
59th International Academic Week of the
Southeast Europe Association
**Memory Cultures since 1945:
German-Southeast European Entangled History**

**Organizers: Southeast Europe Association (Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft) /
Akademie für Politische Bildung Tutzing
Hybrid event: Tutzing and per ZOOM, 4–8 October 2021**

Report: Melinda Harlov-Csortán, Kőszeg (Hungary)

The International Academic Week organized by the Southeast Europe Association followed the tradition in 2021 by being hosted in Tutzing at the Akademie für Politische Bildung. The complexity of this workshop can be identified among others by its interdisciplinarity as well as by the rich and varied used topics which were dealt with during one week. The presentations covered almost the whole of Southeast Europe and even went beyond for example by looking at the diaspora communities from the researched region in Israel. Chronologically as well, the one-week event touched upon characters from the early 15th century (Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbej) as well as the 2019 Nobel Prize Laureate for Literature, Peter Handke. Alike variety of sources and adapted methodologies enriched the presentations. Besides written and published sources such as personal letters and legal documents, oral history sources, memorials, films, and social media sources as well provided fruitful starting points for discussions. In addition to the necessary – and outmost professionally realized – hybrid format where power point presentations also included short videos, the members of the academic week also learned methodological and content information from each other for instance regarding publication processes as well.

The International Academic week of 2021 consisted of six panels. Some panels united presentations based on chronological emphasis such as the last panel which focused on current right-wing populism and cultures of remembrance. Others defined the geographical commonalities of the given presentations like the panel titled “World War II: The Yugoslav Legacy.” Moreover, the organizers dedicated a panel to the legal aspects of the memory cultures since 1945. Each panel had an average of six presentations, divided into smaller units, and a closing question and answer session. The presentations represented a great variety by also discussing theoretical questions like the adapted expressions regarding certain memorized or seemingly silenced historical events. The audience could listen to semiotic analysis as well for instance regarding the history books for secondary education in Albania, or comparative investigations like Ljiljana Radonić’s keynote on memory museums. Numerous case studies about particular persons (for example Lemkin or Eliade) or locations (such as the Heroes Square and the ‘56-ers Square in Budapest, Hungary) also formed essential parts of the case study investigations. Such rich and varied sets of academic presentations ensured that

every participant learned new aspects of the presented content as well as adaptable research sources or -methodologies and presentation techniques.

The program consisted of more than “just” these presentations. On Tuesday afternoon a unique poster session was organized. It included altogether eight outstanding projects that connected to the main theme of this year’s International Academic Week. In terms of geographical scope, the posters analyzed mainly former Yugoslavian case studies (like Bosnia-Herzegovina) and many addressed the topic of Holocaust (for instance via memorials). The presented research projects addressed different sources such as intangible (verbal) ones: as songs (*Claudia Mayr-Veselinovič*), name choices (*Mehdi Sejdiu*), minority policy (*Michal Kucharški*) and adapted discourses (*Anjeza Xhaferaj*). Almost equal amount of poster contributions investigated tangible sources like memorials (*Michael Ilg* and *Ioannis Stylianidis*), architecture (*Antonio Grgič*), or cultural institutions (*Nataša Jagdhuhn*). The presented memorialization examples addressed lost, forgotten, dispersed and desired memories as well. It was possible to discuss each project with the author, and the audience could exchange ideas about the outline and content of the posters as well.

Besides the poster sessions, a mini workshop led by *Aleksandra Salamurovič* and *Zsófia Turóczy* was also part of the program. The workshop was dedicated to share practices and insights about using social media for academic purposes, more precisely for the distribution and discussion of Southeastern European Studies. During the last night of the academic week, the participants could enjoy a film night. The audience had the pleasure to see Branko Bauer’s black-and-white movie titled “Don’t turn around, my son” from 1956. Such experience would have been by itself a unique opportunity and privilege; however it was complemented by an introductory and insightful presentation by *Marija Vulesica*, who put the film and its values into context by speaking about the Yugoslav film industry of that time. The study tour to the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism perfectly suited the theme

of the International Academic Week. Not just the common topic ensured the fruitful experience, but also the insightful discussions with the colleagues about the aims and techniques of the institutionalized memory culture. Moreover, the current temporary exhibition (on the disappearing witnesses of the Holocaust) also fitted well to the interest and research area of the participants.

The program started Monday afternoon with welcoming addresses and an opening panel as well as Professor *Ljiljana Radonič*’s keynote lecture. The conference committee (*Sabina Ferhadbegović*, *Kateřina Kralová* and *Christian Voß*) pointed out the complexity of researching memory cultures after 1945 by naming the importance of the who, when, why and how questions at every given investigated circumstance. *Ljiljana Radonič* justified a possible counterinfluence, the Europeanization trend of the memory museums and its regional consequences and some examples in Southeastern Europe. The first day program was accompanied by an award ceremony too for the best Master thesis in Southeast European Studies (the winner was *Moritz Müller* from Humboldt University of Berlin for his thesis “Der ewige Augenblick – Ismet Prcić ‘Shards’ und die Gegenwart des Krieges” / The Eternal Moment – Ismet Prcić’s “Shards” and the Presence of War and the laudation was presented by *Franz-Lothar Altmann*). The connection and cooperation of young and established scholars characterized the entire week and promoted effective and hopefully long-lasting relations among all the participants. The members of the International Academic Week also had the privileged possibility to meet and have conversation with numerous members of the organizing association (South-east Europe Association) what further blurred the many times separating effect of hierarchical affiliations within and outside of academia.

The first panel “Memory Cultures during the Cold War” had six presenters. The geographical scope of these presentations expanded from USSR to Hungary (*Melinda Harlov-Csortán*) and from Czechoslovakia to Turkey and Greece. Three researchers presented the memory or memorialization of a minority. *Zoltán Tibori-Szabó* introduced the Jewish community in

Transylvania (Romania), *Nikola Karasová* presented the case of the Greek refugees in Czechoslovakia and *Francesco Trupia* spoke about the Turkish minorities in Bulgaria. *Artan Puto's* contribution discussed specific historic figures' memory and mystifications. *Jan Claas Behrends* talked about historical as well as about contemporary events and their instrumentalization in memory politics, while *Melinda Harlov-Csortán* introduced a case study about transforming an urban location due to politically influenced memorialization. Among the identified memorialization techniques, the researchers named artistic (literally and fine art) examples, bottom-up protests and oral history projects as well. As the chair of the panel, *Ljiljana Radonić* also pointed out that each presentation commented on the present phases of the introduced memory techniques justifying the still existing influences of the Cold War period on the societies in Southeast Europe.

The second panel "World War II: the Yugoslav Legacy" took place on Tuesday afternoon. On this panel separate presentations were dedicated to women and "veterans", both contributions analyzed the representations of these groups in comparative research, but they adapted different sources for their investigations. *Jelena Batinic* investigated the image of female partisans through state narratives, memorized representations of school names, songs and on "big screen movies". While *Heike Karge* analyzed the "veterans" of Tito's Yugoslavia via hospital records and by following individual life stories as well. *Vukašin Zorić* continued the "veteran theme" in a kind of international relations perspective by looking at the network and cooperation of SUBNOR (Savez udruženja boraca narodnooslobodilačkog rata Jugoslavije / Association of Veterans of the People's Liberation Wars of Serbia) with other, mainly Third World countries. It was mindfully emphasized that based on the adapted sources (such as films, exhibitions, knowledge transfers and material help), these Yugoslav veterans while "exploring the cause" also memorialized their own fights. *Tea Sindbaek Andersen* underlined the plausibility of memorialization by analyzing the changing evaluations and modifying image-making practices at the narrations of the past. It was interesting how the last two contributors of the pan-

el connected World War II with the more recent Yugoslav wars. *Roswitha Kersten-Pejanić* analyzed physical (visual) traces and *Vladimir Đorđević* focused on the used narratives at for instance far-right events.

On Wednesday, the members of the International Academic Week dedicated their attention to the theme of "Holocaust and Genocide". The panelists, besides describing the historic events of their respective research locations (such as Albania, Bulgaria or Bukovina), focused on the community identification or its formation processes via the memory of the Holocaust and Genocide. Such historical events defined the communities, as *Emil Kerenji* expressed: "all Jewish communities after 1945 are survival communities." By analyzing the work of Raphael Lemkin, *Annette Becker* stressed that the "act of genocide" evidently gives the members of a community a new layer of collective identity by being victims, survivors, perpetrators, or bystanders. *Nadège Ragaru* discussed the formation and transformation of community identity regarding the Bulgarian self-image that has been recently got more complex than the singular "righteous among nations" notion. The audience listened about community formations within new societies by staying geographically at the same location still within a new state format. *Gaëlle Fisher* spoke about the Bukovina community which travelled to a new location, to Israel, and discussed their community identity formation there. Different tools and methods of this self-image creation or empowerment were also discussed. For instance, *Michaela Gligor* spoke about Mircea Eliade's personal letters, while *Esilda Luku* presented her research on history textbooks. The in-depth analysis of these materials provided the possibility of chronologically and comparatively analyzing them as well.

The Thursday panel "Collaboration and Resistance" continued this focus on actors and their characterization regarding their roles in the memorialized historical events. The panel started with *Alexander Korb's* theoretical contribution about the meanings and conditions as well as consequences of the term "collaborators" as seen historically and in contemporary academic discourses. *Franziska Zaugg* singled out the

generalizing threat of these terms by introducing the variety of roles Muslims in Southeastern Europe had during World War II in contrast to the many times oversimplified narratives about them. *Spyros Tsoutsoumpis* drew attention to the action through which a role (e. g. subject, object, bystander) is realized. Focusing on the action or ritual of transgression provides the possibility of analyzing such a role in a non-geographically or non-chronologically determined way. *Arban Mehmeti* pointed out the significance of leaving out certain communities from these categorizations of roles in the memorialized historical event. This finding was exemplified with the present complex relations among Kosovars and Serbs as well as regarding the Bulgarian refugees in Greece. *Alexios Ntetro-rakis-Exarchou* explained that the analyzed community (Bulgarian refugees) could become bystanders or even collaborators in cooperation with the local Jews in Thessaloniki. It was also emphasized how numerous circumstances and influencing factors (e. g. the original social and economic status) affected these Bulgarians' trust in Greece.

Panel six on Thursday was arranged around the legal issues and consequences (and even lack of legal consequences) related to 20th century crimes. First, *Florian Jessberger* provided a historical overview on international criminal law. Among others, he underlined the transformation of the subject of these prosecutions, namely earlier a nation was charged in criminal law and later even individuals were investigated. Jessberger discussed some of the consequences of this change on international and domestic levels and compared and contrasted the original aims and goals of international criminal law with its current capability, efficiency and accountability. *Sabina Ferhadbegović* discussed these transformations of criminal prosecutions connected to Nazi crimes in Southeastern Europe. Referring to the previous panels that discussed the different roles related to these events, she pointed out that the status of being under occupation or in exile can influence the evaluation and punishment too.

The consequences of lack or improper (comparing to the crime committed) punishment were the subjects of the next two presentations.

Eriona Vadinaj introduced it on a national level regarding Albania, while *Kateřina Kralová* spoke about the Max Merten case as an example for improper (almost completely missing) punishment on an individual level. It was fascinating to learn about how an unrealized prosecution can bring advantages and disadvantages to the involved characters and communities via numerous interpretations (such as the "no file against democracy" notion regarding Albania). Moreover, such narratives can be reused for propagandistic aims in other contexts (e. g. the Czechoslovakian media interpretation about the Greek-German relation). Another aspect and actor were introduced by *Johanna Paul*, namely social activism in connection to missed prosecution and the diaspora community. While the presented *Peter Handke* case (who received the Nobel Prize in Literature while being accused with genocide denial) was quite specific, the presentation and especially the question-and-answer session opened up the topic of transnational memory activism.

The last part of panel six on the very last day got explicitly closest to the present time. The title of the panel was "Current Right-Wing Populism and Cultures of Remembrance". All the panelists referred to one or more previously discussed presentations. Firstly, *Barbara Törnquist-Plewa* provided a discourse analysis about the components and consequences of a single phenomenon (populism). *Ferenc Laczó* investigated various narrations of commemorating a single historic event, Trianon in case of Hungary.¹ *Nuri Korkmaz* used the case of Bulgarian Turks to discuss nationalistic intentions, while *Jelena Đureinović* focused her investigation on the narrative combination of World War II and the Yugoslav wars. The last presenter, *Andreea Zamfira* analyzed the role of the diaspora (Romanian Germans living in Germany) as a contemporary example for cultures of remembrance. Both the theoretical investigation and the more specific case study presentations showed that economic factors play a very im-

1 S. die Beiträge in diesem Heft: *Barbara Törnquist-Plewa* (S. 53–63) und *Ferenc Laczó* (S. 65–72).

portant role in the spread of populism. Each presentation explained the diverse aspects and types of communication techniques used in spreading populist ideology. The panel stressed the role of mass media (state communication in Serbia) or the lack of it (like the independent media in Hungary) to spread either threat or to create/endorse a certain memory that can equally fuel populist ideology.

Both the case studies and the theoretical investigations in such a well-structured way together with the possibility of discussing them in a

group after each panel or individually during the coffee breaks enriched all the participants of the International Academic Week 2021.

Through the presented methodologies, the possible threats and challenges at an actual specific research process were also expressed, which further enhanced the overall value of the event. The cooperation and discussions of the International Academic Week 2021 were not terminated on Friday afternoon as the participants agreed to further cooperate via publications that will share and further promote the findings of this intensive and valuable week.

Zehntes Dr. Fritz-Exner-Kolloquium zur Südosteuropaforschung **Südosteuropa ist tot? Lang lebe Südosteuropa!** **Positionierungen in einem interdisziplinären Forschungsfeld**

Veranstalter: Fritz und Helga Exner-Stiftung / Schroubek-Fonds Östliches Europa / Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft in Kooperation mit der Europa-Universität Viadrina, Universität Regensburg (Graduiertenschule für Ost- und Südosteuropastudien) und Universität Leipzig, Frankfurt/Oder, 13. – 15. Oktober 2021

Bericht von Samuel Eleazar-Wendt, Frankfurt (Oder)

Die Beschäftigung mit der (Selbst-)Verortung, Wissensproduktion und Wissensvermittlung innerhalb der Südosteuropaforschung stand im Mittelpunkt des diesjährigen Zehnten Dr. Fritz-Exner-Kolloquiums zur Südosteuropaforschung. Ein wichtiger Bezugspunkt war dabei *Maria Todorovas* vor mehr als 20 Jahren erschienenes Buch „Imagining the Balkans“, welches eine intensive Auseinandersetzung auslöste und in der deutschsprachigen Forschungslandschaft die Revision tradierter Raum- und Selbstverständnisse zur Folge hatte. Zahlreiche Fragen sind weiterhin unbearbeitet; dazu zählen die kritische Auseinandersetzung mit post-kolonialen Theorien und die noch immer nur ansatzweise erschlossene wechselvolle Geschichte politischer Instrumentalisierung der Südosteuropaforschung.

Das Kolloquium fasste verschiedene Formate zusammen: einen Online-Workshop zum Forschungsdaten-Management, verschiedene

Podiumsdiskussionen, zwei Keynotes, vier inhaltliche Panels sowie eine Abschlussdiskussion. Das Fritz-Exner-Kolloquium zur Südosteuropaforschung fand zum zehnten Mal statt; dieses Jubiläum war Anlass dafür, nicht nur Wissenschaftler*innen in Qualifizierungsphasen in den Austausch über ihre Forschungsprojekte und Forschungszugänge zu bringen, sondern auch einen Austausch zwischen unterschiedlichen akademischen Generationen über den Stand und die Zukunft des Forschungsfeldes zu ermöglichen. Zuletzt war es den Veranstalter*innen ein Anliegen, auch über die Südosteuropaforschung hinauszuschauen und immer wieder auch Brücken zu Debatten in der Osteuropaforschung und zu Area Studies allgemein zu schlagen.

Erster Tag

Prof. Dr. Claudia Weber, Professorin für Europäische Zeitgeschichte an der Europa-Universität Viadrina in Frankfurt/Oder, begrüßte die anwe-