice and, appearing before the tribunal of the Inquisition of the city or other ecclesiastical institutions, such as the House of Converts (Casa

dei Catecumeni), they asked to embrace Catholicism. Before arriving to Venice , those individuals' and groups' religious background had often been shaped by earlier voluntary or not conversions, mainly from Christianity to Islam. Before the Inquisition, those people provided accounts of their past and explained their motives for wishing to become Catholics.

Their narratives allow us to reconstruct the lives of that obscure group of people from the Balkans who during their lives moved from one religion to another. Through those narratives my paper explores the social and cultural identities of those individuals and groups. It illustrates that the cultural identities of those people, despite their diverse religious background, had been shaped by a notion of ›convergence‹ that is demonstrated in the common patterns of crossing religious boundaries. The paper points out that in those conversions to Catholicism, certain groups figure prominently, which, despite their different religious background, in their decision to assume the Catholic identity were determined by their social position and profile. Additionally, the paper discusses how people from the Balkans, either Muslims or Christians, who stayed permanently or for short periods in the unfamiliar and often unfriendly environment of Venice, adopted a sense of »Balkan identity«, either through close business association, marriage and wider networks, or in geographical patterns of residence that they developed in the city.

My paper is based on archival material drawn from the Venetian State and Patriarchal Archives.

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A Case of Divergent Convergence: The Cultural Identity of Romaniote Jewry

The impact of Ancient Greek civilization and its successor, the Byzantine Empire, on Balkan Jewry is known to be both deeply penetrating and all-embracing. Its most important consequence for the later historical developments was the language shift, namely the transition of Balkan Jewish communities from the Aramaic/Greek or Hebrew/Greek diglossia to the Greek monolinguisism. Even after the 9th century, when Biblical Hebrew regained its status of main heritage language, the religious instruction was given in colloquial Greek, and Greek continued to be used in the liturgy.

During the pre-modern era the common language can be said to smooth over the religious difference, to certain degree. The Romaniotes were deeply influenced by the surrounding Greek Orthodox society, as they pursued rural occupations, owned domestic animals and enjoyed freedom of dwelling inside the towns. Almost in all the spheres of their everyday life (seasonal festivals, family celebrations, marriage rites, legal practices, etc.) they became profoundly assimilated. The Greek folklore provided the basic building elements for various forms of the Romaniote creative writing, including the poems written in Hebrew. The liturgical music of Romaniotes was recognized as Balkan-inspired by its investigators A. Shiloah and L. Levi. The affect of the mainstream Greek culture on the elite Romaniote learning of the late Byzantine period was noticed by S. Bowman, Z. Ankori and others.

However, many of the abovementioned phenomena were mistakenly described as »Christian influences«, while they should be called, after S. Vryonis , »religious balkanisms« or rather »cultural balkanisms«. Widespread throughout the peninsula, they were not limited neither to Greek nor to Orthodox population.

Modern era was not particularly favorable for the development of Romaniote identity, as the options for divergence became extremely limited. In the new Greek national state the Romaniotes had equal rights with the rest of population and were rapidly integrated into new networks. Yet the Romaniote Jews could not claim any form of political or administrative autonomy, as they were few. They could not develop separate linguistic identity since the image of their sociolect (like that of other Greek dialects) was purely negative. The current sociolinguistic situation encouraged them to cultivate Standard Greek (see e.g., the poetry of Yosef Eliya). As a result, no literary form of Judeo-Greek has ever been created. A divergence was still possible in the realm of religion, but the latter was dominated by the Sefaradim, the Spanish-speaking newcomers – and thus not sufficiently Romaniote. Besides, Judaism was rapidly losing its importance in the modern world, so that the Romaniotes influenced by European haskala voted for learning French rather than Hebrew.

Toward the middle of the 20th century, the unique Romaniote identity has been largely replaced by the more encompassing identity of Greek Jewry.

Historical Approaches (1)

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Convergences et divergences dans le nationalisme à travers l'exemple albanais

Dans cette communication, il s'agira de reconsidérer l'idée selon laquelle les convergences concernent principalement la culture populaire, tandis que les divergences sont davantage situées au niveau de la *Hochkultur* et des constructions idéologiques, en particulier des constructions identitaires nationales.

A travers l'exemple du nationalisme albanais, je voudrais en effet montrer d'abord comment, dans les processus de construction d'identité nationale, les divergences ne concernent pas seulement la »fabrication« des altérités avec d'autres groupes ethnico-nationaux, mais qu'elles se trouvent aussi dans les différentes façons de construire l'identité nationale à partir d'autres types d'identité pré-existantes.

Dans un second temps, je voudrais également montrer que ces processus de construction identitaire résultent de convergences. D'une part l'ingénierie de ces promoteurs fait appel à des outils empruntés aux promoteurs d'autres identités nationales. D'autre part, il a existé et il existe des constructions hybrides, qui ont tendu à combiner différentes identités ethnico-nationales, mais qui sont souvent moins repérables, du fait d'un courant divergent dominant, et moins durables. Pour donner un exemple, l'albanisme s'est d'abord développé en grande partie au sein même de l'hellénisme.

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Constructing and Deconstructing a Common Balkan Past in Nineteenth Century Greece

The making of modern Greek national ideology and tradition was certainly part of the ›divergence process‹ in the Balkans. Greeks gained their independence and built their modern state on the arguments and grounds of Hellenic antiquity, which secured for them a golden age in the past and a distinctive culture in the future. However their ancient cultural glory and distinctiveness contradicted their participation in the Balkan cultural commonwealth. By doing so it certainly negated Greek irredentism and even undermined the prospects for co-operation. Was it possible to retain the Balkan entity without renouncing the Hellenic past? Some Greeks thought it was, through the vision of an Eastern Federation (or at least through bilateral co-operations) based on assumed ethnic kinship, Orthodoxy and anti-Turkism. However, their vision gradually came into sharp contrast with the formation of other Balkan nations.

Through a variety of literary sources (which include political brochures, caricatures, magazines and newspapers) this paper examines how 19th century Greeks saw, commented, and interpreted this »incomprehensible« process from the 1830s until the days of the Balkan Wars. For many reasons divergence from what was regarded as a common past was indeed an ideological drama. Firstly it involved the rise of independent nations which did not satisfy the Greek criteria and did not fit in the Greek view of Balkan »national geneology«. Furthermore it implied conflict of political interests, the rise of anti-hellenism in varying degrees, a fierce Balkan counter-offensive on disputed ethnic grounds, the disappearance of the Greek language from the Balkan urban centres and, the worst, the rapid assimilation of Greece's Balkan Diaspora, a capital overestimated before the 1850s.

The overall argument is that, although the making of the Balkan ›other‹ was clearly nothing more than a reflection of the making of the Greek ›self‹, Greeks failed to evaluate and explain the negation of a common past without invoking dubious conspiratorial theories and historical argument. Through such arguments resentment became traditional, the quest for a common past undesirable and, in the end, divergence absolutely natural.

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Tsarigrad/Istanbul and the Spatial Construction of Bulgarian National Identity in the 60's and 70's of the 19th Century

The paper explores the spatial discourses, participating in the construction of Bulgarian national identity in the third quarter of 19th century. The starting assumption was that building up of a nation identity entails re-working of the local, place-bound identities and successful »merging« of the lived spatial experience with the abstract homogeneous »territory« of the nation, symbolically represented as the common »homeland«. In this respect the representations of Tsarigrad/Istanbul in the Bulgarian public space of the 19th century seems to be a promising field of research. The specific »extraterritorial« position of Tsarigrad in regard with the imaginary and non-imaginary Bulgarian borders, combined with the presence of a large Bulgarian community in the Ottoman capital made it a center of different »mappings« and identification strategies. Tsarigrad (literally »The City of the Kings«) could be regarded as a spatial node, generating different political projects which undermine the nationalistic ideological vision.

In the 60's and the 70's Tsarigrad has been employed as a repository of images for the negative construction of collective identity. Negative exactly as in the photography. Tsarigrad has been forced to participate in the formation of a normative standard what the Bulgarian(s) should be. In the satiric writings of Hristo Botev and Lubn Karavelov Tsarigrad was presented as a center of very strange map – a map of »dark places«, signifying deviation and sexual pervertnes. The crucial feature of these places – and the harem as most important and frequently used at the time – was their presumed resistance to the gaze of the normative public discourse. Everything that is happening »secretly« cannot be legitimized – as far the modern legitimization of power is funded in the public opinion. Thus the harem becomes the emblematic counterpart of the patriarchal Home. The imagery of lewdness makes the moral decay and the system of power inseparable. The map of lewdness connects in a menacing network all the »dark places« of sexual excess and perverted deeds. This map consists not only of harems and coffeehouses, but of monasteries, brothels (brought to life with the progress of the railroads) and even factories. By representing both the administration and the social progress in terms of sexual perversion, Botev and Karavelov were trying by all means to mock and discredit the idea of the possible cohabitation between the Bulgarians and the other ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire, especially the Turks. Tsarigrad was »the world upside down«, as an un-homely place it was opposed to the »true Homeland«, represented by figures like »fatherly fireside« etc. There should be no »mixing| and conterescting« between the imaginary territories and the supposed ethnic identities – it was the crucial claim of the nationalistic discourse.

There were alternative political projects however, born within the context of the struggle for ecclesiastical independence, which took Tsarigad as their symbolic and institutional center. For example, the so called »Turkophiles« were convinced liberals, proposing a totally different map, envisioning the Bulgarians as an integral part of the modernized Turkey. The institutional practice of the Bulgarian Exarchate (the independent ecclesiastical body, established after the Sultan's Firman in 1870) provided another spatial model, differing from that of the newly established Bulgarian state. Tsarigrad wasn't only the opposite of the »true Bulgarianness« – it was seriously considered as the political and symbolical center of the Bulgarian nation. After the Russian-Turkish war in 1877-78 and the establishment of the Bulgarian Principality however, these political and cultural projects proved to be in very compromised position.

To put it shortly, the representations of Tsarigrad took active part in the construction of the homogeneous national space and rigidly defined cultural identity. It generated, however, alternative discourses as well, which deconstruct the normative ideological vision of »pure« Bulgarian territory and identity.

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A Mixing of Cultural Identities: The Croatian Borderlands in the 19th Century

The question of how cultural identity has developed in the Balkans is perhaps most intriguing in those areas where peoples lived together in mixed communities before the advent of nationalism. My research into the Croatian part of the Habsburg Military Frontier, where Serb and Croat peasants lived side by side for centuries, exemplifies how such mixing made for ambiguous notions of cultural identity. While a few aspects of life in the Military Frontier reveal similarities with other peasants in the Balkan lands, it was far more common that the notion of cultural identity was extremely localized. In my paper, I intend to present one aspect of my research and share my findings concerning customs among Serb and Croat peasants in the 19th century.

This research reveals that by sharing many of the same experiences and interacting on a daily basis, some Serb and Croat traditions seem to have changed in response to their new environment on the Military Border, converged and thus increasingly resembled each another. For instance, a similar oral tradition in which rather prosaic themes dominated was certainly held in common, but many songs also paid tribute to the shared military heroics of both Serb and Croat peasants against Ottoman domination. Some of this oral literature was also widely shared among peasants throughout the Balkans. Forms of entertainment, such as marriage and dances varied in detail from one village to the next but also display general patterns common to other rural peoples. Rituals connected to agricultural pursuits also reveal traditions that were shared not only with one another but with rural folk throughout the wider Balkan region. Dress is especially interesting for it reveals the significance of geography, gender and social class in determining a people's choice of apparel. Choice of dress reveals how problematic it is to impose any generalizations on the nature of similarities or differences in customs.

The reality of rural life was extremely diverse and a number of competing factors shaped Serb and Croat customs. Any attempt to determine whether these customs fit the pattern of convergence or divergence is consequently fraught with difficulties. While folk customs were certainly non-national in the 19th century Military Frontier, it is also erroneous to suggest that ›convergence‹ characterises these customs. More often than not, cultural identity was a reflection of the peasant's specific rural milieu. An empirical analysis of that milieu reveals that for the 19th century peasant in the Croatian Military Frontier, cultural identity was above all localised – in other words a marker of one's place of origin.

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Alien by Default: The Identity of the Turks of Bulgaria at Home and in Immigration

By the end of 1984 the communist authorities in Bulgaria launched an assimilation campaign against the Turkish minority in the country, aimed at the overt change of their identity and their ultimate Bulgarisation. This campaign, known as the *Revival Process*, lasted until the autumn of 1989 and was admittedly considered among the major reasons for the fall of the communist government in the country. The last months of this assimilation policy were marked by mass migration of Turkish families from Bulgaria to Turkey – within three months from June through September 1989 over 350 000 Turks left Bulgaria, and more than half of these returned to their homeplaces by the end of the same year. In the early 1990s this migration continued on a limited scale, resulting in the formation of a considerable community of new immigrants from Bulgaria in Turkey .

This paper discusses how the identities of Bulgaria born Turks are shaped and reshaped in critical situations and under the impact of certain official politics of identity. This is viewed at a local level and from within the group of interest – the Turks of Bulgaria. How are their shared images and identity strategies constructed in everyday culture? What is the role of language, kinship, religion and local affiliation in their identity constructions? How do Bulgarian born Turks cope with their position of being always ›Others‹ – both in their country of birth and in the country of immigration? What are the shifting meanings of ›Turkishness‹?

These questions are commented in the paper on the basis of fieldwork observations and interviews carried out in certain local communities in Northeastern and Southeastern Bulgaria, as well as in the city of Izmir in Turkey. Two types of strategies of identification and cultural adaptation are compared – of Bulgaria's Turks who returned and/or stayed in their country of birth, and of others who permanently settled down in the Republic of Turkey. It is clear in both cases that ethnicity is rather insignificant in ingroup identity constructions. Other components, such as kinship, gender, religious and local affiliations, varying in significance with regard to the particular context, determine their position in local and official social categorisations. Ethnicity is as a rule introduced and enhanced in everyday discourses by means of official nationalist rhetorics. The case of the Turks of Bulgaria also demonstrates the flexibility of identity and reveals how the concept of »pure« identities, sustained both in official and popular culture, is challenged and denied in actual intergroup contacts.

Historical Approaches (2)

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The Bulgarian-Macedonian Divergence: Why Does It Look So Complicated?

La divergence bulgare-macédonienne: dénouer le nœud gordien?

La notion de divergence est particulièrement opératoire pour rendre compte des relations bulgare-macédoniennes. D'abord parce qu'elle neutralise les deux approches essentialistes: les Bulgares et les Macédoniens seraient, par essence, un seul et même peuple (Sofia); les Macédoniens seraient, par essence, différents des Bulgares (Skopje). D'autre part, la divergence se définit comme un processus, donc elle s'inscrit dans la durée historique.

La divergence bulgare-macédonienne devient un fait avéré en 1944-45, mais ce repère chronologique ne représente ni le début, ni l'aboutissement du processus: c'est juste la ligne de flottaison de l'iceberg. Le processus de divergence se poursuit encore de nos jours.

La question de la périodisation, et particulièrement celle de l'apparition des premiers indices significatifs, pose un problème très intéressant pour les historiens. Les principaux jalons chronologiques sont: les années 60 du XIXe siècle, 1878, 1893, 1903, 1913, 1918, 1944, 1991. L'importance de ces jalons pour la partie macédonienne et la partie bulgare respectivement reste à discuter. En effet, les deux parties ne se meuvent pas dans la même temporalité.

Une autre question passionnante pour le chercheur est celle de savoir si la divergence est le produit de contradictions internes ou le résultat de décisions extérieures, internationales.

Mais l'aspect le plus fascinant est l'impressionnant argumentaire développé de part et d'autre, sinon pour nier, du moins pour camoufler la divergence bulgare-macédonienne. Plus que les arguments fournis dans ce débat (ce dialogue de sourds), nous essayerons de montrer ici la place des non-dits dans les deux discours.

En conclusion, on tentera de montrer les éléments d'évolution indiquant récemment le rejet de l'approche essentialiste et la prise en compte de la notion de divergence.

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Shifting Images of Society in Bosnian Fiction

In his book *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation*, Andrew Baruch Wachtel analyses the role of literature and cultural politics in the disintegration of Yugoslavia. He discusses four major aspects of the attempts at cultural national nation building, namely (1) linguistic policies that functioned to create a shared national language or at least a unified Serbo-Croatian language (2) the promulgation of a Yugoslav literary and artistic canon (3) educational policy, particularly relating to the teaching of literature and history in schools and (4) the production of new artistic works that incorporated a Yugoslav view variously defined.

In this paper we both narrow and extend the scope of Wachtel's project. On the one hand, we focus on the fourth component of his study, and moreover we limit ourselves to literature produced in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the other side we broaden the analysis to the literary production in most recent years. In other words, we will concentrate on the view of society in recent post-war literary production. So along with a short reconsideration of the work of Ivo Andrić, Meša Selimović and Vojislav Lubarda, we will discuss mainly the work of

authors such as the novel writers Zilhad Klucanin, Asmir Kujovic, the poets Marko Vesovic, Abdullah Sidran and Mile Stojic, and the playwrights Almir Imsirevic and Alija Isakovic.

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Art from Somewhere Else – The Fuzzy Logic of Yugoslav Cultural Identities in the Light of War, Art and Literature

1) »Ethic« Identity and Ethnic Identity

The modern civilian concept of identity originates from the jurisdiction of the Roman emperor Justinian. Identity meant simply a juridical reference to a concrete person in accordance with state law. Unlike contemporary notions of cultural identity »civilian« identity did not discriminate persons on the basis of »cultural«, religious or ethnic origin – rather the opposite: identity necessarily referred to every juridical subject equally.

Nowadays, when for example someone says, that he has a German passport, but – as he was born and educated in Italy –, he »feels« or he is »truly« Italian by heart, we encounter these two concepts of identity on a contemporary level.

We do not consider our identification document to represent our »real« being, instead we refer to personal experience or irrational justifications to explain what we »really« are, how we »really« feel. However, analogous to passports these »feelings« are nothing but symbolical representations of identity. In this regard we subscribe more authority to »inner« representation than to »outer« representation, and we refuse to believe that our feelings or our reasoning may be as trivial or arbitrary as identification cards.

Our modern passports and IDs represent precisely the Justinian concept of identity (in the sense of identification) whereas our post-19th century imaginings of cultural identity include essentialist and contrafactual longings (cultural »origin«, heritage, racism, chauvinism, historical fatalism, myths, sociobiological constructs, etc.) that we subscribe to societies as well as to individuals.

A third concept of identity that is of relevance in this context relates to the artistic dealing-with or anthropological observation of cultural patterns (behaviour, fashion, folklore, aesthetics, communication, etc.), which we in accordance with Gregory Bateson could call »ethic identity« (not *ethnic*). [1] This concept of ethic identity has its roots in the universalist era of Enlightenment and defines the borders of identity neither in the juridical nor geographical nor cultural (contrafactual) sense, but in the sense of »daily life«, that is in the sense of how people organize a society, how they communicate, how they manage to make a living, solve problems, etc.



fig. left: Slobodan Milosevic during his speech commemorating the Battle of Kosovo on June 28, 1989; right: *Podium*, 2000, German artist Thomas Demand rebuilt Milosevic's platform thus trying to extract the »aura« of the fateful anniversary.

2) The Yugoslav disintegration is a very good example to illustrate on one hand a failed concept of »civilian« identity, and on the other hand the rise of divergent cultural identities, i.e. the rise of exclusive, mythical, irrational longings and concepts.

The process of cultural differentiation began in some areas of *Hochkultur* (cultural policies, language issues, novels) from the mid 60's on.

Beside a »Yugoslav reality« a »national reality« existed that has permanently been perpetuated by parts of the cultural elite which tried to challenge the meaning and the national »logic« of Yugoslavia .

On the other hand, one could observe unifying tendencies and activities in the area of popular culture (e.g. up to date one speaks of »Yugorock« whereas there exists no topoi »Yugoliterature« in the analogue sense) and official cultural policy.

3) In my proposal I want to display several phenomena of convergence respectively divergence that have to be seen in the context of the Yugoslav disintegration. Of particular interest are:

a) The *Istocnici* discourse as ideological tool on one hand and as a proposition for a Balkan identity on the other.



fig.: *One small Country of Indomitable Serbs*. The »fun« postcard during the NATO war against FR Yugoslavia in 1999 mirrors also aspects of cultural policy.

fig.: Retro-avantgarde: Milic od Macve's account of the NATO bombardment in 1999 in religious icon-style. In this image two completely different cultural concepts collide.



The word »Istocnici« (»genuine people from the East«) refers initially to the originality of Eastern »culture«, and was used by some authors (e.g. D. Ugresic) to define the origin of their production beyond national affirmations. On the other hand, in Serbia the concept was used as a means to propagate national ideology by deliberately distancing oneself from Western cultural agendas. In 1994 nationalist hardliner Dragos Kalajic organized the exhibition *Istocnici* in the Belgrade Museum of Modern Art as an attempt to display the rural, heroic premodern aspects that – in his eyes – made up Serbian culture.

A non-explicite *Istocnici* discourse, however, can be traced back to the 70's and 80's in the field of literature (e.g. war novels).

b) »Yugonostalgia« as a virtual remains of a pop-cultural or – if you will – »ethic« identity beyond national borders.

I shall discuss four forms of current »Yugonostalgia«:

1. revisionism – vague longing for socio-political unification
2. escapism – distraction from current hardship, longing for »better times«
3. active nihilism – artistic non-position, »Yu-Mythology« (e.g. www.juga.com)



fig.: One can apply for membership in »Cyberyugoslavia« at www.juga.com

c) Homo Balkanicus – The »Barbarian Network«: In 1992 former PRAXIS philosopher Miladin Zivotic coined the term ›homo balkanicus‹ in an attempt to describe a certain mentality among many former Yugoslav cultural activists and intellectuals that had fallen for the nationalist idea.

›Homo balkanicus‹ is nothing but a synonym for the modern barbarian: a semantic figure that expresses the revolting, uncompromising, and radical side in our Eastern and Western societies. This chapter will investigate the role of cultural protagonists in the scope of identity debates.



fig.: *Artists to weapons!* Poster by Vlado Martek at the exhibition *For the Defense and Renewal of Croatia*, Zagreb 19

The question is whether the outlined phenomena will condense to distinct cultural concepts or figures or whether they will vanish in the near future.

I cannot give definite answers, of course. What I hope is to contribute some aspects to the complex discussion on »Cultural identity in the Balkans« from an art-theoretical and phenomenological point of view.

[1] The German philosopher Martin Heidegger translates gr. »ethos« allegorically as »place«. The eidetic (*wesensmäßig*) place of a community defines its identity and defines the individual.

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La redéfinition de l'identité nationale bulgare: Le rôle des images médiatiques

La Bulgarie postcommuniste a pris le chemin pour son adhésion à l'Union européenne et à l'OTAN. Dans les années 1990, le pays s'est imposé comme un «île» de la paix et de la stabilité dans les Balkans. La politique ethnonationaliste de l'ex-régime, dont l'expression fulgurante a été le »processus renaissant« (1984-1989), c'est-à-dire l'assimilation forcée des Turcs et, en général, des Musulmans bulgares, a été rejetée. Aujourd'hui la politique officielle est d'intégration des minorités à la société bulgare. Suite aux élections législatives de 2001 le *Mouvement pour des droits et libertés* (MDL), dont la base électorale est formée surtout des Turcs bulgares, fait partie du gouvernement. La plupart des partis politiques tiennent des discours en faveur de l'intégration des minorités, pour l'expression libre des différences culturelles dont la cohabitation serait un atout pour l'intégration européenne de la Bulgarie. Marginalisé sur le champ politique, l'ethnonationalisme réapparaît pourtant dans le discours journalistique.

Nous discernons dans la presse nationale contemporaine deux types de discours sur l'identité nationale. L'un est ethnonationaliste, l'autre – intégrationniste. L'un construit la bulgarité comme une identité ethnique, l'autre – comme une identité nationale. L'un cherche à définir les »vrais« Bulgares, la majorité, de laquelle délimite les minorités. L'autre parle des

citoyens bulgares malgré leurs différences culturelles. Les images des Turcs et des Roms bulgares, les deux plus grandes minorités dans le pays, incarnent l'altérité culturelle présupposée dans l'espace nationale.

Le discours ethnonationaliste narre la conquête inachevée de la Bulgarie par les Turcs ottomans. Dans les années 1990, le danger était un éventuel séparatisme de la population turque, aujourd'hui c'est le MDL qui véhiculerait «les intérêts néocoloniaux d'Ankara» en Bulgarie. Ce discours est codé par la mémoire collective de martyr des cinq cent ans de joug ottoman du pays. Il rejette l'image des Turcs bulgares – victimes de l'ex-régime, leur image concurrente dans la presse, et dénonce la monopolisation du «modèle ethnique bulgare» de la part du MDL au détriment de la majorité et des autres minorités. L'élite politique turque est représentée soit comme le garant soit comme le danger pour la paix en Bulgarie.

Les mêmes stratégies de victimisation et de culpabilisation régissent la représentation ambiguë des Roms bulgares. Leur image des «dangereux» apparaît à côté de celle des «Turcs-conquérants» à la fin des années 1990. Au début le «Rom criminel», après la «Foule désocialisée» est ce qui fait peur à la majorité. Ils sont souvent représentés comme le visage non authentique de la Bulgarie qui va «nous» déshonorer et empêcher «notre» intégration européenne. L'image des Roms en tant que les perdants de la transition est rejetée. A l'image «des discriminés» s'oppose une contre-image: celle des «privilegiés», gagnants de leur pauvreté. Ce serait la minorité qui profiterait des aides sociales, du «droit d'extorsion contre l'Etat», des moyens financiers de l'étranger, etc. L'effet de ce type de discours est la superposition de deux frontières entre la minorité et la majorité – sociale et ethnique. C'est le faux, le mauvais pauvre, le Rom, qui est opposé à la «population bulgare» laborieuse. Les autres effets sont l'ethnisation des problèmes socio-économiques et le renversement des rapports majorité/minorité: majorité discriminée – minorité privilégiée serait la vraie relation.

Dans les deux cas, des Turcs et des Roms bulgares, il est intéressant de voir la construction de leur identité/altérité par rapport à la majorité, les mécanismes dont cette construction procède, les hybridations du discours journalistique, ainsi que les glissements du discours ethnonationaliste vers des discours eurosceptique, anti-européen, anti-globaliste.

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Multiculturalism vs. Cultural Homogenization: The Status of Landmarks in the Reconstruction of Sarajevo

The theme of my paper will deal with the changes sustained by local imaginary-urban identity caused by the siege of Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina) and the problematic of urban reconstruction of the city. The articulation between space, memory and identity is therefore central as the process of identification and of identity-building are based on multiple elements going from the familiar environment to expressive forms such as the language and the religion including space and memory.

Cities in Bosnia & Herzegovina, particularly Sarajevo, are/were the symbol of a common history, of the blending of cultures and religions (convergence). These elements influenced the architectural and urban development through history in this region. When the siege of Sarajevo began (April 1992) the city became a target as a figure of the cultural identity, starting with the historical and religious monument (divergence).

The kind of destruction undergone by Sarajevo during the siege orients the reflection on its reconstruction. In fact, reconstruction does not have to be understood solely as the act of construction of what has been demolished. The stake of reconstruction in this case is the restoration of the pre-war appearance of Sarajevo in order that residents regain possession of the image of their city. The need to restore the pre-war image of a war torn city is existential and does not imply the negation of what has happened. In this sense, destruction can be seen as tokens of the recent history since destroyed buildings, as well, belong to the urban topography of the city.

The transformation of the urban social fabric of Sarajevo has a consequence on the status of landmarks. By this term, we refer to buildings and monuments with a symbolic meaning for the inhabitant. These prove to be the support of the local identity, that is to say, the one of citizens living in cities. The symbolic meaning carried out by these structures participates of the collective memory of a community. Thus, since the beginning of the siege, we notice that some buildings, identified by assailants as landmarks of the culture to annihilate,

have been deliberately taken for target. It is the case, for example of the National and University Library, known under the name of »Vijecnica«, former municipality of Sarajevo under the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The destruction of landmarks put in evidence in a symptomatic manner the problematic of identity linked to reconstruction. Will the urban cultural identity of the inhabitants of Sarajevo undergo changes due to the partial destruction of landmarks or the transformation of the social urban fabric? Will the new nationalist iconography favouring national styles, symbols and expressions be materialised or a new iconography will be revealed? These interrogations reveal the current complex situation of the Bosnian identity, and particularly of the Sarajevo identity, divided between multiculturalism and cultural homogenization.

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Albania and the EU: How State Ambitions Have Become Part of National Identity

The Balkans are converging again, on the European Union. If the disparate countries of the Balkans have anything in common then it is their ambition to join the EU, rather sooner than later. And the public discourse on the EU has emerged to become an essential part of the local discourse. This paper will discuss how for the case of Albania the EU has become part of that local discourse, what it represents for the people and how they perceive themselves in the European mirror.

Albania finds itself in a unique position in this respect. On the one hand the people have emerged and are emerging still from an extremely isolated political situation where the understanding of the self was always constructed against a hostile other on all sides. The post-socialist transition has required a complete rethinking of the other and the self. On the other hand, Albania is in a geographically unique situation compared to most other postsocialist nations, only 60 km away from the Italian »heart« of the EU across the Adriatic and sharing a very permeable common border with Greece .

Many Albanians (a third of adult males, for example) have »EU experience«, having worked, both legally and illegally, in the above mentioned Greece or Italy or elsewhere in the EU. Those experiences have become an essential part of their identity, in how they are perceived at home and how the local population perceives itself. »EU experience« has become an essential part of what it means to be Albanian.

This paper will discuss which (real and imagined) elements of the »EU« have become a part of Albanian identity and self-perception, what these images represent for the Albanian population and what developments they may be heralding for the future.