Abstracts

Heinz-Jürgen Axt

The Aegean: Conflict Resolution Through a Judicial Ruling? The Opportunities and Uncertainties of International Arbitration

Whilst there is a wealth of literature on intra-state and inter-state conflicts in Southeast Europe, relatively few studies examine how conflicts can be resolved peacefully on the basis of international law. This gap in the literature is particularly evident in the case of the Aegean conflict, which continues to divide Greece and Turkey. Addressing this deficit, this paper examines how maritime disputes between the two Aegean littoral states could be resolved through the decision of an international arbitral tribunal. It asks: what are the prerequisites, and what could be the consequences of such a judicial ruling? In this regard, one can draw, to a limited extent, on examples where conflict parties have taken this route. It is therefore worth broadening our perspective beyond Europe to scrutinize the maritime dispute between China and the Philippines. The 2016 South China Sea Arbitration in The Hague offers a valuable comparative precedent, underlining both the legal potential and geopolitical limits of international arbitration over contested waters.

Thomas Schad / Tamara Gajić

Contested Wetlands: Krivaja in Bosnia and Buljarica in Montenegro

This article is the result of two ongoing research projects on more-than-human assemblages in Bosnia and Montenegro. We tackle the scramble for resources in the Western Balkans by extractivists of critical raw materials and the detrimental effects caused by investors for aquatic ecosystems. The first part focuses on Bosnia's Krivaja basin, where lead and chromium mining threat inhabitants and the local biomes. These plans gave birth to a vibrant form of resistance in a highly vulnerable social environment. In the second part, we examine the unique wetlands of Buljarica in Montenegro, where homes and marshlands are under pressure from untransparent, large-scale "development" plans. As in Bosnia, local ecologists mount resistance to protect their community. In the third part, we draw conclusions from our two landscape-based assemblages for the broader context of extractivism and corrosive capital in the Western Balkans.

Zsófia Turóczy

Reconstructed, Built Over or Left to Decay: Construction Sites of Memory in Post-Socialist Albania

This essay examines material traces and museum-based artistic representations of the Zogu regime, the Italian and German occupations, and the communist dictatorship (1944–1991). Focusing on sites in Tirana, Durrës and Spaç, it scrutinises how buildings and relics from that period have been treated. It analyses how these are turned into museum exhibits, aestheticised, commercialised or left to fall into disrepair, and how their history is made visible or invisible in public spaces.

Baillie Bell

Women of the Bosnian War: Disrupting Dominant Narratives of Violence

The notorious use of wartime rape against women during the Bosnian war served to solidify long-standing assumptions of the gendered dynamics of violence, classifying all women as victims subjected to violence by male perpetrators. However, since the end of the war, many women have been accused of participating in atrocities, with witnesses stating they could be even crueller than male abusers. This article moves beyond gendered stereotypes by considering the experiences of women tried domestically for war crimes before the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through an analysis of their cases, the limitations of existing narratives used to explain women's violence are shown, demonstrating that gender does not appear to be a major factor in their defences nor characterizations. Instead, most female perpetrators asserted their agency by first voluntarily joining militarized groups and then committing violent acts within this capacity. Thus, by offering accounts of women's war experiences as soldiers first, and women second, a very different explanation for their violent participation emerges.