

FOREWORD: DILEMMAS OF THE EUROPEANISATION OF SERBIA AND CULTURAL TRANSFER EUROPE-SERBIA

In January 2022, a group of scholars from Belgrade was awarded a three-year grant by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia within its programme IDEAS to do research on cultural transfer Europe-Serbia from the age of Josephinism (end of the 18th century) till the early 21st century. The group includes historians, anthropologists, political scientists, and philologists. In a bid to approach various methodological challenges in the analysis of culture transfer, an international hybrid conference was organised in Belgrade on April 2, 2022.

In dealing with the theoretical issues of cultural transfer, the team greatly benefited from the introductory lecture delivered by Prof. Wolfgang Schmale on April 8, 2022, at the conference “Cultural Transfer Europe-Serbia. Methodological Issues and Challenges”. This collection opens with a paper by Prof. Schmale entitled “What is Cultural Transfer?” based on his original lecture. In addition to describing the scholarly development of the concept, this paper offers a guide on how the concept worked from the 18th till the early 20th century. The paper ends with a warning regarding the role that nationalism played in the first half of the 20th century. The climax of nationalisms in Europe certainly made an impact on the pace of cultural transfer. Due to the fact that the area of former Yugoslavia was affected by the Wars of Yugoslav Succession in the 1990s and the concomitant rise of local nationalisms, this warning has double implications for the project. The relation Cultural Transfer – Nationalism will emerge twice in this research: for the period from the early 20th century till 1945 and the period beginning in the late 1980s.

The issue of Yugoslavia, a country that disappeared, re-emerges in the scholarly interview with Vesna Goldsworthy. She is an Anglo-Serbian scholar and writer who has had a very unusual opportunity to be both an academic who analysed Western stereotypes about the Balkans, and a contributor to the creation of a more nuanced image of Eastern and Southeast Europe through her literary works and widely read memoir *Chernobyl Strawberries*. This double role of her book *Inventing Ruritania* and her memoir is the focus of the interview that I made with her for the purposes of the conference and this collection. The story of her precedes-

sor in this double task, Rebecca West, and the role that her memoir has played in presenting Serbia and Yugoslavia to Western readers have also been covered.

Another problem is the absence in areas of the Ottoman Balkans of previous European homogenisations that took place during the Renaissance and Baroque. “The Italian model” and “the French model”, which Prof. Schmale mentions in his paper, had a very small impact on the Ottoman Balkans. European cultural transfer flourished in 18th-century Europe in areas that had already been “Europeanised”, while the Ottoman Balkans stayed out of similar processes. It was in Russia, starting from the reign of Peter the Great, that Europeanisation and European cultural transfer became concomitant phenomena.

The same happened with Austrian Serbs during the 18th century. The paper by Dragana Grbić gives a very good introduction to how various European ideas were received by this group and depicts the case of Zaharija Orfelin, a polymath and the first encyclopaedist in Serbian culture. This paper also testifies to the very elaborate scholarship that developed in analysing the culture of Austrian Serbs during the 18th century.

The concept of Europe was introduced to the epicentre of Serbian culture by Serbian Josephinists, particularly by Dositey Obradovich, the father of Serbian Enlightenment, also known as “Serbian Voltaire”. Since the publication of his biography *Life and Adventures* in Leipzig in 1783 and its second part in 1788, the relations Europe–Serbian culture became crucially important. In 1789, Dositey published in Vienna his “Poem on the Redemption of Serbia”. The illustration in the publication shows a female allegory of Serbia kneeling before the Habsburg Emperor Joseph II. The allegory depicts the moment when Serbia symbolically liberated herself from her shackles and was placed within the confines of lands blessed by the Enlightenment. For Dositey, that meant that Europe widened her boundaries and that Belgrade and Serbia, after being annexed by Austria, also became part of Europe. But the process of accepting Serbia to Europe soon became much more complex, and Austria had to abandon Belgrade and Serbia two years later (1791). For the minority of ethnic Serbs who lived within the Habsburg Empire at the end of the 18th century, there was no dilemma about their cultural orientation. Europeanisation was an ongoing process acknowledged by both their intelligentsia and church leaders under the then fashionable terms of progress and education. The situation was rather different with ethnic Serbs in the Ottoman Empire.

When autonomous Serbia emerged in 1830, the issues of its modernisation and Europeanisation became crucial. In my own article in this collection, I have attempted to list various challenges and dilemmas in

analysing both the process of Europeanisation and European cultural transfer in Serbia. This article also identifies three groups in Serbia that were the leading agents of Europeanisation: 1. Austrian Serbs who moved to Serbia, 2. Serbian students who used state stipends to study abroad and then returned to Serbia, and 3. foreigners who moved from Central and Western Europe to Serbia.

The paper by Nemanja Radulović introduces a special case that appeared in German culture where, since 1814, a keen interest emerged in Serbian folk culture, Serbian folk songs, and the Serbian vernacular. Something that could be called counter-transfer took place, and Radulović describes how prominent intellectuals in German lands and Austria took a keen interest in Serbian folk poetry. It also analyses how Vuk Karadžić, who encouraged this interest through his collections of folk songs published in 1814–15 and 1823–33 and his *Serbian Dictionary* of 1818 influenced Central European research of folk poetry and how he created his own network(s).

Orel Beilinson's article analyses a very interesting case. The author attempts to uncover where adolescents hid before they were "discovered" as a distinct age group by psychologists of the early 20th century. It provides insights into a redefinition of age groups in various cultures during the 19th century and explains how the concept was culturally transmitted to Central and Southeast Europe.

The paper by Ivana Pantelić introduces the reader to a peculiar case of Americanisation and Europeanisation of Yugoslav culture, which happened in a communist country. After its split from the Soviet Union in 1948, communist Yugoslavia was gradually forced to allow foreign influences. This process brought not only American, Italian, and other European cultural influences but also the culture of consumerism, and, in this sense, Yugoslavia became a special case within the socialist group of countries.

In addition to the five case studies covering encounters of Serbian and Eastern European culture with European and Euro-Atlantic cultural transfers since the 18th century, there is another group of papers that deals with various dilemmas involved in employing analysis of cultural transfer.

Gordana Djerić examines the interdisciplinary aspects of cultural transfer and the related concepts of cultural mobility and intertextuality. While the early 19th century poses a challenge to historians due to the scarcity of sources, especially about rural Serbia, the early 20th century offers a totally different dilemma. How could a researcher cope with the vast amount of available material? The period in question (2000–2020) is immersed in the concepts of transition and transformation connected with the process of Serbia's EU accession. The author finds parallels with

Van Gennep's concept of the rite of passage and warns that researchers will inevitably find themselves wedged between constructivism and essentialism. Hertzfeld's concept of cultural intimacy and Sztomka's sociological concept of cultural trauma are suggested as possible approaches.

In her article, Marina Simić presents possible points of interaction between anthropology and cultural transfer studies. Among various anthropological theories, diffusionism shares some similarities with the concept of cultural transfer. Although diffusionism has generally been rejected in anthropology, some of its elements have been incorporated into the anthropological mainstream, especially the concepts of cultural translation and multiple modernities. The author also analyses the interactions between post-colonial studies, the concept of hybridity and cultural transfer studies.

Two papers employ post-modernist approaches. In the first, Nikolina Nedeljkov deals with the remix, highlighting counter-culture as a channel for delivering messages that could refashion the social fabric. She endorses vibrant critical and creative voices against noise and in the service of the remix. Finally, Goran Kauzlarić discusses the cultural transfer of political economy in 18th-century Europe and insists on the epistemological differences between modern *laissez-faire* liberalism and neoliberalism. His analysis is focused on examples of appropriations and translations of Eastern heritage.

The editor would like to express special thanks to Ms Ljubica Ćorović of the Local History Department of the Belgrade City Library for providing an excellent copy of a lithography showing the line of Belgrade's first electric tram from 1894. This illustration so vividly testifies to the cultural transfer Europe-Serbia in that period. I would also like to thank Mr. Zoran Mošorinski, CEO of Politika AD for the permission to reproduce illustrations from *Politika Bazar*, and the Gallery of Matica Srpska for their permission to reproduce a painting of the monastery of Nova Ravanica from 1888.

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