

Entwicklung der Landeshauptstadt

SARRAJEVO

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S. M. des Kaisers und Königs Franz Josef I.

Sarajevo Bosnia

**Workshop on Post-Yugoslav Neoliberal
Academic Selves and Possibilities of
Knowing the Balkans Otherwise**

5 - 7 February 2020



University of St. Gallen

Workshop participation is free and open to all.
Please register by January 31 at alexander.mishnev@unisg.ch
More information on: transculturalstudieshsg.home.blog and gce.unisg.ch

Design by Jasmina Gavrankapetanović-Redžić

SAMO VJERAN PAS?

Workshop on Post-Yugoslav Neoliberal Academic Selves and Possibilities of Knowing the Balkans Otherwise

University of St Gallen, 5.2. – 7.2.2020.

Organizers: Jelena Tošić (*Transcultural Studies, University of St Gallen*),
Sandra King-Savić (*Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St Gallen*),
Sunčana Laketa (*Institute of Geography, University of Neuchâtel*)

What are the features and the politics of knowledge production about the Balkans in contemporary academia? Are the Western Balkans a testing ground for Western intellectual hegemony? If so, how and why do we, as post-Yugoslav scholars, reproduce these dominant forms of knowledge, however inadvertently? How does the contemporary neoliberal academy foster the self-colonization and (re)balkanization as a career strategy? Can we disrupt the uneven power geometries in which we ourselves partake? What are the ways by which to know the Balkans otherwise?

The dissolution of former Yugoslavia – as one of the particularly dramatic chapters of the implosion of real-socialism – served as an unprecedented impetus for knowledge production. The newly emerging Yugoslav republics soon turned into the object of vibrant research by scholars who, by and large from Central and Western Europe and the U.S., aimed at understanding the causes and consequences of conflicts, the processes of “transition”, religious revitalization, reconciliation, gender regimes, (forced) migration, and a number of other issues.

In the years to follow, new protagonists are emerging together with the newly reorganized Balkan region. They embody different biographical configurations of im/mobility, which include decades of labour- and chain migration, as well as forced migration brought about by the Yugoslav Succession Wars. At the same time, established and emerging scholars who stayed in the region produced knowledge under totalitarian conditions, which hindered transnational networks and mobility. In the course of developing critical (anti-nationalist, anti-totalitarian, feminist etc.) social science perspectives, these differently

positioned scholars forged cooperation under global conditions of consolidating neoliberal academia. The increasing competition, precarity, marketization of ideas, concepts, and academic selves led to the bizarre result that it was/is precisely “profitable” to produce knowledge on former Yugoslavia as an “indigenous” (migrant) scholar already “equipped” with the core language and “cultural” competence non-native scholars have to invest significant time and effort to acquire. This, at times, created a paradoxical result of auto-balkanization in ways that perpetuated the myths and failed to offer a truly emancipatory project.

The aim of the interdisciplinary workshop is to bring together scholars across disciplines and generations to employ a radical self-reflexion of experiences, epistemologies and the subjectivization of knowledge production about the Balkans under highly politicized (post-) totalitarian, neoliberal and deterritorialized conditions. The workshop will offer a challenging, productive and safe space of exchange among scholars who embody different (post-)Yugoslav experiences.

We invite both emerging and established scholars to join us in exploring one of the core aims of the workshop – to engage with feminist postcolonial and other solidarity movements/commitments to radically transform what is considered legitimate knowledge about the Balkans. The workshop will contribute to critically envisioning possible futures of this line of scholarship both in terms of its epistemological/theoretical relevance for socio-economic and political developments in the post-Yugoslav space as well as its potential as an avenue of participating in wider global emancipatory knowledge horizons.

Detailed program

Wednesday 5th February 2020

Room 09-012, University of St. Gallen, Dufourstrasse 50

- 10.00 – 11.00 Guest arrival/registration/coffee
- 11.00 – 12.00 Welcome and introduction to the workshop
- 12.00 – 13.00 Lunch at the Mensa (University Cafeteria)
- 13.00 – 14.00 Participant introductory rounds
- 14.00 – 15.30 Panel discussion - Thematic Cluster 1: **Post-Ethno-national Epistemologies**
– Beyond legitimizing nationalist ideology and idealizing the Balkans.
Who legitimizes this knowledge, who does not, and why?

Chair: Jelena Tošić (*University of St Gallen*)

Discussant: Ana Dević (*KU Leuven*)

Round-table participants: Čarna Brković (*University of Göttingen*) via Skype,
Nevena Daković (*University of Arts, Belgrade*),
Rozita Dimova (*Ghent University*),
Mišo Kapetanović (*University of St Gallen*)

- 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break
- 16.00 – 17.00 **Post-Ethno-national Epistemologies** – out of the comfort zone?
- 17.00 – 18.00 Free time
- 18.00 – 20.00 Dinner at the Restaurant Lokremise, Grünbergstrasse 7
- 20.00 Movie screening and discussion: Hotel Jugoslavija
(<https://hotel-jugoslavija-film.com/en/home-an/>) at Kinok, Grünbergstrasse 7

Thursday 6th February 2020

Room 09-012, University of St. Gallen, Dufourstrasse 50

- 9.00 – 9.30 Welcome coffee
- 9.30 – 11.00 Panel discussion - Thematic Cluster 2: **Post-Yugoslav academic selves** – disciplines, generations, attachments and embodied landscapes of neoliberal academia. What are the global politics of academic knowledge production, and what kind of (perhaps unintended) consequences they have for creating knowledge about the Balkans?

Chair and discussant: Sunčana Laketa (*University of Neuchâtel*)

Participants: Olivera Jokić (*City University of New York*),

Dino Kadich (*University of Cambridge*),

Dženeta Karabegović (*University of Salzburg*) and Elena Stavrevska (*London School of Economics*),

Daniijela Majstorović (*University Banja Luka*),

Irena Šentevska (*University of Arts, Belgrade*)

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break

11.30 – 12.30 Post-Yugoslav academic selves – out of the comfort zone?

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch at the Mensa (University Cafeterija)

13.30 – 15.00 Panel discussion - Thematic Cluster 3: **Migration and Knowledge** – the “safe distance”, ambivalent belongings, commodification of knowledge, and the migrant academic self. Is there a convergence between academic migrant biographies and knowledge production?

Chair: Sandra King-Savić (*University of St Gallen*)

Discussant: Marko Zivkovic (*University of Alberta*)

Participants: Azra Hromadžić (*Syracuse University*),

Dragana Kovacevic-Bielicki (*University of Oslo*),

Katarina Kušić (*University of Bristol*),

Krisztina Rázs (*University of Oslo*)

15.00 – 15.30 Coffee break

15.30 – 16.30 **Migration and Knowledge** – out of the comfort zone?

16.30 – 19.00 Free time

19.00 Dinner at the Restaurant Baratella, Unterer Graben 20

Friday 7th February 2020

Room 09-012, University of St. Gallen, Dufourstrasse 50

9.00 – 9.30 Welcome coffee

9.30 – 11.00 Wrap-up of the workshop and final conclusions

11.00 – 12.00 Future plans: Where do we go from here?

12.00 – 13.00 Lunch at the Mensa (University Cafeteria) and Farewell

Workshop funded by:

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Center for Governance and Culture in Europe (GCE), HSG