

SOFT POWER OF THE
BALKAN SCREENS

MEKA MOĆ
EKRANA BALKANA

editors / urednice
Nevena Daković
Aleksandra Milovanović



FAKULTET
DRAMSKIH
UMETNOSTI
U BEOGRADU

SOFT POWER OF THE BALKAN SCREENS
MEKA MOĆ EKRANA BALKANA

SOFT POWER OF THE BALKAN SCREENS MEKA MOĆ EKRANA BALKANA

Editors / Urednice
Nevena Daković, PhD
Aleksandra Milovanović, PhD

Contributing Editor / Saradnica
Iva Leković

Reviewers / Recenzenti
Aleksandra Kolaković, PhD
Institute for Political Studies (IPS)

Ana Grgić, PhD
Babeş-Bolyai University

Tomislav Longinović, PhD
University of Wisconsin – Madison

Publisher / Izdavač
Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade
Institut for theatre, film, radio and television
Fakultet dramskih umetnosti
Institut za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju

This book was published with the support of Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

Izdavanje ovog zbornika radova podržalo je Ministarstvo prosvete, nauke i tehnološkog razvoja Republike Srbije.

Some of the texts published in this book are part of the TÜBITAK-MoESTD bilateral project *Television Series: A Comparative Study From Geopolitics to Geocriticism – Serbia and Turkey* (Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade and Kadir Has University in Istanbul). This project is part of the scientific-research activities of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia), financed according to the agreement with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

Neki od tekstova u ovoj publikaciji nastali su u okviru bilateralnog projekta TÜBITAK-MoESTD *Televizijske serije: komparativna studija od geopolitike do geokritike – Srbija i Turska* (Fakultet dramskih umetnosti u Beogradu i Univerzitet Kadir Has u Istanbulu). Ovaj projekat je deo naučno-istraživačke delatnosti Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti (Beograd, Srbija), a finansira se po ugovoru sa Ministarstvom prosvete, nauke i tehnološkog razvoja.

SOFT POWER OF THE BALKAN SCREENS
MEKA MOĆ EKRANA BALKANA

Editors / Urednice
Nevena Daković, PhD
Aleksandra Milovanović, PhD

Faculty of Dramatic Arts
Institut for theatre, film, radio and television
Fakultet dramskih umetnosti
Institut za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju

Belgrade / Beograd
2022.

CONTENT/SADRŽAJ

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| FORWARD | 7 |
| PREDGOVOR | 15 |

I TV SERIES / TV SERIJE

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Nevena Daković, Aleksandra Milovanović and Iva Leković</i> CODING SOFT POWER: MEDIA RECEPTION OF SERBIAN TV SERIES Kodiranje meke moći: medijska recepcija srpskih TV serija | 25 |
| <i>Deniz Bayrakdar, Fatma Memici and Levent Soysal</i> CODING SOFT POWER: A MATRIX FOR TURKISH TV SERIES Kodiranje meke moći: matrica turskih TV serija | 41 |
| <i>Milena Kvapil</i> SAVREMENE SRPSKE TELEVIZIJSKE SERIJE I MEKA MOĆ Contemporary Serbian TV Series and Soft Power | 59 |
| <i>Gergana Doncheva</i> THE BULGARIAN TELEVISION SERIES: CONTEXT, DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTERISTICS (2000–2022) Bugarske TV serije: kontekst, razvoj i karakteristike (2000–2022) | 71 |

II OTHER FORMATS OF THE SMALL SCREENS / DRUGI FORMATI MALIH EKRANA

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Sunnie Rucker Chang</i> SERBIA AND SERBS IN THE WORLD: THE IDEAL AS PRESENTED IN THE VI STE SVET (YOU ARE THE WORLD) CAMPAIGN Srbija i Srbi u svetu: idealna slika predstavljena u kampanji Vi ste svet (You are the World) | 85 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|

Vanja Šibalić

**CAMPAGNES PROMOTIONNELLES ET TRAITEMENT
MÉDIATIQUE DE GRANDES COMPÉTITIONS
SPORTIVES – LES OUTILS DU *SOFT POWER*
Promotivne kampanje i medijski tretman
velikih sportskih takmičenja – alati meke moći 97**

Jana Dudková

**ADAPTATIONS BY GORAN MAROJEVIĆ:
BALKANISM REVISITED IN THE CONTEXT
OF CENTRAL-EUROPEAN TELEVISION
Adaptacije Gorana Marojevića: preispitivanje
Balkana u kontekstu srednjoevropske televizije . . . 109**

III CINEMA SCREENS / FILMSKI EKRANI

Angela Brintlinger and Elizabeth McBean

**CONSTRUCTION OF WAR AND MEMORY
IN THE FILMS OF SERGEI LOZNITSA
Konstrukcija rata i sećanja
u filmovima Sergeja Loznice 121**

Jagoda Stamenković

**L'ART DU CINEMA – L'AGENT DIPLOMATIQUE
(DES BALKANS)
Filmska umetnost – diplomatski agent
(Balkana) 139**

Marian Țuțui

**SOFT POWER OF EXOTIC ROMANIA
Meka moć egzotične Rumunije 155**

Notes on Contributors 167

Beleške o autorima 171

Index of Films and TV Series

Indeks filmova i TV serija 175

FOREWORD

Every book, including this one, analysing the phenomenon of soft power has to begin with the canonical definition of the term provided by Joseph Nye (2005) and cited in the majority of the offered texts. In contrast to hard power as coercion through country's "military or economic might" (*ibid.*: 3), soft power "arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies" (*ibid.*: x), with the aim of shaping the attitudes, influencing the opinions and altering the image and identities of those it is addressing. During the long and complex development of the term – as the counterpart to "tangible resources you could drop on your foot or drop on a city" (Nye 2017) – connecting various definitions or rather the variations of the same definition, the notion of soft power "took on political resonance" (*ibid.*). Despite numerous critiques culminating with its almost complete dismissal on the grounds "that 'it's, well, soft'" (*ibid.*), the term grew into an innovative, hybrid concept of "smart power". "The successful combination of hard and soft power resources into effective strategy" (*ibid.*) of the smart power became one of the key words of Hilary Clinton's political strategy during her mandate as the USA Secretary of State. Eventually, successful attempts "to use soft and smart power for the political purpose of centring American foreign policy" (*ibid.*) were sustained by the emerging political crises.

The concept of soft power relates spontaneously with the USA and Western Europe – in archaic terms, with the First World – and their art, media, and cultural production. The national cinemas of the UK, France, Germany, Italy and above all Hollywood, as well as their television production and other formats of creative industries, have become synonymous with high quality influence, strong leadership, globally successful and effective soft power. The texts of soft power thematically related with hard power – wars, military, economic might, political and/or historical figures – are prime examples of "how to" disseminate glorious, noble, dignified and powerful images of the state and the nation. As "the image speaks louder than words", it is sufficient to merely glance at selected clips on *YouTube* that prove the case. In *Top Gear's* reportage "British made motors take over the Mall" (BBC 2013), British Household Cavalry in full dress is parading between the various British-made motorised vehicles (from Bentley and Formula 1 racers to ice-cream vans and tipper-trucks) lined up along the Mall (a short road between Buckingham

Palace and Whitehall). The iconic vehicles are adorned with UK flags flying in the wind while national emblematic music testifies to eternal greatness of the United Kingdom. Videos of the state funeral of recently deceased Queen Elisabeth II (Channel 4 News 2022) display the honour of the monarchy and glory of Empire “on which the sun never sets”. Naturally, it is compared with the scenes of state funerals of other remarkable political figures who – like Queen Elisabeth II – marked the XX century. The most outstanding one is, of course, Tito's funeral (Josip Broz Tito, President of Yugoslavia, 1952–1980), both as a documentary and even more as a brilliantly interpolated archive footage in Emir Kusturica's *Palme d'Or* winning film *Underground (Podzemlje)*, 1995). Furthermore, one has to remember another example from the history of cinema, the emotionally charged scene of the birth of *La Marseillaise* in the eponymous Jean Renoir's film (1938).

Concerning the examples from TV screens, it is sufficient to remember nation glorifying, idealizing, mythologizing series such as *Downton Abbey* (UK, 2010–2015), *Un village français* (FR, 2009–2017) or *The Gilded Age* (USA, 2022–) that according to Dominique Moïsi (2016) promote the hope that prevails over fear and humiliation. In this sense, TV series achieve the status similar to the one James Bond holds in cinema: the best national export product, nation branding instrument and soft power agency. They export the desired, controlled, embellished and universally attractive image of the country.

This book, dealing with the Balkans and soft power of its diverse screens (cinema, TV, digital), departs from the understanding of soft power found in various art and cultural texts, multimedia artefacts, cultural policies and strategies. Its tools belong to the domains of art and culture, cultural industries, material and immaterial heritage. Yet, soft power of the Balkans is not to be seen as the one of centring only foreign policy. Rather, it is the one dominantly centring and reflecting internal policy. In a broader sense, the Balkans soft power aims to promote affirmative and attractive image of the nation, the state and their values both for international and national audiences. It is made both for “external” and “internal use” – as the tool for the imposition of state defined values and ideas with the objective of creating a coherent, strong and unified nation and national identity. Accordingly, the essence of soft power is the process of nation branding (Anholt 2011; Dinnie 2015) involving number of tasks such as: to remould national identities (Olins

1999); to enhance nation's competitiveness (Anholt 2007; Lee 2009); to embrace political, cultural, business and sport activities (Jaffe and Nebenzahl 2001); to promote economic and political interests (Rendon 2003; Szondi 2007); to alter, improve or enhance a nation's image and reputation (Gudjossion 2005; Fan 2006, 2008b, 2009, 2010) both at home and abroad.

Regarding the Balkans, a good example of the ambivalent use – internal and external – and elusive criteria of soft power tools is the selection of the national candidate for the award of the American Film Academy, *Oscar*¹ During the time of SFRY (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1945–1992), the state defined concept for the selection was world appeal and universal attraction it hold for international audience *i.e.* the soft power of the chosen title targeted foreign audiences and public opinion. The aim was to confirm SFRY as the country of good films, quality cinema and developed production system; to make it visible on the world cinema map. National identity, politics, ideology, and social values were of secondary importance. Such a stance was diversely reflected in the chosen films – *The Road a Year Long* (*Cesta duga godinu dana / La strada lunga un anno*, Giuseppe De Santis, 1958), *The Ninth Circle* (*Deveti krug*, France Štiglic, 1960), *Three* (*Tri*, Aleksandar Petrović, 1965), *I Even Met Happy Gypsies* (*Skupljači perja*, Aleksandar Petrović, 1967), *Battle of Neretva* (*Bitka na Neretvi*, Veljko Bulajić, 1969), and *When Father Was Away on Business* (*Otac na službenom putu*, Emir Kusturica, 1985). Today, in the Republic of Serbia, predominant criteria seems to be affirmative and desired portrayal of the society, the state and the nation. Since 2017 and the introduction of a “film with a national theme” in the call for projects by the Film Centre Serbia, in two cases, the national candidates for the Oscar were the films from this new category: *King Petar the First* (*Kralj Petar I*, Petar Ristovski, 2018) and *Dara of Jasenovac* (*Dara iz Jasenovca*, Predrag Antonijević, 2021). On both occasions, the decision was criticised by film professionals and social analysts whilst strongly approved by the state, various groups in power and the widest audience.

The Oscar example brings us to the question of “Who decides about soft power, its aims and formats?”. The obvious answer is the state and its various agencies and institutions. Most certainly, this is true for the Balkan countries where film production is amply supported by the state. However, TV production, and hyper

1 For more see Brašanac 2021.

production of high-quality TV series in Serbia in particular, mainly stay out of state reach. They are financed through sponsors, private companies, international funds, cable channels and, only partially by national television. Their international success is determined by their values, appeal, image – in many cases, not made after institutional prescriptions or subsumed to national political agenda – as well as by producer's personal ambition and entrepreneurship. Moreover, social media oriented and various digital formats of soft power have self-defined dynamic, content and lines of influence.

Despite the initial idea of comparative research of the soft power of the Balkan screens most of the essays in this book deal with national examples arguing that the balkanisation of the region persists in all domains. Inseparable from the issues of soft power (national and balkanised identities, nation branding in the domains of cultural (and public) diplomacy,² cultural heritage and its preservation interrelated with geopolitics, etc.), some of the questions raised in the texts are: How do the Balkan countries use cinema, TV series and digital texts – as tools of soft power or in the process of nation branding?; Is there a state strategy of soft power? If yes, what is the point of that strategy?; Are the strategies of soft power subsumed to actual national political agenda?; Does soft power of Balkan screens relate with foreign policy?; How does it relate to contemporary production as well as to cultural heritage?. The book also tackles the questions of geocriticism (Westphal 2011) by mapping out the soft power of the Balkan screens framed by cultural history, history and media semiotics. The volume consists of three parts focused on TV series, other formats of the small screen and cinema.

The first part – TV SERIES – includes four essays analysing regional TV series as the most prominent soft power media tools and the most popular agent of cultural diplomacy and nation branding. The first two texts do not only have apparently matching titles and mutually complementary content but also shared and jointly developed methodology of media analysis. Both chapters present results of the research carried on within the bilateral (TÜBİTAK–MoESTD) project, *TV Series: A Comparative Perspective – from geopolitics to geocriticism – Serbia and Turkey (TV serije: komparativna studija, od geopolitike do geokritike: Srbija i Turska)*. In the first chapter, “Coding Soft Power: Media reception of Serbian

2 For more see proceedings from the conference *Kulturna diplomatija i kulturni odnosi: jačanje fer saradnje, raznolikosti i dijaloga / Cultural Diplomacy and Cultural Relations: Strengthening Fair Collaboration, Diversity and Dialogue* (Belgrade, University of Arts, June 1–2, 2022).

TV series”, Nevena Daković, Aleksandra Milovanović and Iva Leković explore media reception of four Serbian TV series (*Shadows over Balkan / Black Sun / Senke nad Balkanom*, 2017; *Besa / Besa*, 2018; *Nemanjić Dynasty: the birth of the kingdom / Nemanjići – rađanje kraljevine*, 2018; and *Civil Servant / Državni službenik*, 2019). The chapter by Gülümser Deniz Bayrakdar, Fatma Memici and Levent Soysal, “Coding the TV series: a matrix of Turkish TV series”, explores media narratives of four Turkish TV series (*The Choice / Babil*, 2020; *Persona / Şahsiyet*, 2018); *Bitter Lands / Bir Zamanlar Çukurova*, 2018–2022; and *The Great Seljuks: Guardians of Justice / Uyanış: Büyük Selçuklu*, 2020–2021). The comparative analysis of the eight series (read consecutively or in pairs), points to the genre and the format diversity that allows multiperspective analysis of the soft power – after variety of narrative types, models, codes and matrix. Continuing the discussion along the same lines, the essay “Contemporary Serbian TV Series and Soft Power” / “Savremene srpske televizijske serije i meka moć” touches upon representative strategies of accomplishing geopolitical influence and their applicability in local context. Classifying recent Serbian production, Kvpil sets the framework for Serbian TV series’ soft power, defined by opposed options – nation branding like in Israeli production or region branding prevailing in Nordic production. The essay “The Bulgarian Television Series: context, development and characteristics (2000-2022)” by Gergana Doncheva provides an overview of TV production in another Balkan country, and points out that the rise in national production is the result of intersecting regional and international influences. Doncheva highlights that contemporary Bulgarian TV series represent a response to the very tangible presence of international role models - primarily Turkish TV series. However, lines of influence also come from smaller Balkan countries, such as Serbia and Croatia.

The essays in the second part of the book – OTHER FORMATS OF THE SMALL SCREENS – focus on various TV and video formats, that tackle the subjects overlapping with the domains of foreign politics and sports diplomacy. The essay “Serbia and Serbs of the World: the ideal as presented in the *Vi ste svet* Campaign” by Sunnie Rucker-Chang examines a series of commercials – the author rather chooses to call them *micro-films* – produced by the American Embassy in Belgrade. Acknowledging their high production value, Rucker-Chang analyses the aims, objectives and reception of these micro-films about the historical figures who are simultaneously

part of both Serbian and American culture and history. Special importance is paid to the micro-biopic of Milunka Savić, presented as the “larger-than-life” story that sets an (eponymous) example of the course that Serbian-US relations ought to take. The essay “Promotional Campaigns and Media Coverage of Major Sports Competitions – Soft Power Tools” / “Campagnes promotionnelles et traitement médiatique de grandes compétitions sportives – les outils du *soft power*” by Vanja Šibalić starts from Joseph Nye’s and Philip Lane’s theoretical premises in order to study sports and sport events as a tool of cultural diplomacy. Focusing in particular on media campaign of *Euroleague – Final Four* that was held in Belgrade (May 2022), the author shows how the branding of a sport event (through tag lines, headline, logotypes, LED screen designs etc.) functions also as a tool of nation branding. The essay “Adaptations by Goran Marojević: Balkanism revisited in the context of Central European Television” by Jana Dudková speaks about screen adaptations of plays by Southeastern and Middle European authors that appeared in Slovakia only after the end of the Cold War (1947–1991). After providing an overview of the social context of Marojević’s adaptation of Mrožek’s *The Contract*, Dudková shows how the new TV form contributes to the revision of colonial discourse (on Balkanism and Orientalism) within new historical circumstances.

The third and last part of the book – CINEMA SCREENS – is devoted to Balkan and Eastern European cinemas seen mainly as soft power phenomena, despite the claims made by the authors – that the power of cinema resides equally in the tightly linked and affiliated concepts of memory and history, identity building and nation branding. Angela Brintlinger and Elizabeth McBean, in the essay “Construction of War and Memory in Films of Sergei Loznitsa”, analyse several of Loznitsa’s films made during the past decade, in which Soviet past and post-Soviet present coalesce, peculiarly coinciding with the actual hard power play on the battlefields of Ukraine. Loznitsa’s films deal with individual accountability, collective memory, identity, war and traumas written in the mythic national narratives. The authors reveal the mechanisms of the director’s deconstruction of a conservative public propaganda and position of an individual within it. The following essay by Jagoda Stamenković also presents narratives dealing with the past, but this time displaced to a post-Yugoslav context. The essay “The Art of Cinema – Diplomatic Agent (of the Balkan)” / “L’art du cinéma

– L’agent diplomatique (des Balkan)” offers the analyses of three recent films (*Šavovi / The Stitches*, Miroslav Terzić, 2019; *Otac / Father* Srđan Golubović, 2020; *Quo vadis Aida?*, Jasmila Žbanić, 2020) that are (co)produced by the Balkan countries, supported by a EU fund and nominated for the European Film Academy. The author asks about the kind of soft power of these films; Whether and how it operates in national, regional and/or European terms? Stamenković implies that Balkan coproductions, in accordance with the rules of the *Euroimage*, work in favour of the entire Balkan region, thus positively affecting its image and perception by European audiences. Finally, the essay by Marian Țuțui rethinks the Balkan discourse and co-productions taking the reader to the early years of Balkan cinema and focusing on “Soft Power of the Exotic Romania”. The analysed titles from the begging of the past century reveal the changes of the terminology – from Nicolas Iorga to Joseph Nye. However, the soft power of the Balkans continues to hesitate between the need to synchronize its (media and state) narratives with those of Europe and of a self-colonizing *optique* that attracts various audiences.

Eventually, the essays, as we hope, succeed in making all of us understand why the Balkans have never quite managed to make or use smart power to their advantage.

Nevena Daković
Aleksandra Milovanović
Iva Leković

Literature and Sources

2008. “President Tito’s Funeral, Yugoslavia (film clip from ‘Underground’), *YouTube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wq8QcrjCqko>[Accessed: September 19, 2022].
- “Scene From La Marseillaise (1938)” 2009. *YouTube* [video]. Available at:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JSww4ryiJQ> [Accessed: October 1, 2022].
- Anholt, Simon. 2011. “Beyond the Nation Brand:The Role of Image and Identity in International Relations”, *Exchange: The Journal of Public Diplomacy*: Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 1. Available at: <https://surface.syr.edu/exchange/vol2/iss1/1> [Accessed: October 1, 2022].
- BBC. 2013. “British made motors take over the Mall | Top Gear – BBC”, *YouTube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmcmqTAu6b8> [Accessed October 5, 2022].

- Brašanac, Nevena. 2021. *Nation branding through cinema: Serbian candidates for The Oscars*, MA thesis (supervisor dr Ljiljana Rogač Mijatović, assoc. prof.), University of Arts in Belgrade.
- Channel 4 News. 2022. "Queen Elizabeth II Funeral: royal family say final goodbye", *YouTube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INl4A7yNK0Q>[Accessed September 19, 2022].
- Daković, Nevena. 2022. "Representing Trauma – Writing the Past Into the Present Through Films", *Culture of History Forum*. Available at: <https://www.cultures-of-history.uni-jena.de/serbia/representing-trauma-through-films>[Accessed: October 1, 2022].
- Dinnie, Keith. 2015. *Nation branding: Concepts, issues, practice*. London: Routledge.
- Fan, Ying. 2010. "Branding the Nation: Towards a Better Understanding", *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 6 (2): 97–103.
- Moisi, Dominique. 2016. *La géopolitique des séries ou le triomphe de la peur*. Paris: Editions Stock.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 2005. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs Books.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 2017. "Soft power: the origins and political progress of a concept", *Palgrave Communications*, 3:17008 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2017.8.
- "President Tito's Funeral, Yugoslavia (film clip from 'Underground')" 2008. *YouTube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wq8QcrJCqko> [Accessed: September 19, 2022].
- "Scene From La Marseillaise (1938)" 2009. *YouTube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JSww4ryiJQ> [Accessed: October 1, 2022].
- Westphal, Bertrand. 2011. *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces*. Berlin: Springer.

PREDGOVOR

Svaka knjiga, pa tako i ova, koja se bavi fenomenom *meke moći* gotovo neizostavno počinje kanonskom definicijom Džozefa Naja (2005), citiranom i u većini tekstova predstavljenih u ovoj publikaciji. Nasuprot određenju *tvrde moći*, kao mehanizma prinude putem „vojne i političke sile” (*ibid.*: 3), meka moć „nastaje usled privlačnosti kulture, političkih ideala i politika jedne zemlje” (*ibid.*: x), a sve u cilju tvorbe stavova, uticaja na mišljenja, te oblikovanja slike i identiteta onih kojima se obraća. Tokom dugog i kompleksnog razvoja ovog pojma – koji predstavlja protivtežu „opipljivim resursima na koje je moguće spustiti nogu ili (i)spustiti ih na grad” došlo je do spajanja različitih definicija ili, bolje rečeno, varijacija iste definicije, a pojam meke moći „zadobio je politički odjek”. Uprkos brojnim kritikama koje su kulminirale njenim potpunim odbacivanjem na temelju toga „što je, ipak *meka*” (*ibid.*) – *meka moć* se preobrazila u inovativni hibridni koncept *pametne moći*. „Uspješna kombinacija resursa tvrde i meke moći u efikasnu strategiju” (*ibid.*) *pametne moći* postala je ključna reč političkog diskursa Hilari Klinton na mestu državnog sekretara SAD. Najzad, plodonosna nastojanja „upotrebe *meke* i *pametne* moći u cilju učvršćivanja američke spoljne politike” (*ibid.*) dobila su na značaju novonastalim političkim krizama.

Koncept meke moći sponatno se vezuje za Sjedinjene Američke Države, zapadnu Evropu, odnosno, u arhaičnim pojmovima, za Prvi svet, njegovu umetničku, medijsku i kulturnu produkciju. Nacionalne kinematografije Ujedinjenog Kraljevstva, Francuske, Nemačke, Italije i, iznad svega, Holivuda, i njihova televizijska produkcija kao i drugi formati kreativnih industrija, postali su sinonimi snažnog uticaja, kvalitetnog liderstva, globalnog uspeha i efikasnosti meke moći. Tekstovi *meke moći* koji tematizuju *tvrdnu moć* – ratove, vojsku, ekonomsku moć, političke i istorijske figure – izvrsni su primeri „kako” raditi na diseminaciji slavni, uzvišenih i sugestivnih slika države i nacije. S obzirom na to da „slika govori glasnije od reči”, dovoljno je pogledati odabrane klipove na *Youtube*-u koji potvrđuju ovu izreku. U reportaži *Top Gear*-a „Vozila napravljena u Britaniji ’zauzimaju’ *Mall*”¹ (BBC 2013) konjička garda u paradnim uniformama jaše između kolona raznih motornih vozila, od Bentlija i Formule 1 do kombi vozila za sladoled i kiperu. Kadrovi ikoničkih vozila ukrašenih zastavama Velike Britanije koje se vijore na vetru, praćeni trijumfalnom, amblematskom nacionalnom melodijom, svedoče o večitoj slavi Ujedinjenog Kraljevstva. Snimci sahrane

1 Kratak put između Bakingemske palate i Vajthola.

nedavno preminule kraljice Elizabete II govore o časti i veličini imperije „u kojoj Sunce nikad ne zalazi”. Prirodno, ovi snimci nameću poređenje sa prizorima državnih sahrana drugih značajnih političkih figura, koje su, poput kraljice Elizabete II, obeležile XX vek. Najzapaženiji su, naravno, snimci sahrane Josipa Broza Tita, kako dokumentarni tako i arhivski, briljantno iskorišćeni u montažnoj sekvenci u filmu Emira Kusturice *Podzemlje* (1995). Treba pomenuti još jedan primer iz istorije filma – scene velikog emotivnog naboja o nastanku *Marseljeze* iz istoimenog filma Žana Renoira iz 1938. godine.

Kada je reč o primerima sa TV ekrana, dovoljno je setiti se serija koje slave, idealizuju i mitologizuju naciju, kao što su *Dauntaunska opatija* (*Downton Abbey*, UK, 2010–2015), *Francusko selo* (*Un village français*, FR, 2009–2017) ili *Zlatno doba* (*The Gilded Age*, USA, 2022–), te koje prema Dominiku Mojsiju za izabrane velike nacije, promovišu trijumf nade nad emocijama straha i poniženja. U istom ključu, TV serije su dosegle status sličan onom koji Džejms Bond uživa u svetu filma – postale su najbolji nacionalni izvozni proizvod, instrument brendiranja nacije i agent meke moći. Svi oni, zajedno uzevši, „izvoze” željenu, kontrolisanu, ulepšanu i univerzalno privlačnu sliku države.

Polazeći od Balkana i meke moći njegovih različitih ekrana (film, TV, digitalni i drugi formati), ova knjiga nastoji da doprinese razumevanju meke moći prisutne u različitim umetničkim i kulturnim tekstovima, multimedijalnim artefaktima, kulturnim politikama i strategijama. Alati meke moći pripadaju sferama umetnosti i kulture, kulturne industrije, kao i materijalnog i nematerijalnog nasleđa. Ipak, meku moć ne treba posmatrati isključivo kao sredstvo učvršćivanja spoljne politike, već možda, čak i više, kao sredstvo jačanja načela unutrašnje politike. U širem smislu, oba aspekta ukazuju da meka moć teži promociji pozitivne, afirmativne i dopadljive slike nacije, države i njenih vrednosti namenjenih internacionalnom gledalaštvu. Potonji slučaj sugeriše da je meka moć usmerena ka sopstvenoj naciji i lokalnoj publici; da je napravljena za „unutrašnju upotrebu” i pojmljena kao sredstvo nametanja državno-definisanih vrednosti, ciljeva i ideja, a sve sa ciljem stvaranja koherentne, jake i jedinstvene nacije i nacionalnog identiteta. Shodno tome, suština meke moći jeste *brendiranje nacije* (Anholt 2011; Dinnie 2015), koje podrazumeva procese kao što su: preoblikovanje nacionalnog identiteta (Olins 1999); poboljšanje kompetitivnosti nacije (Anholt 2007; Lee 2009);

prihvatanje političkih, kulturnih, poslovnih i sportskih aktivnosti (Jaffe and Nebenzahl 2001); promovisanje ekonomskih i političkih interesa (Rendon 2003; Szondi 2007); modifikovanje, unapređenje i poboljšanje slike i reputacije nacije (Gudjosson 2005; Fan 2006, 2008b, 2009, 2010) u zemlji i u inostranstvu.

Kada je reč o Balkanu, dobar primer ambivalentne upotrebe – unutrašnje i spoljne – i kriterijuma oruđa meke moći jeste izbor nacionalnog kandidata za nagradu Američke filmske akademije, poznatiju kao Oskar.² U doba SFRJ država je definisala kriterijume selekcije prema principu univerzalne privlačnosti za međunarodnu publiku, tj. meke moći okrenute internacionalnom gledalaštvu i javnom mnjenju sa ciljem potvrde imidža SFRJ kao zemlje dobrih filmova, razvijenog sistema produkcije i njenog upisa na svetsku mapu. Nacionalni identitet, politike, ideologija i društvene vrednosti bile su od sekundarnog značaja. Takav stav je kritički i raznovrsno oslikan u filmovima *Cesta duga godinu dana* (*La strada lunga un anno*, Giuseppe De Santis, 1958), *Deveti krug* (France Štiglic, 1960), *Tri* (Aleksandar Petrović, 1965), *Skupljači perja* (Aleksandar Petrović, 1967), *Bitka na Neretvi* (Veljko Bulajić, 1969), *Otac na službenom putu* (Emir Kusturica, 1985). Danas, u Republici Srbiji, čini se da su kriterijumi izbora svedeni na željeni prikaz društva, države i nacije usmerene ka lokalnoj publici. Nakon 2017. godine i uvođenja nove kategorije na konkursu za projekte Filmskog centra Srbije, film sa nacionalnom tematikom, u dva navrata izbor nacionalnog kandidata za Oskara bio je film podržan na ovom konkursu: *Kralj Petar I* (Petar Ristovski, 2018) i *Dara iz Jasenovca* (Predrag Antonijević, 2021). U oba slučaja, odluka je naišla na kritiku i osudu od strane filmskih profesionalaca i analitičara, odnosno svesrdnu podršku i odobravanje države, vladajućih političkih grupacija i najšire publike.

Primeri nacionalnih kandidata za Oskara otvaraju pitanje o tome ko odlučuje o mekoj moći, njenim ciljevima i formatima. Očigledan odgovor jeste da je to država (Srbija), sa svojim različitim predstavnicima i institucijama koje kontrolišu „proizvodnju” meke moći. Sasvim izvesno, kada je reč o filmu, ovo se odnosi i na druge balkanske zemlje, budući da je produkcija filmova najvećim delom subvencionisana od strane države. Međutim, TV produkcija, posebno hiperprodukcija visokokvalitetnih TV serija, izmiče državnoj kontroli jer je finansiraju privatne kompanije, međunarodni fondovi, kablovski kanali, sponzori i samo delimično

2 Više videti kod Brašanac 2021.

javni servis. Njihov međunarodni uspeh određen je njihovim vrednostima, dopadljivošću i vizuelnim izrazom koji, uglavnom, nisu kreirani prema institucionalnim receptima niti podređeni političkoj agendi. Štaviše, društvene mreže i drugi digitalni formati meke moći poseduju samodefinisanu dinamiku, sadržaj i pravce uticaja.

Uprkos inicijalnoj ideji komparativnog istraživanja *meke moći ekrana Balkana*, većina tekstova u ovoj knjizi bavi se nacionalnim primerima, pokazujući istrajnost *balkanizacije* regiona. Neodvojiva od pitanja meke moći (nacionalnih i balkanizovanih identiteta, brendiranja nacije u domenu kulturne/javne diplomatije,³ kulturnog nasleđa i njegovog očuvanja u sprezi sa međunarodnom politikom, itd.), neka od pitanja otvorenih u ovim tekstovima su: Kako balkanske zemlje koriste film, TV serije i digitalne tekstove – kao oruđa meke moći ili brendiranja nacije?; Da li postoje strategije meke moći?; Ako postoje, ka čemu teže te strategije?; Da li su strategije meke moći u službi nacionalnih i političkih agendi?; Da li je meka moć ekrana Balkana povezana sa spoljnom politikom? Na koji način je povezana sa savremenom produkcijom i sa kulturnim nasleđem? Baveći se i pitanjima geokriticizma, autori mapiraju meku moć ekrana Balkana kroz prizmu kulturne istorije, istorije i medijske semiotike. Knjiga obuhvata tri dela sa tekstovima koji se bave TV serijama, drugim formatima malih ekrana i filmom.

Prvi deo – TV SERIJE – obuhvata četiri poglavlja koja analiziraju regionalne TV serije kao najvažnije medijske alate meke moći i najpopularnije agente kulturne diplomatije i brendiranja nacije. Prva dva poglavlja poseduju slične naslove, komplementaran sadržaj i bave se medijskom analizom zasnovanom na zajednički osmišljenoj metodologiji. Oba rada predstavljaju rezultate istraživačkog projekta *TV serije, komparativna studija – od geopolitike do geokritike: Srbija i Turska (TÜBİTAK–MoESTD)*. U prvom poglavlju, „Kodiranje meke moći: recepcija srpskih TV serija” / „Coding Soft Power: media reception of Serbian TV series” Nevena Daković, Aleksandra Milovanović i Iva Leković istražuju medijsku recepciju četiri srpske TV serije (*Senke nad Balkanom*, 2017; *Besa*, 2018; *Nemanjići – rađanje kraljevine*, 2018; i *Državni službenik*, 2019), dok tekst koji potpisuju Gulumser Deniz Barjakdar, Fatma Memidži i Levant Sojsal, „Kodiranje meke moći: matrica turskih TV serija” / „Coding the TV Series: a matrix of Turkish TV series”, istražuje medijske narative četiri turske TV serije (*Vavilon*

3 Za više informacija, videti izlaganja sa konferencije *Kulturna diplomatija i kulturni odnosi: jačanje fer saradnje, raznolikosti i dijaloga* (Beograd, Univerzitet umetnosti, Jun 1–2, 2022).

/ *Babil*, 2020; *Persona / Şahsiyet*, 2018; *Bilo jednom u Čukurovoj / Bir Zamanlar Çukurova*, 2018–2022; i *Buđenje velikog Seldžučkog carstva / Uyanış: Büyük Selçuklu*, 2020–2021). Analiza ovih osam serija (čitanih uzastopno ili u paru) otkriva komparativnu prirodu projekta, istovremeno, ukazujući na raznovrsnost žanrova i formata koja omogućava multiperspektivno (narativno, kodovno, tipsko) sagledavanje meke moći. Nadovezujući se na diskurs o srpskim TV serijama, mekoj moći i generalno govoreći, balkanskoj produkciji, tekst „Savremene srpske televizijske serije i meka moć” bavi se reprezentativnim strategijama geopolitičkog uticaja TV serija, te preispitivanjem njihove primenjivosti u lokalnom kontekstu. Klasifikacijom recentne srpske produkcije Milena Kvapil uspostavlja referentni okvir meke moći srpskih TV serija, definisan kroz suprotstavljene opcije – brendiranje nacije imanentno izraelskoj produkciji ili brendiranje regiona koje preovlađuje u nordijskoj produkciji. Poglavlje „Bugarske TV serije: kontekst, razvoj i karakteristike (2000–2022)” / „The Bulgarian Television Series: context, development and characteristics (2000-2022)” Gergane Dončeve pruža pregled TV produkcije u još jednoj balkanskoj zemlji, ističući da je rast nacionalne produkcije rezultat ukrštanja različitih regionalnih (i šire gledano) međunarodnih uticaja. Dončeva navodi da savremene bugarske TV serije predstavljaju odgovor na snažno i jasno prisustvo internacionalnih uzora – pre svega, turskih TV serija. Međutim, linije uticaja dolaze i iz manjih balkanskih država, poput Srbije i Hrvatske, koje su sličnije kad je reč o sistemu produkcije.

Poglavlja u drugom delu knjige – DRUGI FORMATI MALIH EKRANA – usredsređena su na različite TV i video formate, a njihovi autori bave se temama i iz domena spoljne politike i sportske diplomatije. Tekst „Srbija i Srbi u svetu: idealna slika predstavljena u kampanji *Vi ste svet (You are the World)*” / „Serbia and Serbs of the World: the ideal as presented in the *Vi ste svet* campaign” Suni Ruker-Čeng istražuje seriju reklama – *mikrofilmova* – rađenih u produkciji Američke ambasade u Beogradu. Konstatujući njihove visoke produkcione vrednosti, Ruker-Čeng analizira ciljeve, namenu i recepciju mikrofilmova posvećenih ličnostima koje istovremeno pripadaju i srpskoj i američkoj kulturi i istoriji. Posebno mesto, prema značaju i pažnji, zauzima *mikrobiografija* Milunke Savić, u kojoj je ova žena i ratnica predstavljena kao „veća od života”, dok sadržaj videa postaje primer u kom pravcu treba razvijati srpsko-američke odnose. Poglavlje „Promotivne kampanje i medijski tretman velikih sportskih takmičenja – alati meke moći” /

„Campagnes promotionnelles et traitement médiatique de grandes compétitions sportives – les outils du *soft power*” Vanje Šibalić polazi od teorijskih premisa Džozefa Naja i Filipa Lejna, promišljajući sport i sportske događaje kao alate kulturne diplomatije. Na primeru medijske kampanje *Euroleague – Final Four* (Beograd, maj 2022), autorka pokazuje na koji način brendiranje jednog sportskog događaja (putem slogana, naslova, logotipa, dizajna LED ekrana itd.) istovremeno funkcioniše kao instrument brendiranja nacije. Tekst „Adaptacije Gorana Marojevića: preispitivanje Balkana u kontekstu srednjoevropske televizije” / „Adaptations by Goran Marojević: Balkanism revisited in the context of central-European television” Jane Dudkove govori o televizijskim adaptacijama tekstova autora iz jugoistočnoevropskih i srednjoevropskih zemalja, nastalih u Slovačkoj po okončanju Hladnog rata. Uvidom u kontekst nastanka Marojevićeve ekranizacije drame *Ugovor* Slavomira Mrožeka, Dudkova otkriva kako TV adaptacija doprinosi preispitivanju kolonijalnog diskursa (Balkanizam i Orijentalizam) u novim istorijskim okolnostima.

Treći i poslednji deo knjige – FILMSKI EKRANI – posvećen je balkanskoj i istočnoevropskoj kinematografiji, prevashodno sagledanoj kroz fenomen meke moći, iako autori ističu da istinska moć filma leži i u blisku povezanim konceptima sećanja i istorije, koji su jednako bitni (ako ne i konstitutivni) u procesima izgradnje identiteta i brendiranja nacije. Endžela Brintlinger i Elizabet Makbin u tekstu „Konstrukcija rata i sećanja u delima Sergeja Loznice” / „Construction of War and Memory in Films of Sergei Loznitsa” analiziraju nekoliko Loznicinih filmova nastalih tokom protekle decenije, u kojima se *meka moć* sovjetske prošosti i postsovjetska sadašnjost spajaju, začudno se poklapajući sa aktuelnim igrama *tvrde moći* na ratištima u Ukrajini. Kroz filmove o individualnoj odgovornosti i kolektivnom pamćenju, identitetu, ratu i traumama upisanim u mitske nacionalne narative, autorke otkrivaju mehanizme rediteljske dekonstrukcije konzervativnog oblika ideološke i državne propagande i pozicije pojedinca u njoj. Naredno poglavlje, „Filmska umetnost – diplomatski agent (Balkana)” / „L’art du cinéma – L’agent diplomatique (des Balkan)” Jagode Stamenković, bavi se postjugoslovenskim narativima okrenutim „suočavanju sa prošlošću” (*Šavovi*, Miroslav Terzić, 2019; *Otac*, Srđan Golubović, 2020; *Quo vadis Aida?*, Jasmila Žbanić, 2020). Autorka postavlja pitanja kakva je meka moć ovih filmova, da li i kako ona deluje u nacionalnim, regionalnim i/ili evropskim

okvirima i sugeriše da balkanske koprodukcije, podržane od strane EU fondova i nominovane za EFA-u, „rade” u korist čitavog regiona, pozitivno menjajući imidž Balkana i njegovu percepciju u Evropi. Najzad, tekst Mariana Tutuia „Meka moć egzotične Rumunije” / „Soft Power of Exotic Romania” nastavlja diskurs o Balkanu i koprodukcijama, vodeći čitaoca u doba pionira filma. Primeri sa početka prošlog veka otkrivaju promene u terminologiji (od Nikole Jorge do Džozefa Naja) meke moći i uticaja filma, kao i nepromenjenu meku moć Balkana koja većito okleva između „usklađivanja” svojih (medijskih i državnih) narativa sa Evropom i samokolonizujuće optike, koja privlači kako lokalnu tako i raznovrsnu publiku.

Na kraju, nadamo se da će ovi tekstovi učiniti da shvatimo zašto Balkan nikada zapravo nije uspeo da uspešno strateški promišlja i koristi *pametnu moć*.

Nevena Daković
Aleksandra Milovanović
Iva Leković

Literatura i izvori

2008. “President Tito's Funeral, Yugoslavia (film clip from 'Underground')”, *YouTube* [video]. Dostupno na: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wq8QcrJCqko>[Pristupljeno: September 19, 2022].
- “Scene From La Marseillaise (1938)”. 2009. *YouTube* [video]. Dostupno na: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JSww4ryiJQ> [Pristupljeno: October 1, 2022].
- Anholt, Simon. 2011. “Beyond the Nation Brand: The Role of Image and Identity in International Relations”, *Exchange: The Journal of Public Diplomacy*: Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 1. Dostupno na: <https://surface.syr.edu/exchange/vol2/iss1/1> [Pristupljeno: October 1, 2022].
- BBC. 2013. “British made motors take over the Mall | Top Gear – BBC”, *YouTube* [video]. Dostupno na: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmcmqTAu6b8> [Pristupljeno: October 5, 2022].
- Brašanac, Nevena. 2021. *Nation branding through cinema: Serbian candidates for The Oscars, MA thesis* (mentor dr Ljiljana Rogač Mijatović, assoc. prof.), University of Arts in Belgrade.
- Channel 4 News. 2022. “Queen Elizabeth II Funeral: royal family say final goodbye”, *YouTube* [video]. Dostupno na: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IN14A7yNK0Q>[Pristupljeno: September 19, 2022].

- Daković, Nevena. 2022. "Representing Trauma – Writing the Past Into the Present Through Films", *Culture of History Forum*. Dostupno na: <https://www.cultures-of-history.uni-jena.de/serbia/representing-trauma-through-films>[Pristupljeno: October 1, 2022].
- Dinnie, Keith. 2015. *Nation branding: Concepts, issues, practice*. London: Routledge.
- Fan, Ying. 2010. "Branding the Nation: Towards a Better Understanding", *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 6 (2): 97–103.
- Moisi, Dominique. 2016. *La géopolitique des séries ou le triomphe de la peur*. Paris: Editions Stock.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 2005. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs Books.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 2017. "Soft power: the origins and political progress of a concept", *Palgrave Communications*, 3:17008 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2017.8.
- „President Tito's Funeral, Yugoslavia (film clip from 'Underground')” 2008. *YouTube* [video]. Dostupno na: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wq8QcrJCqko>[Pristupljeno: September 19, 2022].
- “Scene From La Marseillaise (1938)”. 2009. *YouTube* [video]. Dostupno na: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JSww4ryiJQ> [Pristupljeno: October 1, 2022].
- Westphal, Bertrand. 2011. *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces*. Berlin: Springer.

I

TV SERIES

TV SERIJE

UDK 7.097(497.11)"2017/2021"
327:316.7(497.11)

Nevena DAKOVIĆ
Aleksandra MILOVANOVIĆ
Iva LEKOVIĆ¹
Faculty of Dramatic Arts,
University of Arts, Belgrade

CODING SOFT POWER: MEDIA RECEPTION OF SERBIAN TV SERIES²

Abstract

The significant increase in the number of TV series made in Serbia during recent years has initiated a bilateral project intended as a comparative study of case studies from Serbia and Turkey. The chapter presents the results of the research of soft power of Serbian TV series, - *Shadows over Balkan / Black Sun (Senke nad Balkanom, 2017)*, *Besa (Besa, 2018)*, *Nemanjić Dynasty: the birth of the kingdom (Nemanjići: rađanje kraljevine, 2018)* and *Civil Servant (Državni službenik, 2019)* – as well as their role in the domains of cultural diplomacy and international cultural relations. The analysis relies on qualitative and quantitative methods, i.e. codebook analysis and keywords research concept, used for studying (social) media reception of the series and interpreted after Dominique Moisi's theory of *geopolitics of emotion*.

Keywords: Serbian TV series, coding, soft power, cultural diplomacy, media reception

The iconic images that marked the birth of a new century – collapsing twin towers of the WTC (1973–2001) – have irreversibly changed the world map of *geopolitics of emotions* (Moisi 2008), successively revealing tectonic changes within the *geopolitics of TV series* (Moisi 2016).³ Production expansion and diversification of

1 n.m.dakovic@gmail.com; lolamontirez@gmail.com; ivalekovic@gmail.com;

2 The text is a part of TÜBITAK-MOESTD bilateral project *Television Series, A Comparative Study From Geopolitics to Geocriticism: Serbia and Turkey* (Faculty of Dramatic Arts (University of Arts) in Belgrade and Kadir Has University in Istanbul). This project is part of the scientific-research activities of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (Belgrade, Serbia), financed according to the agreement with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

3 Dominique Moisi in his book *La géopolitique des séries* (2016) does not explicitly connect the two events, but he points out synchronicity in geopolitical changes that followed 9/11 and the expansion in the sector of TV series.

distribution channels have led to the consolidation of the status of TV series as the most popular media content within contemporary audio-visual sphere (Milovanović 2019), and thus set in motion critical problematizing of TV series and their role in cultural diplomacy and related concepts of nation branding and soft power. The present context inspired a Serbian–Turkish bilateral project,⁴ created as a comparative study of TV series in the two countries, as well as in the Balkans in a wider sense. A part of our research focused on *soft power* of Serbian TV series produced between 2017–2021. The case studies – *Shadows ove Balkan / Black Sun* (*Senke nad Balkanom*, Dragan Bjelogrić, 2017), *Besa* (*Besa*, Toni Džordan, 2018), *Nemanjić Dynasty: the birth of the kingdom* (*Nemanjići – rađanje kraljevine*, Marko Marinković, Gordan Mihić, 2018) and *Civil Servant* (*Državni službenik*, Predrag Antonijević, Dimitrije Vojnov, 2019) – were chosen according to criteria of popularity, ratings and awards on national and international scene. Quantitative instruments, such as codebook analysis and keywords research concept, used for studying (social) media reception of the four series⁵, were designed in order to provide an insight into audiences' emotional response. Although this is the most abstract approach, according to Dominique Moisi it is crucial for the transmission of messages and better understanding of world politics. Moisi asserts that TV series have not only become the reflection of world politics, but its creator and shaping agent as well. They have been recognized as an inspiration for politicians and “the best way to get a message across to a wider audience” (Moisi 2016: 6). Furthermore, the same arguments allow the research to be based upon Moisi's argument concerning the privileged place that contemporary series occupy among different media narratives in the processes of understanding today's world from internal (specific) to global (cultural) politics.

The so-called “new era of soft power” is characterized by its ability to “attract and convince” (Nye 2004), “representing an alternative asset of governments towards managing their national interests” (Rogač Mijatović 2014: 32). It functions on all levels – through public (state-regulated) diplomacy as well as through other cultural agents that play a role in international cultural relations. *Soft power* of TV series – defined by media optiques, structures

4 It also implies official bilateral relations between Serbia and Turkey, which have intensified in recent years through number of visits of the two presidents (2017, 2019, 2018, 2021, 2022). During the last visit of the President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Belgrade, in September 2022, several bilateral agreements and memorandums were signed, including the Protocol about the Cooperation between Radio-television Serbia (RTS) and Turkish radio television (TRT).

of fiction, and efficiency in (self)imagining of the nation (nation branding) – represents a field traditionally dominated by media industries of the United States of America, Great Britain, France and other countries of the Global North, which have recently faced notable competition in *Nordic Noir* TV series, Korean, Bollywood and especially Turkish TV series – *Dizi*/soap operas.

Starting a decade ago and especially since 2015, Serbia has made a significant turn in the production of TV series, reflected both in their quantity and quality. At the peak of this trend, just in 2020, twenty series premiered, five renewed their seasons and several were digitally remastered as audio-visual legacy, thus arguing national growth and expansion of media (entertainment) industry (Daković & Milovanović 2022).

During a period of “renaissance of historical themes on national television” (Daković 2018: 21), one season of *Nemanjić Dynasty* and two seasons of *Black Sun* were produced (completely or partially) by RTS (national public service broadcaster). Also, the second season of *Black Sun*, being the first Serbian production that became available on the *Amazon Prime* platform, marked the beginning of the era of export of Serbian TV series. International rights for a spy-thriller *Civil Servant* were bought by a Brazilian digital platform *Globoplay*, and the crime series *Besa* (besides becoming available on *Amazon Prime*) was adapted by a production company from the United Arab Emirates (*Blood Oath*, 2020). During the same period, clear absence of reality ratio in serial storytelling (*ibid.*: 19), typical for previous years, was replaced by actual settings and narratives that made strong impression on *glocal* audience. All this testifies that Serbian TV series have become a competitive asset in the global soft power setting. The following analysis is intended to show how their (social) media reception resonates in the context of current *geopolitics of emotions*.

From front pages to TV series and vice versa

Systematic media analysis of case study series in the first part of this research is based on specially designed keywords research concept. The method entails examination of collected media texts⁵

5 The research collected a total of 50 titles, published until February 2022, in various print and online media. The corpus includes 13 articles devoted to the series *Nemanjić Dynasty*; 19 articles related to the series *Shadows over the Balkans*; 10 articles about the series *Besa*; and 9 articles devoted to the series *Civil servant*. The texts were found in the following media: *RTS, Al Jazeera Balkans, Blic, Peščanik, Svet plus, Mondo, Danas, City Magazin, FCS, N1, Nova RS, BBC, Politika, Noizz, Before After, Nova srpska politička misao, Nedeljnik, Mašina, Espresso, Euronews*.

with the aim of classifying them according to the topics they cover, the field they are dealing with, the social messages they convey, and, most importantly, the presence of keywords chosen on the basis of their relatedness to the concept of nation branding: cultural diplomacy, soft power, memory/history, identity building, multicultural identities, and transnational audiences.⁶

Overall media reception of these series is well illustrated by the headlines that followed their premieres. As Jurica Pavičić writes, “one gets the impression that neither before, nor after the 90s, did a TV series become such a central media event, as it is the case in present day Serbia with the series *Black Sun*” (Pavičić 2018). His words echo in very inspiring, both ludicrous and lucid newspaper titles that follow the series: “‘Shadows over Balkan’: a history we were not taught” (*Vajb Magazine* 2017), “‘Shadows over Balkan’ as a revision of history” (*Peščanik* 2017), “Shadows are still there, but at least the masks are falling” (*Vreme* 2019), “Shadows over Serbian cinema” (*Pečat* 2017), “‘Shadows over Balkan’ as ‘Game of Thrones’” (*Al Jazeera Balkans* 2017), “Shadows over the shadows of the Balkans” (*Peščanik* 2017), “‘Shadows over Balkan’ – between Šotra and Hollywood” (*Nova srpska politička misao* 2017), “‘Shadows over Balkan’ between Shakespeare and ‘Godfather’” (*Danas* 2019).

The series that won the national award (FEDIS 2019) – *Besa* – is acclaimed by headlines such as “The series ‘Besa’ gets an international version” (*FCS* 2020) “The darkest, but the best: why the viewers are thrilled with the series ‘Besa’ and “Can’t wait for the third season!” (*Telegraf* 2022), “I watched ‘Besa’ on the edge of my seat” (*Noizz* 2018), “Who will honour their word in the end?” (*Novosti* 2021), “We watched a sequence of the Serbian series ‘Besa’: the Balkan grief is beyond words” (*Klix.ba* 2021).

Reactions to the series *Civil Servant* are articulated as: “‘Civil Servant’ – a romanticized image of State security service. ‘Serbian way’ – without mincing words, and no good guys and bad guys” (*Nova srpska politička misao* 2019), “The second season of ‘Civil Servant’ restored our faith in national series” (*Noizz* 2020), “‘Civil servant’ reaches Brazil: the popular series will be watched by 30 million people” (*Euronews* 2022).

In contrast to the aforementioned examples, the headlines that accompanied the series *Nemanjić Dynasty* testify about unfulfilled “high hopes and expectations”: “The series about ‘Nemanjić

6 The keywords are explicitly or implicitly present in the texts.

Dynasty’ – a pre-critical review” (Peščanik 2017), “Why ‘Nemanjić Dynasty’ is an absolute TV failure” (Al Jazeera Balkans 2017), “Series ‘Nemanjić Dynasty’ – first episode: Expensive, but cheap” (Peščanik 2018), “Soberly about ‘Nemanjić Dynasty’ – unrealistic expectations, sarcasm and some evil intentions” (Nova srpska politička misao 2018).

| Keywords | soft power | memory/ history | identity building | multicultural identities | transnational audiences |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Black Sun</i> | / | 57.9 % | 15.8 % | 26.3 % | 15.8 % |
| <i>Besa</i> | / | | 10% | 70% | 30% |
| <i>Nemanjić Dynasty: the birth of the kingdom</i> | / | 66.6 % | 41.6 % | / | / |
| <i>Civil Servant</i> | 11.1% | / | 22.2% | 22.2% | 33.3 % |

Table 1. Keywords coding

Keywords analysis (Table 1) reveals that in media reception of both *Nemanjić Dynasty* and *Black Sun* the most common keywords are memory and history, which is a logical result of, both, the themes and the settings of the two series. Their presence is also crucial for the concept of identity building strongly embedded in narratives of memory and history. Unlike the series *Nemanjić Dynasty*, where the notion of identity building is strictly related to national identity, in the context of *Black Sun* this notion can be comprehended as the one including national identity (Serbian, Yugoslav or multiplicity of Yugoslav identities(s)), but also, as a broader “semantic” Balkan identity determined by the structuring binaries of the region. In the *Black Sun*, the issue of identity is addressed in its very title (*Shadows over the Balkans*), inscribed in the notion of the Balkans and its state of perpetual flux. Compliance of series’ narrative with theoretical discourse of the Balkans (Daković 2008: 11) is quoted in the article by Mirza Skenderagić, who explicitly connects it with the notion of the *Balkan genre* (Skenderagić 2017). The two other series – with contemporary themes and crime plots – seem to have caused less controversy in print media. This resulted in a somewhat smaller number of analytical media reviews and, consequently, in more conventional observations. The most emphasised aspects of the series *Besa* refer to the characters, the story and the themes: family, tradition,⁷ Balkan mafia, international police and political establishment.

7 *Besa* is, Albanian word for solemn promise, a word of honor and a traditional custom.

Social messages cited in media refer to the clash between the urban and the rural, the contemporary and the traditional, revenge, justice, privatisation, corruption, but most of all – fatherhood. The subject of family is one given in the tagline – „Family is everything”. Bearing this in mind, it further appears that *Besa* stands on the midpoint between audiences’ demands for a crime plot of sophisticated visual style and of what appears to be a new trend.⁸ According to the words of the series’ creator and director Igor Stoimenov: “*Besa* is a saga about three generations of two families: a Serbian and an Albanian. It is a Balkan series, made with Serbian money, revealing the best, but also the worst of the Balkans” (Rosić 2021).

Frequent appearances of the keyword multicultural identities speak about subcategories such as multilingualism and multinational cast. Identity building is directed more towards Balkan identity, which already begins in the opening credits (similarly as in *Black Sun*)⁹ showing blood flooding over Balkan toponyms. The real map is substituted with images of a human body, whereby “the body gives the environment a spatiotemporal consistency” (Westfall 2011: 64), additionally charting the relations between the “body and the movement” (*ibid.*: 63–68), identity and spatial transgressions.

The notion of transnational audiences, also found among the keywords of this series, points to efficient distribution and export strategies employed by the producers as well as to the mixed Balkan and European crew.

| Media Topics | Story | Characters | Genre | Script | Production Process | Export | Awards | Ratings |
|--------------------------------------------|--------|------------|--------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------|---------|
| <i>Black Sun</i> | 73.7 % | 57.9 % | 31.6 % | 21% | 19% | 5.2% | 8.3% | 3% |
| <i>Nemanjići: the birth of the kingdom</i> | 41.6% | 16.6% | / | 50% | 58.3 % | / | / | 58.3% |
| <i>Besa</i> | 60% | 70% | 30% | 20% | 50% | 20% | 10% | 20% |
| <i>Civil Servant</i> | 88.8% | 55.5% | 77.7% | 55.5% | 44.4% | 11.1% | / | / |

Table 2. Topics in print and online media

The coded media topics of the four series (Table 2) are headed by those that deal with the story and the characters, followed by

8 Dimitrije Vojnov declares that: “now, in my opinion, we have reached the point of saturation with crime series” and the attention of the audience is slowly shifting towards the family series (Manojlović 2020).

9 In visual coding of the *Black Sun*, “the Balkan curse is visualized persuasively in the clear semantics of the opening credits, very much like those in *Game of Thrones*. A stream of deep red, almost black, blood floods scattered dead bodies, a red star, spears and swastikas, signifying the remnants of imperial, Balkan and Yugoslav histories” (Daković 2019: 95).

the production, script, awards, ratings and export. The general statistics makes evident that the topic of ratings dominates the media reception of the series *Nemanjić Dynasty*. The cause of this aberration lies in unfavourable reception of the series on social media that exploded immediately after the broadcasting of the first episode. Almost seen as a trademark of national cultural policy strategy (that failed to meet required standards and great expectations), and a-long-time waited and demanded historical saga,

Nemanjić Dynasty – the first series about medieval history and the birth of the kingdom – was declared a Serbian version of (or rather an attempt at) *Game of Thrones* (2011–2019) – and locally situated epic fiction. In a diachronic [...] political perspective, the moment of the premiere – the celebration of 800 years of Serbian statehood [...] and the coronation of Stefan the First-Crowned (1217) – gives special importance to the series (Daković 2018:20).

Another series whose plot is also submerged into historical context – *Black Sun* – not only initiated a national trend of *quality television* and *complex storytelling* (Milovanović 2019), but appeared as the series with the multi-layered and versatile narrative. In the fields of history, political power, monarchy, secret societies, interwar communist movement, national separatist movements, the role of White Army, and the rise of fascism inspired many exciting and passionate discussions in media coverages. A modest percentage of articles deals with its historical plausibility (16.6%); its role models (25%); and the introduction of *binge viewing* (15.7%) to the Serbian audience, while the production is mentioned as the heritage production (25%).¹⁰ Social messages of the series refer to post-WWI social context, (post-war) crime, class stratification – the phenomena of the 1990s that were “revived and resurrected in their fullest scope and force” (Daković 2019: 91) – providing contemporary audience with a feeling “that the series creates a ‘surrogate identity’ of today's Serbia” (*ibid.*: 93). *Civil Servant*, perfectly fitting Moisi’s definition of *political fiction*,¹¹ is presented in media as a story that tackles some of the very *hard power* fields: geopolitics, diplomacy, secret services, intelligence agents, and (again) family. Highlighted

10 It is praised for “visual fetishisation of a specific part of historical heritage that mediates the image of history through marketing and consumer elements” (Đurović 2017).

11 According to Moisi, the elements of the new genre are a belief in the triumph of hope, woven into the narratives of TV fiction. Moreover, ongoing social political and cultural debates broadly referenced in TV series, make “them a mirror and a reminder of our hopes and fears” (Daković 2019: 92).

social messages refer to nepotism, terrorism and double-identities. The presence of key words reveals similar statistics to the one of *Besa*. Again, the concept of transnational audiences appears with the highest frequency and is followed by keywords referencing multicultural identities and (national) identity building. What seems to be an exception is that it is the only one among the four case studies that is recognized in media for its soft power potential (Table 1). However, the percentage of media texts dealing with this narrative aspect is relatively small, more so if we know that the series has the most exemplary soft power narrative made after the “easily recognizable American matrix” (Tanasić 2019). This suggests successful intertextual playfulness of spy/crime films and TV series – made after Hollywood formula – used for revealing sore points of a social system (Moisi 2019: 18) as well as for boosting patriotism and actions of individuals.

Comparative coding of keywords data shows that media reception of case studies, with rare exceptions, failed to recognize their soft power potential. However, media narratives strongly document their relationship with identity building, a quality closely linked with strategic goals of cultural diplomacy. With the exception of *Nemanjić Dynasty*, the series relate to the ideas of multicultural identities and transnational audiences. Additionally, our coding shows that concepts of memory/history appear in much higher percentages in comparison with other keywords. This substantiate both the dominant media narratives and the claim that “the Balkans produce more history than they can consume”. On the other hand, it highlights the significance of TV series as (pop-)cultural artefacts when it comes to dissemination of historical data, responsibility towards the past and discussions about identity, geopolitical and socio-political issues.

Mapping Emotions: Codebook analysis

The analysis of social media reception serves as a basis for mapping audiences’ emotions (Moisi 2008: 20), while the codebook method, used in the research, is designed and based on content analysis - including *Instagram* posts with still images and videos, captions and comments.¹² Quantitative data regarding the number of followers, likes or comments allow us to compare the series’ popularity in local and regional framework. Coding reveals

¹² The analysis of *Instagram* is based on a sample that includes 10% of the total number of posts.

that official *Instagram* account of the TV series *Besa* has the highest number of followers and, proportionally, the highest number of likes, as well as the highest average number of comments per post. *Black Sun* is next on the list, followed by *Civil Servant* and *Nemanjić Dynasty*. Although the data vary slightly from one social media platform to another,¹³ *Black Sun* and *Besa* are usually found at the top.

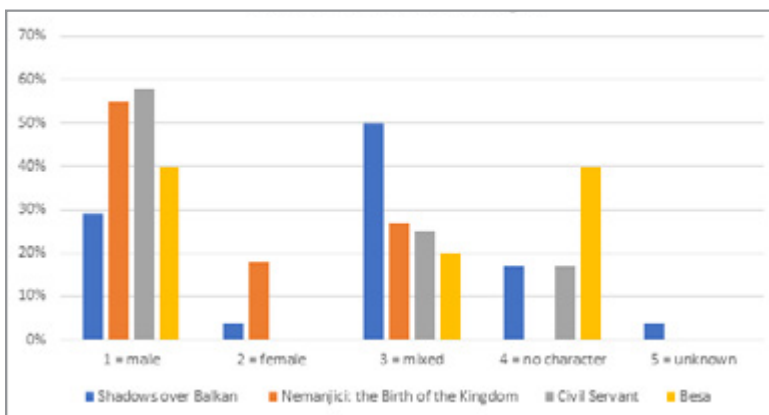


Table 3. Male and female characters on Instagram

The analysis of images posted on *Instagram* pages clearly reveals different variables such as diversity of motives, ratio in representation of characters' sex and characters' social diversity. Comparative systematization of the data (Table 3) shows that in most accounts, with the exception of *Black Sun*, male characters are more present than female. In the account of *Black Sun*, the highest number of posts offer images of all characters regardless of their sex (for the other three series the number is lower, roughly up to the 30% of the analysed images). In the *Nemanjić Dynasty* account, the percentage of posts representing only female characters is the highest. Unlike the series with historical themes, the accounts of the other two series referencing contemporary moment, still very masculine in themes, expectedly show dominant presence of male characters and a lack of images with female characters.¹⁴

The analysis also shows that, beside close-ups or portraits of the characters, the accounts of *Black Sun* and *Nemanjić Dynasty*

13 In comparison, the analysis of *Facebook* pages reveals slightly different statistics: *Black Sun* switched places with *Besa* regarding the number of likes per page, number of followers and likes per post, but still *Besa's* account remains the most commented one.

14 These results are even more indicative when compared with the claim of Dimitrije Vojnov "Civil Servant is, first of all, a series about the family [...], a series about fathers and sons, about sins of ancestors that are passed on to descendants, but above all it is a series about women who have to be strong in the man's world" (Vojnov 2019).

frequently contain images of national monuments and animals. On the other hand, the visuals of the accounts of *Besa* and *Civil Servant* are marked by strong and frequent presence of weapons, further indicating story setting and genre aspects.

Also, in the case of *Black Sun*, the diversity of social groups (clergy, detectives, capitalists, working class, petty criminals, bourgeoisie, artists, prostitutes, government officials, secret society members) represented on *Instagram* visuals stands out. In case of the other three series this “image of society” is more narrowly focused. In the account of *Nemanjić Dynasty* representation of social diversity includes: monarchs, clergy, warriors and peasants. In the account of *Civil Servant* we can see intelligence community, field agents, IT professionals; and in the account of *Besa* the most present are images of criminals, police officers and family people.

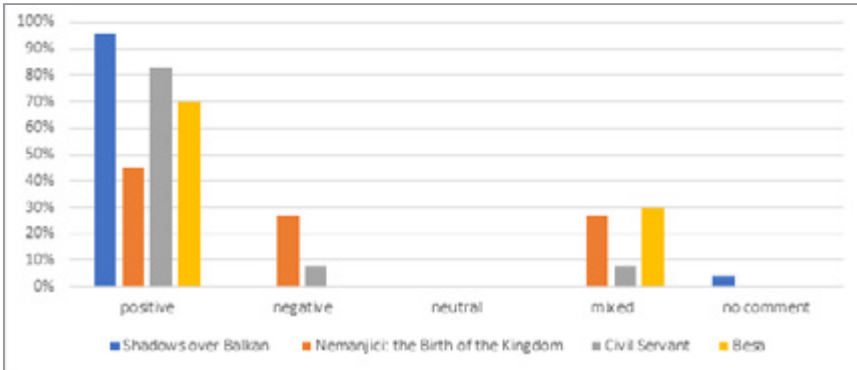


Table 4. Emotions of Instagram comments

The section of the codebook dealing with audiences’ emotions in the comments (Table 4) shows that the *Instagram* account of *Black Sun* has the highest percentage of positive comments, followed by *Civil Servant* and *Besa*, while the *Nemanjić Dynasty* account has the lowest percentage of positive comments.¹⁵ In the comments of *Black Sun* and *Besa*, instead of negative there are rather ambiguous reactions. Each of the accounts has a small percentage of posts in a foreign language, arguing that the discussion is contained within local and regional circles.

Negative comments of the TV series *Nemanjić Dynasty* in social media, are abundantly discussed in media. *Facebook* account of the series is filled with comments such as: “Except for the music and the costumes, everything else is miserable, wretched and shameful.

¹⁵ Regarding the statistics of online forums dedicated to these series, again TV series *Shadows over Balkan* and *Besa* have the highest and almost equal number of positive comments; *Civil servant* is again third on the list, while among comments about *Nemanjić Dynasty* the majority has negative intonation.

They ruined the whole nation, destroyed the idea and wasted the money. [...] all “partisan” films are better done than this attempt at a series” (Pjevalica 2018) “You don't have to look at Hollywood, just remember *Battle of Kosovo* and the series *Vuk Karadžić*, and then you will see all the tragedy of this, so called historical series!” (Ignjatović 2018) etc.

Despite an overwhelmingly negative tone, the comments confirm that audiences experience TV narratives as an important reflection of national pride and identity, while the praise for the costumes and music proves that they are attentive to every detail. In both traditional (50%) and social media, most of the criticism of the series is directed towards the script (language anachronisms, historical inaccuracy, fragmentation, confusing ellipses). The analysis of captions shows that they do not see any social, political or religious messages (or if they do, such captions rarely exceed 10%). A notable exception is the account of *Nemanjić Dynasty*, where captions with religious messages prevail (over 20%).

Audience reception of *quality television* (characterised by large scale production, genre hybridization, visual style and narrative diversity) recalls Moisi's words that the main reason for the great success of contemporary (American) TV series is the exceptional quality of their screenplay (Moisi 2016: 19). Audience's emotional response to the four Serbian series is well illustrated with adjectives used in respective social media comments. *Black Sun* is seen as: “a world-class series”; “a series worth every minute spent watching” (Borković 2020); “Historically very accurate and correct in terms of chronology” (*ibid.*). Often used comparisons with Hollywood (Skenderagić 2017; Petrović 2017; Đurović 2017; Bajić 2019), Martin Scorsese's productions (*Gangs of New York*, 2002; *Boardwalk Empire*, 2010–2014) or popular TV series such as *Peaky Blinders* (Steven Knight, 2013), confirm it as the one “full of pop cultural eclecticism” (Daković 2019).

The thrill and the excitement concerning the series *Besa*, are given in indicative phrases: “The series is brutal” / “brutally well done!” (_springvibes 2021) / “...the script is merciless and cruel” (NaEdenCovekBratMu 2019). A *Twitter* user makes an interesting comparison claiming that: “The best series of the 21st century in Serbia is *Besa* and only *Vratiće se rode* can match it” (Kljajić 2021).

Nation wide reception of *Civilservant* is described as: “awesome” (Cvetković 2020) / “an outstanding series” (Milosavljevic-Djuric

2020) / “flawless production” (Jovičić 2020). The fact that *Civil Servant* was not shown on RTS “is a disastrous mistake” (Kecha Radović 2020; Milosavljevic-Djuric 2020) as audience rightfully recognized it as a story of national and nation-wide interest. Finally, audience firmly states that “in our country, in recent years, quite serious series have been made” (Matić 2020), acknowledging their ability to “attract and convince” and therefore their soft power potential as well.

Conclusion

The analysis of the four case studies enabled us to map out the coding of contemporary Serbian TV series in terms of their production contexts, narratives and settings. Through the chronology of their premiers, we can also trace the changes of the context of production and that of reception. Gradual substitution of classical with more complex television models also points to the changes in cultural policy. Two historical series that premiered the same year (2017), show significant differences therefore making us realize how an old model of soft power very close to unbound and intrusive propaganda (*Nemanjić Dynasty*) is replaced with a new one of higher quality and better screenplay (*Black Sun*). Successful placement of *Black Sun*, *Besa* and *Civil Servant* on the world programmes, channels and streaming platforms testify about a new era of cultural diplomacy and the potentials of soft power, both of which await state regulation and new strategies. All three series are multilingual, made with international cast and crew, and have good export strategies, all of which enable them to reach the widest audiences and to increase visibility of the Republic of Serbia on the international scene. By opting for regionally based soft power – one that redefines and popularizes the Balkans as a geopolitical notion, historical entity, cultural and civilizational space – their high quality plays a crucial role in the process.

Literature and Sources

- Borković, Aleksandar. 2020. "The Filmske Recenzije", *Facebook*, May 31 2020. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2928085650602094&id=465594223517928&comment_id=2928087383935254 [Accessed: December 13, 2021].
- Daković, Nevena. 2008. *Balkan kao (filmski) žanr*. Beograd: Institut za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju, Fakultet dramskih umetnosti.
- Daković, Nevena. 2018. "Mediji o medijima: od naslovnih strana do TV serija (*Novine, Crno-bijeli svijet, Ubice mog oca*)", *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, br. 34: 13–27.
- Daković, Nevena. 2020. "Belgrade between the Wars: Imperial Shadows on the Screen", *European Review*, no. 28: 90–101.
- Daković, Nevena & Milovanović, Aleksandra. 2022. "Meka moć Balkana", *Kultura: časopis za sociologiju kulture i kulturnu politiku*, br. 173: 83–96.
- Cvetković, Snežana. 2020. "Državni službenik", *Facebook*, November 16, 2020. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/drzavnisluzbenikserija/posts/398671198213775> [Accessed: December 16, 2021].
- Ignjatović, Branislav. 2018. "Nemanjići – rađanje kraljevine", *Facebook*, May 12, 2018. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NemanjiciRTS/videos/754226641632585/> [Accessed: December 6, 2021].
- Jovičić, Dejan. 2020. "Državni službenik", *Facebook*, November 19, 2020. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/drzavnisluzbenikserija/posts/398677954879766?comment_id=398774124870149 [Accessed: December 13, 2021].
- Kecha Radović, Gordana. 2020. "Državni službenik", *Facebook*, November 19, 2020. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/drzavnisluzbenikserija/posts/398671198213775> [Accessed: December 6, 2021].
- Kljajić, Stevan. 2021. "Online Danas", *Twitter*, January 1, 2022. Available at: https://twitter.com/kljajic_stevan/status/1477057043630632965?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw [Accessed: October 20, 2021].
- Manojlović, Ana. 2020. "Dimitrije Vojnov: Klatno gledanosti prelazi na porodične serije", *RTS*, Available at: <https://www.rts.rs/page/magazine/sr/story/411/film-i-tv/4163768/dimitrije-vojnov-drzavni-sliuzbenik-scenario-serije.html> [Accessed: October 20, 2021].
- Matić, Vladislav. 2020. "The Filmske Recenzije", *Facebook*, May 31 2020. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2928085650602094&id=465594223517928&comment_id=2928127373931255 [Accessed: December 13, 2021].

- Milovanović, Aleksandra. 2019. *Ka novim medijima: transmedijalni narativi između filma i televizije*. Beograd: Fakultet dramskih umetnosti i Filmski centar Srbije.
- Milosavljevic-Djuric, Mirjana. 2020. "Državni službenik", *Facebook*, November 19, 2020. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/drzavnisluzbenikserija/posts/398671198213775> [Accessed: December 13, 2021].
- Moisi, Domonique. 2008. *The Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear, Humiliation, and Hope are Reshaping the World*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Moisi, Domonique. 2016. *La géopolitique des séries*. Paris: Stock.
- NaEdenCovekBratMu. 2019. "Besa (2018)", *forum.titlovi*. Available at: https://forum.titlovi.com/besa-2018_t92134.html [Accessed: December 6, 2021].
- Pavičić, Jurica. 2018. "Senke nad Balkanom, kako je serija Dragana Bjelogrića postala središnji medijski događaj u Srbiji", *Jutarnji list* (6. 1. 2018) Available at: <https://www.jutarnji.hr/kultura/film-i-televizija/kako-je-serija-dragana-bjelogrlica-postala-sredisnji-medijski-dogadaj-u-srbiji-gangsterska-prica-u-nostalgicnom-sjaju-prve-jugoslavije-6907032> [Accessed: October 20, 2021].
- Pjevalica, Nikola. 2018. "Nemanjići – rađanje kraljevine", *Facebook*, May 12 2018. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NemanjiciRTS/videos/754226641632585/> [Accessed: December 16, 2021].
- Rosić, Branko. 2021. "Tea Korolijai Igor Stoimenov: 'Besa' nosi snažan iskorak", *Nedeljnik*. Available at: <https://www.nedeljnik.rs/besa-nosi-snazan-iskorak/> [Accessed: December 16, 2021].
- Skenderagić, Mirza. 2017. "'Senke nad Balkanom' kao 'Igra prijestolja'", *Al Jazeera Balkans*, available at: <https://balkans.aljazeera.net teme/2017/11/26/senke-nad-balkanom-kao-igra-prijestolja> [Accessed: August 17, 2022].
- Tanasić, Nikola. 2020. "'Državni službenik' – romansirana slika državne bezbednosti na srpski način – bez dlake na jeziku, i bez dobrih i loših momaka", *Nova srpska politička misao*, dostupno na: <http://www.nspm.rs/kulturna-politika/drzavni-sluzbenik-%E2%80%93-romansirana-slika-drzavne-bezbednosti-na-srpski-nacin.html?alphabet=1> [Accessed: December 16, 2021].
- Vojnov, Dimitrije. 2019. „Kako je Služba postala Agencija – kratka televizijska istorija srpskih tajnih agenata”, *Blic*. Available at: <https://drzavnisluzbenik.blogspot.com/2019/04/kako-je-sluzba-postala-agencija-kratka.html> [Accessed: August 17, 2022].
- Westphal, Bertrand. 2011. *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nevena DAKOVIĆ
Aleksandra MILOVANOVIĆ
Iva LEKOVIĆ
Fakultet dramskih umetnosti
Univerzitet umetnosti u Beogradu

KODIRANJE MEKE MOĆI: MEDIJSKA RECEPCIJA SRPSKIH TV SERIJA

Apstrakt

Značajan porast broja TV serija proizvedenih u Srbiji proteklih godina svedoči o pojavi globalnog trenda u nacionalnoj produkciji. Posredno, poslužio je kao podsticaj za bilateralni projekat, zamišljen kao komparativna analiza srpskih i turskih TV serija. Ovaj rad predstavlja deo rezultata istraživanja meke moći srpskih TV serija i njihovih „kodova” kao i uloga u polju kulturne diplomatije i međunarodnih kulturnih odnosa. Analiza medijske (štampani, *online* mediji i društvene mreže) recepcije četiri studije slučaja – *Senke nad Balkanom* (2017), *Besa* (2018), *Nemanjići – rađanje kraljevine* (2018) i *Državni službenik* (2019) – koristi kvalitativne i kvantitativne metode (*codebook* metoda, ključne reči). Konačno, rezultati analize interpretirani su i prema teoriji geopolitike emocija Dominika Mojsija.

Ključne reči: srpske TV serije, kodiranje, meka moć, kulturna diplomatija, medijska recepcija

UDK 7.097(560)"2018/2022"
316.774(560)"2018/2022"

Deniz BAYRAKDAR
Fatma MEMICI
Levent SOYSAL¹
Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Türkiye

CODING SOFT POWER: A MATRIX FOR TURKISH TV SERIES²

Abstract

This article is based on the results of the media analysis phase of the TÜBİTAK-MoESTD Project: 220N370_TV Series: *A Comparative Perspective-From Geopolitics to Geocriticism, Serbia and Türkiye*. The aim of this paper is to categorize soft power codes embedded in the narratives of the Turkish TV series (*The Choice (Babil, 2020)*, *Persona (Şahsiyet, 2018)*, *The Great Seljuks: Guardians of Justice (Uyanış: Büyük Selçuklu, 2020–2021)* and *Bitter Lands (Bir Zamanlar Çukurova, 2018–2022)*) through an analysis of print and social media. Thus, a theme matrix, based on textual analysis of the selected series, integrates the keywords from print and social media analyses, primarily dealing with soft power. *Persona* and *The Choice* as counter-narratives, working outside the traditional comfort zone of the canonic soft power applications, speak from the margins to the centre (Bhabha 2013), whereas *Bitter Lands* re-constitutes the patriarchy and *The Great Seljuks: Guardians of Justice* “trans-myths” Turkish roots.

Keywords: Turkish TV series, soft power, geopolitics, geocritism

Turkish TV Series and Soft Power

The change and transformation of communication and social media resulted in a world of images and influences of soft power in a post-modern world, as it was once defined by geopolitics and hard power. Since the 1970s Cultural studies have been concerned with identities and network societies, e.g. in the work of Manuel Castells: *The Network Society: From Knowledge to Policy* (2006). However, the war in Europe makes us reconsider soft and hard power issues

1 denizb@khas.edu.tr; 20161305003@stu.khas.edu.tr; levsoy@khas.edu.tr.

2 This paper was made as part of TÜBİTAK-MoESTD Project: 220N370_TV Series: *A Comparative Perspective - From Geopolitics to Geocriticism, Serbia and Türkiye*.

and, more than ever, to give geopolitics a priority despite the fact that social media seem to increase the urgency for change in some countries. Hard power is still in charge, hence one should foster the ways of gaining peace through methods of soft power. Soft power is applied through cultural diplomacy which relies on “intellectual marketing” of countries foregrounding their identities by showing their differences and articulating their values. TV series, in most cases, function as cultural diplomacy agents in a more effective way. The role of Turkish series as cultural diplomacy agents supports Gilboa’s model of media and media broker diplomacy – in which media take the role of diplomats and act in international negotiations (Gilboa 2008: 4).³

Joseph S. Nye defines soft power as “the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes you want” (2008: 95). He thinks that the real use of soft power is “to make others think the way you want them to think – makes people co-opt rather than coerce”(ibid.). Whereas Vladimir Putin’s statement – “Soft power is a *matrix* of tools and methods to reach foreign policy goals without the use of arms but by exerting information and other levers of influence.” – goes more in the *informational direction* than attractions (Putin as cited in Singh, McDonald & Son 2021: 76).

These arguments consider soft power as functioning from one centre – the state and its cultural and public diplomacy strategies and facilities – while at the same time acknowledging that there is no longer one centre that dictates what the global audiences should be watching, reading, and enjoying. Brazil, India, Korea, China, Türkiye, and other countries, are now recognized production centres for regional and global flows of cultural products. The networks spanning cultural flows do not necessarily originate in the US and are, only, then transplanted into the rest of the world.

3 Traditional public diplomacy on the other hand according to Hwajung Kim has undergone a paradigm shift in the information age (2017). The combination of “new” public diplomacy and soft power has become the formula for how international cultural exchanges and programs work in contemporary diplomatic activities and has brought a new perspective on arts and culture as means of soft power. She sees cultural diplomacy as an “intersectional concept of new public diplomacy and international cultural relations”. The exchange of art and culture between countries nowadays happens mostly in the area of TV formats, and series. The investment in cultural diplomacy is not only the work done directly by states, but also by cultural institutes, galleries, workshop places, film festivals, encounters of youth and children, and women and migrants nowadays play a great role in cultural diplomacy. Concerning Türkiye’s cultural diplomacy TV series are one of the main categories among other popular media products. Discussion on public and cultural diplomacy is differently approached by scholars and international relations experts. Kim points out that her understanding of public diplomacy sees cultural diplomacy as public diplomacy; whereas Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte (2009) consider cultural diplomacy as the core of public diplomacy, Henrikson (2005) defines ‘engagement diplomacy’ and omits both public and cultural diplomacy; Zicheng and Qingmin (2013) discuss the terms “in different domains”. Türkiye’s cultural diplomacy can be seen in line with Nye’s perspective whereas the cultural industries build public diplomacy by applying soft power.

Global companies like Netflix are in a way required to pay respect to the localization of their products in order to survive and surpass/overcome or transgress local markets. Not only do national programs exceed imports, but they extend to markets not imagined before; they find audiences in supposedly unlikely places; and blur the distinctions between indigenous and foreign formats, aesthetics, and tastes. This is exactly the case with Turkish TV series that as a soft power tool promote Turkish products, tourism, and language. In 2015, Türkiye sold 1,035,000 hours of drama to 75 countries and grossed approximately 300 million dollars while in 2018 this number increased to 350 million dollars (Ahmed 2019). Today, Türkiye is the world's second-largest exporter of television series after the United States. Turkish TV series are watched by more than 650 million people in more than 140 countries (*Tooistanbul n.d.*), ranging from South America and Asia to Arabic countries and to the Balkans.

This article is based partially on the media analysis phase of the project with the aim to categorize the soft power codes embedded in the narratives of the four selected Turkish TV series (*The Choice (Babil, Uluç Bayraktar, 2020)*, *Persona (Şahsiyet, Onur Saylak, 2018)*, *The Great Seljuks: Guardians of Justice (Uyanış: Büyük Selçuklu, Sedat İnci, 2020–2021)* and *Bitter Lands (Bir Zamanlar Çukurova, Murat Saraçoğlu et al., 2018–2022)*). The results of the media analysis – realized in the first phase of the project (September 2021– September 2022) – involved a literature survey; print media analysis worked out through the word cloud method; social media analysis done by codebook method; essays based on the textual analysis and a theme matrix derived there of and discussed in the conclusion (Figure 1). The media analysis of the project helped to reveal the matrix of soft power embedded in the Turkish TV series. The theme matrix as the outcome of the textual analysis of the selected series is integrated with the keywords from print and media analyses, primarily dealing with soft power. In the following text, we present part of the results of the media analysis that answer our research questions in order to prove the Turkish series as a global phenomenon.

The Media Analysis of the Turkish TV Series

The four case studies chosen for analysis - representing four genres: historical and social dramas, melodramas, and film noir and the ones with the highest ratings – are:

- The social drama *The Choice* includes the themes of family, industry, the city of Istanbul and power games between social classes. The series illustrates the neoliberal, global capital accumulation in metropolitan Istanbul.

- *Persona* is a web “noir” series. The main character, Agah Beyoğlu’s (Haluk Bilginer) actions are motivated both, by a will to do justice, bring order back and (re)gain his persona and by the wish to save his memory and fight back the forgetting the past.

- The historical epic *The Great Seljuks: Guardians of Justice* centres on the story of the Seljuk Empire reigned by Melikşah who has to choose between the survival of the state or of his family while the former imperatively means to follow and respect the word of Nizamülmülk.

- *Bitter Lands* is a family melodrama based on the clash of landlords and fugitives and workers on a cotton farm.

The media analysis of the project is based on the textual and codebook analysis of the series – the first phase of the project – followed by the second phase which includes data analysis of the focus group study of Serbian and Turkish series and in-depth interviews with the representatives of the Turkish TV series sector. In the media analysis phase of the project, both print media and social media analyses were done. For the print media analysis, eighty news items, articles, and blogs on websites of printed newspapers, blog pages, news of online newspapers, and news published on websites of the TV channels were systematically scanned and analysed.⁴ The social media analysis was realised by examining the content shared in the social media accounts of the series by using a specifically created codebook for the project.

Print Media Analysis

The concern of the print media analysis were the topics covered by the articles and the themes focused on by the news in the printed press. For the analysis, 80 articles were scanned and it was examined whether topics such as cultural diplomacy, soft power and production process, and transnational audiences were covered in these articles. Also, the most repeated words in the articles were found.

⁴ In the systematic print media analysis, news and blogs of the following websites are covered: *NTV, Sözcü, Posta, Cumhuriyet, Ranini.tv, Sondakika.com, Beyazperde, Filmlovers, Show TV, Hakimiyet Gazetesi, Birgün, Son TV, BBC News, Ay Yapım, Gazete Duvar, Bigumigu, Kültür İstanbul, GZT, Evrensel, Milliyet, Timetürk, Akit, Yeniakit, Vatan, Anadolu Ajansı, F5Haber, Mynet, Televizyon Gazetesi, CNN Türk, Sabah, Hürriyet, Habertürk, Ensonhaber.com.*

Thus, the analysis of the thirteen news articles about *The Choice* shows that 30.77% are about cultural diplomacy, 7.69% about soft power, and 7.69% about transnational audiences. It can be said that the most frequently repeated words in the news reflect the messages of the series such as social classes, economy, adventure, love, and violence. *The Choice* carries messages about money (such as low minimum wage), power, and ethical values (NTV 2020). The series was discussed a lot on social media regarding its messages on fatherhood (NTV 2020a). The broadcast of the first episode made it the first-ranked Twitter agenda (*Son Dakika* 2020) and maintained its rank in the ratings for a long time (NTV 2020b). The popularity of the series on social media was effective in its successful export to more than seventy countries such as Latin America, Georgia, Albania, Israel, Northern Iraq, and Bangladesh (*Ranini TV* 2020).

The analysis of the twenty-one news articles about *Persona* shows that 38.10% are about transnational audiences, 33.33% about memory/history, and 14.29% about identity building. The most frequently repeated words are on the success of the series, Emmy awards, and adaptations as well as those related to the keywords of the series, such as memory (the series attempts to establish a relationship between individual and social memory (NTV 2020c)), Alzheimer, retirement, countries (Germany, Australia, Britain), and places like Istanbul, Beyoğlu, Gölyazı, and Kambura (*Persona* was shot in Istanbul's iconic landscapes such as Çamlıca Hill, Beykoz Grove, Riva, Beyoğlu, Asmalı Mescit, and Gölyazı (Evren 2021)). With its rich offer of social messages on justice, a sense of conscience, the place of women in society, being idealistic and brave (Çınar 2019), the TV series has reached 15 million viewers on Puhutv (*BirGün* 2019). *Persona's* lead actor, Haluk Bilginer, won the Best Actor award at International Emmy Awards (BBC2019). Shortly after receiving the Emmy award, the series ranked 33rd on IMDb's "Top 100 TV Shows of All Time" list (NTV 2019). It was the first Turkish TV series to be sold in Germany (*Sözcü* 2020) and the Mexican adaptation under the name *Asesino del Olvido* (Jorge Tijerina, 2021) was broadcast on HBO Max (Yenilmez 2021).

News articles analysed regarding *The Great Seljuks* series show that 50% of news is about memory/history and 40% about identity building. The most frequently used words reflecting the topics are history, sultan, Islam, Arabic, mosque, Byzantine, Türkiye, local and national, culture, political, peace, democracy, struggle, partisan, soldier, reputation, and the words reflecting the success of the series

are award, success, and popularity. The series about the Great Seljuk period, which has a significant place in Türkiye's cultural memory, is shot to share the political, cultural, and intellectual motivations of that period with the public (*Yeni Akit* 2021). The series is an important source of Türkiye's soft power in the Arab and Islamic world, as it strengthens Türkiye's Muslim identity with its political and symbolic messages. Simultaneously, it succeeds in creating and promoting a Turkish Muslim intellectual and cultural heritage in a contemporary and professional manner (*Gazeteduvar* 2020).

The analysis of thirty-four news articles about *Bitter Lands* reveals that only 8.82% is about identity building. The most frequent words are the names of places like Adana, Istanbul, Diyarbakır, Ankara, and Kozan as well as homeland, soil, farm, love, and success. The 1970s, family, strong, happy, dangerous, and handsome are often used adjectives. The first season of the series ranked first in the ratings for a long time (*Son TV* 2018). The series received “The Best Foreign Series Award” at the Produ Awards 2020 (*Sabah* 2020).

Social Media Analysis

The social media analysis deals with the official *Instagram* accounts of the TV series using a codebook limited only to static posts, their captions, and comments. Each account is analysed by two separate coders and intercoder reliability ratios are checked. The analysis of variables and levels is taken against the averages of the posts and their ratios to the total number⁵ (see Table 1).

| Analysis of Comments | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | | <i>Persona</i> | <i>The Choice</i> | <i>The Great Seljuks</i> | <i>Bitter Lands</i> |
| Sentiments of the comments | Positive | 37.50% | 59.09% | 29.17% | 22.54% |
| | Negative | 0.00% | 0.00% | 2.50% | 13.33% |
| | Neutral | 0.00% | 0.00% | 1.67% | 13.02% |
| Hate speech of the comments | Yes | 0.00% | 0.00% | 3.33% | 2.22% |
| | No | 100.00% | 100.00% | 96.67% | 96.83% |

5 In the study, 10% of the total number of posts were selected. 44 images from *Babil* (total number of posts is 432), 315 images from *Bitter Lands* (total number of posts is 3174), 16 images from *Persona* (total number of posts is 156), and 120 images from *The Great Seljuks* (total number of posts is 1200) were selected for the analysis.

During the main study, all the images – except those taken as a single image – in the carousel posts, captions, and comments (3 comments from the beginning, middle, and the end for each post) were analysed. The codebook included variables such as landscapes, animals, objects, characters, spaces, symbols, social, political, and religious messages present in the images and the content of the comments and captions. These variables are interconnected and in most of the series, they function as coded soft power elements. The intercoder reliability rate for the analysis of each account is at least 70%.

CODING SOFT POWER: A MATRIX FOR TURKISH TV SERIES

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Comments in foreign language | Yes | 25.00% | 29.55% | 10.00% | 7.62% |
| | No | 75.00% | 63.64% | 90.00% | 92.38% |
| | More Than One ⁶ | 0.00% | 6.82% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Analysis of Captions | | | | | |
| | | <i>Persona</i> | <i>The Choice</i> | <i>The Great Seljuks</i> | <i>Bitter Lands</i> |
| Political messages in the captions | Yes | 0.00% | 0.00% | 8.33% | 0.00% |
| | No | 100.00% | 100.00% | 91.67% | 100.00% |
| Social messages in the captions | Yes | 0.00% | 0.00% | 2.50% | 0.32% |
| | No | 100.00% | 100.00% | 97.50% | 99.68% |
| Religious messages in the captions | Yes | 0.00% | 0.00% | 6.67% | 0.00% |
| | No | 100.00% | 100.00% | 93.33% | 100.00% |
| Analysis of Posts⁷ | | | | | |
| | | <i>Persona</i> | <i>The Choice</i> | <i>The Great Seljuks</i> | <i>Bitter Lands</i> |
| Characters' socio-economic classes | Upper class | 0.00% | 65.91% | 55.83% | 47.94% |
| | Middle class | 81.25% | 0.00% | 17.50% | 6.98% |
| | Lower class | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 4.13% |
| Characters' occupations | Soldier/Warrior | 0.00% | 2.27% | 20.00% | 0.00% |
| | Religious | 0.00% | 0.00% | 10.83% | 0.32% |
| | Retired | 37.50% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 1.59% |
| | Businessperson | 0.00% | 20.45% | 0.00% | 21.27% |
| | Labourer | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 1.27% |
| Characters' sentiments | Happy | 12.50% | 11.36% | 8.33% | 6.98% |
| | Serious | 18.75% | 11.36% | 43.33% | 20.32% |
| | Angry | 0.00% | 6.82% | 6.67% | 3.49% |
| | Sad | 0.00% | 18.18% | 3.33% | 10.79% |
| | Fearful | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.83% | 1.27% |
| Animals | Horse | 0.00% | 0.00% | 11.67% | 0.95% |
| | Dog | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.32% |
| | Eagle | 0.00% | 0.00% | 1.67% | 0.00% |
| Religious symbols | Cross | 0.00% | 0.00% | 1.67% | 0.00% |
| | Crescent | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.83% | 0.00% |
| | Whirling dervish | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| National symbols | National flag | 0.00% | 0.00% | 10.00% | 1.27% |
| | National monument | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.32% |
| | Mixed | 6.25% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.95% |
| Outdoor | Seaside/Beach | 0.00% | 6.82% | 1.67% | 0.63% |
| | Forest | 0.00% | 2.27% | 20.83% | 2.86% |
| | City Centre | 6.25% | 6.82% | 0.00% | 1.90% |
| | Suburb | 0.00% | 9.09% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| | Village | 0.00% | 0.00% | 5.00% | 2.54% |
| | Grave | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.83% | 0.00% |
| | Park | 0.00% | 4.55% | 0.00% | 0.95% |

Table 1. Results of the Social Media Analysis in the Context of Variables

6 More than one means that at least two foreign languages appear in the comments.

7 The analysis was conducted according to the characters, places, and symbols in the post image.

The account with the highest number of followers is *The Great Seljuks* (474,000) and is considered to belong to the ‘dominant reader’ category (Hall 1973)⁸. The audience understands the messages of the series as conveyed, and reacts (as seen in their feedback) in accordance with the expected reception attitude. The 306,000 followers of *Bitter Lands* in the first season belong to “the negotiated reader” category (Hall 1973). But when the patriarchal structure of the melodrama was shattered and became morally unacceptable for the majority of the followers (the landlord lady “was killed” and left the series and her daughter-in-law, Züleyha gave her heart to another man than her husband) they began shifting towards “oppositional reader” category. As the narratives of *The Choice* and *Persona* ethically and politically go against the grain, their followers hesitate on the border between “negotiated” and “oppositional” reading. A digital platform series *Persona* with its fragmented and postmodern narrative structure has a followers typology that normally belongs to the “oppositional reader” category. However, the likes show that the series’ encoding is decoded as expected by the “dominant reader”, e.g. the ideological and political messages embedded in the story with indirect references to the societal traumatic events are accepted as given by the creators of the series and, thus, similar to *The Great Seljuks*’s decoding.

The emotions in the reception of *The Great Seljuks* and *Bitter Lands* series are dominated by fear and humiliation (see Table 1). *Bitter Lands*, using the melodramatic mode based its story on the contrasts between the rich and the poor, the good and the bad, consequently evoking extreme emotional reactions visible in the accounts. The change in star actors negatively affected the audience’s attitude towards the melodrama. However, the series’ producers after realizing the importance of the followers’ fidelity to the main characters who left the series for a variety of reasons, made an homage to all of them in the final episode, to the satisfaction and pleasure of the audience. *The Great Seljuks* on the other hand works on building a national identity and its strong formula, relying – again – on the contrasts and differences between “us” and “others”. Historically, the Seljuk state and Ottoman Principality existed in different spaces and times but according to historians, their firm relationship is established from the 15th century onward.

⁸ Accordingly, the highest average number of likes belongs to *The Great Seljuks* (M = 12,025). It is followed by *Bitter Lands* (M = 4,942), *The Choice* (M = 3,254), and *Persona* (M = 3,043). Considering the number of comments, *The Great Seljuks* is the first (M = 245), *Bitter Lands* (M = 150) is the second, *The Choice* (M = 145) is the third, and *Persona* (M = 48) is the fourth.

According to Gündüz (2009: 199) “Ottoman sovereignty can be seen as a legacy of Seljuk sovereignty and Ottomans as a substitution for Seljuks”. Ergul (2012) emphasizes the difficulty of analysing the Ottoman Empire’s as the past of an “all-encompassing identity” due to “sub-identities of Ottoman *millet*s”. Moreover, she explicitly states that the analysis of the structure of multicultural and multiethnic societies of the past from the perspective of national identity and rhetoric of today is not appropriate (Ergul 2012). *The Great Seljuks* series’ narration relies on the national identity rhetoric of the present allowing both the creators and the audience to combine the geopolitics of then and now in the national comfort zone.⁹

An important aspect in the social media analysis is the social and economic status of the stars in print and social media but also of the characters they play in the series. Gaenssle and Budzinski (2020) question whether the economic status of offline superstars of traditional media is also applicable and valid for the new social media stars. In our project, some media stars of the selected series (Birce Akalay and Hilal Altınbilek) belong to the younger generation. They are also social media stars and according to the aforementioned essay, their analysis from the economic perspective “resembles the traditional stars but derives from them in terms of algorithm management and upload behaviour strategies” (2020:5) like the role of “gatekeepers, strategic intimacy and authenticity, and star-fan interaction, user-generated content of prosumers” (Gaenssle and Budzinski 2020). The social media star Birce Akalay has *YouTube* accounts created by her followers (Birce Akalay Organize TV 2020) and she is mentioned in 29.55% of the selected comments for *The Choice*, followed by Halit Ergenç with 20.45% (see Table 1). Birce Akalay’s social media personality is doubly-emphasized as she is both an actress and a fashion icon. Halit Ergenç on the other hand has a *YouTube* account shared with his wife Bergüzar Korel (Bergüzar Korel Halit Ergenç videos 2016) with whom he played passionate partners in *Binbir Gece / 1001 Nights* (2006–2009).¹⁰

9 Hence the hate speech analyzed in the comments is not so high as for other series of the project. In comparison, *Bitter Lands* in its narration arouses extreme effects in the followers. *Persona* and *The Choice* series are based on hybrid genres using the formulas of film noir and detective genres, which are familiar to the more media literate and “genre connoisseur” spectators. On top of this, *Persona* is a digital platform series which is preferred by an audience keen on choosing what and when to watch a film or series and at times engaging in binge watching.

10 The series was very popular in the Balkans. It helped the popularity of Istanbul as a tourist destination and evoked great interest in learning Turkish language (Wikipedia 2022).

In the accounts of *The Choice*, *The Great Seljuks*, and *Bitter Lands*, represented characters are mostly adults belonging to the upper classes, with evident social roles, whereas the characters in *Persona* are mainly middle-class senior people in accordance with the series' themes such as aging, retirement, and Alzheimer.

Spectacles¹¹ function as space fillers since the average running time of the each episodes is two to three hours (see Table 1). Objects used in TV series are read after their meaning similar to "cinematographic objects which create a relationship between a thing and operation" (Casetti 2012). The posts on the object used in the series as selected, cut, pasted, and framed on the accounts by the followers, gain double spatiality and temporality.

There are four kinds of animals in the accounts. The horses are seen in 11.67% of the posts for *The Great Seljuks*, and in 0.95% of posts for *Bitter Lands*. In the account of *The Great Seljuks*, 1.67% of posts present an eagle and 0.32% of posts pigeons (Table 1). All these animals stand for the nomadic Turkish past, especially during the time of migrations from Asia to Anatolia. At the same time, horses became the symbols of the Turks. Horses, seen as the owner's close friends and allies in victories or the most valuable asset – in the legends and epics – also became symbols of strength, power, and wealth (Çatalbaş 2011). Pigeons are used as carriers of messages between clans, while the eagle stands for the power and pride of the Turkish nation at the time of its settling in Anatolia. Eagles, the protective spirit of rulers or lords, especially in Göktürk and Uyghurs, are, moreover, a symbolic sign of power and victory in battles and conflicts (Çatalbaş 2011).

The photographs in the accounts are predominantly wide-angle, eye-level shots that, otherwise, dominate in war spectacle *mise-en-scène* of *The Great Seljuks* or the scenes of *Bitter Lands* showing the cotton fields and orange orchards.

Outdoor spaces in the posts show spectacular forest, hill, and mountain views allowing a tourist gaze in *Bitter Lands* or evoke nostalgia for the glamorous, victorious past in *The Great Seljuks*. Interiors or indoor spaces are ones of gated communities, modern business centres in *The Choice*, and the dark non-places (Augé 1992) in *Persona* (Table 1).

11 In the accounts, the percentage of posts of important events (see Figure 1) such as deaths, injuries, and births differ. *The Great Seljuks* contains fighting scenes whereas *The Choice*, *Bitter Lands*, and *Persona*, in 6.25% of posts contain remarkable dancing scenes. The scenes of dance mark a shift between spectacle and narrative freezing the moment of anxiety (Angst) giving the audience time of relief and hope.

Conclusion: Soft Power Matrix of the Turkish TV Series

The keywords matrix (Figure 1) is the effective graphic resume of the media analysis research on the Turkish TV series. In separate circles it shows encoded soft power keywords, like state, fatherhood, war, cultural memory, nationalization, unity, being Turkish, power struggles, tourist gaze, landlord, economy, business, gentrification, the transformation of the metropolis, memory, justice, social responsibility. In the elliptical overlapping of the circles are the keywords they have in common: tradition, social classes, urban transformation, ethical values, prestige, mafia, power, identity, love, mysticism, and dialect.

The Turkish TV series' coding of soft power, in the deep context of the plots, is a reflection of the reactions of the national and international audiences in social media. On the other side, the printed media, generally, offer a more objective descriptive approach to writing on the series' stories, of course, foregrounding the facts and numbers. The Turkish series exported worldwide play a great role in cultural diplomacy. As the tools of cultural diplomacy, *Persona* and *The Choice* promote powerful counter-narratives placed outside the traditional comfort zone of soft power applications and speaking from the margins to the centre (Bhabha 2013). On the other pole *Bitter Lands* re-constitutes the patriarchy and *The Great Seljuks* "trans-myths" of the Turkish roots. In their genre variety and richness Turkish TV series combine their powerful narration with diverse classical and traditional narratives (*Bitter Lands*, *The Great Seljuks*) as well as with counter-narrative (*The Choice*, *Persona*).¹² The most important fact in all cases is that the series are well sold, mostly well received by the followers, and are used for the acculturated adaptations in other countries. Even when their narrative runs against the dominant voice and uses different streams, they reach their aim of gaining new audiences worldwide and profit in the global market that in return foster the work of Türkiye's soft power.

12 The historical dramas are considered as "Türkiye's message" in El Araby, stressing the political and symbolic ideas and confirmed to be soft power. Denise Haymillan (Global Agency) points out that "certain cultural codes share some similarities across different territories around the globe, and (that) Turkish Culture is somewhat a bridge to the West and East worlds". For love dramas like *Bitter Lands*, as Haymillan underlines "that conflict between tradition and modernity, the past and the present" enriches Turkish drama, strengthening the social position of the women while the traditional ethics and moral values are an important factor in the series success.

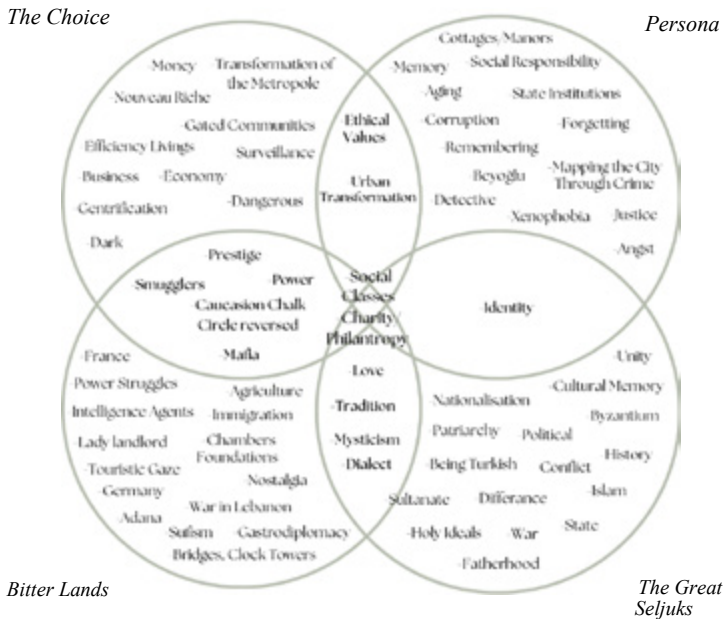


Figure 1. Keywords matrix of the series

The definition of soft power by Joseph Nye overlaps with, already mentioned, Putin’s statement – about exerting information and other levers of influence – with the difference that the “Russian concept goes beyond the ‘attraction-factor’ and focuses on informational work” (Putin in *ibid.*: 76). Both strategic approaches are built on the acceptance of contrast as consequences of warfare states, the US and the Soviet Bloc (Nye 2008), Russia and the West (Putin). İbrahim Kalın, Turkish Presidential Spokesperson, points out that a new “geographic imagination is emerging, leaving the narratives of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution that shaped the history and geography, time and place, centre and periphery, self and other, reason and faith and individual and society” (Kalın 2008: 8). In the global world of densely intertwined money, travel and communications, migrations, and exchanges between people, “national” is reinterpreted by new imagined communities (Appadurai in Figueira 2015) and the national cultures’ homogeneity is being challenged (Rassoul 1995 in Figueira 2015: 166). The new geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe which has become the unfortunate stage of new clashes urges a rethinking of all the concepts including the soft power concept based on the Cold War Era conditions by Nye, and moreover, how the concept of global has to be redefined.

Literature and Sources

- Ahmed, Khaled. 2019. "Everyone Loves Turkish Drama", *Indian Express*, August 21. <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/pakistan-everyone-loves-turkish-drama-5932039/> [Accessed: June 1, 2022].
- Augé, Marc, 1992. *Non-places: introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity*. London and New York: Verso.
- BBC. 2019. "Haluk Bilginer, Şahsiyet Dizisindeki Rolü İle Uluslararası Emmy Ödüllerinde En İyi Erkek Oyuncu Seçildi", November 26. <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-50555127> [Accessed: November 15, 2021].
- Bergüzar Korel Halit Ergenç. 2020. *Youtube* [Channel] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9eIDTiIsLsK_x89Y_rR7dw?app=desktop [Accessed: September 10, 2022].
- Bhabha, Homi K. 2013. *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge.
- Birce Akalay Organize TV. 2020. *You Tube* [Channel] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/BirceAkalayOrganizeTV/videos?app=desktop> [Accessed: September 10, 2022].
- BirGün*. 2019. "Haluk Bilginer'e Ödül Kazandıran Şahsiyet Dizisi Hakkında Bilmeniz Gerekenler", November 26. Available at: <https://www.birgun.net/haber/haluk-bilginer-e-odul-kazandiran-sahsiyet-dizisi-hakkinda-bilmeniz-gerekenler-277757> [Accessed: November 15, 2021].
- Casetti, Francesco. 2012. "Cinematographic Objects", *Francesco Casetti: Screens, fears and spaces*, July 9, 2012. Available at: <https://francescocasetti.com/2012/07/09/cinematographic-objects-2/> [Accessed: November 7, 2021].
- Castells, Manuel, and Gustavo Cardoso (eds). 2006. *The Network Society: From Knowledge to Policy*. Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins Center for Transatlantic Relations.
- Cooren, François. 2019. "Embodiment in the Semiotic Matrix: Communicology in Peirce, Dewey, Bateson, and Bourdieu", *Journal of Communication*, 69/5: E22–E25. <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqz009>.
- Çatalbaş, Resul. 2011. "Türklerde hayvan sembolizmi ve din ilişkisi", *Turan Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi Dergisi* 3/12: 49–60.

- Çınar, Ömer Furkan. 2019. "Haluk Bilginer'e Emmy Getiren Şahsiyet Dizisini Yakından Tanyalım", *GZT*, November 26. Available at: <https://www.gzt.com/jurnalist/dizi-analizi-sahsiyet-spoiler-icermez-3514975>. [Accessed: November 12, 2021].
- Ergul, F. Aslı. 2012. "The Ottoman Identity: Turkish, Muslim or Rum?", *Middle Eastern Studies* 48/4.
- Evren, İsmail. 2021. "Kambura Neresi? Aslında Olmayan Ama Şahsiyet Dizisiyle Adından Bahsedilen Yer! Darphane Bar Da Yok", *Hakimiyet*, July 6. Available at: <https://www.hakimiyet.com/haber/kambura-neresi-aslinda-olmayan-ama-sahsiyet-dizisiyle-adindan-bahsedilen-yer-darpha-1282654/12321>. [Accessed: November 15, 2021].
- Figueira, Carla. 2015. "Cultural Diplomacy and the 2005 UNESCO Convention". In *Globalization, Culture and Development* (eds: De Beukelaer, Pyykkönen, Singh). London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137397638_12.
- Gaenssle, Sophia & Budzinski, Oliver. 2021. "Stars in social media: new light through old windows?", *Journal of Media Business Studies* 18/2: 79–105.
- Gazeteduvar. 2020. "Diriliş Ertuğrul'dan Uyanış Büyük Selçuklu'ya Türkiye'nin Mesajı", December 19. Available at: <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/dirilis-ertugruldan-uyanis-buyuk-selcukluya-turkiyenin-mesaji-haber-1507694> [Accessed: November 20, 2021].
- Gilboa, Eytan. 2008. "Searching for a theory of public diplomacy", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616/1: 55–77.
- Gündüz, Sema. 2009. "Tarihi Kaynaklarda Selçuklu-Osmanlı Bağlantısı", *U.Ü. Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi. Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 10/17: 199–216.
- Hall, Stuart. 1973. *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse*. Birmingham: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.
- Haymillian. n.d. "Turkish Delight: How Turkey Has Become The Second Biggest TV Exporter In The World". Available at: <https://haymillian.com/blog/turkish-delight-how-turkey-has-become-the-second-biggest-tv-exporter-in-the-world>[Accessed: October 07, 2021].
- Henrikson, Alan K. 2005. "Niche Diplomacy in the World Public Arena: The Global 'Corners' of Canada and Norway." in Jan Melissen (ed.) *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 67–87.
- Kalın, İbrahim. 2021. "Soft Power and Public Diplomacy in Turkey", *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* 16/3: 5–23.
- Kim, Hwajung. 2017. "Bridging the Theoretical Gap Between Public Diplomacy and Cultural Diplomacy", *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 15/2: 293–326.

- Koçak, Candan. 2021. "TV8'in "Gerçeksi Gösterilerinde" Kimlik İnşası", *Journal of Erciyes Communication* 8/1: 399–419.
- Milliyet*. 2021. "Bir Zamanlar Çukurova Nerede Çekiliyor? Bir Zamanlar Çukurova Dizisi Oyuncuları Kim, Konusu Nedir?", December 23. Available at: <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/cadde/galeri/bir-zamanlar-cukurova-nerede-cekiliyor-bir-zamanlar-cukurova-dizisi-oyunculari-kim-konusu-nedir-6640137/1>. [Accessed: January 4, 2022].
- Moïsi, Dominique. 2008. *The Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear, Humiliation and Hope are Reshaping the World*. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Doubleday.
- NTV*. 2019. "Emmy Ödülü Şahsiyet'e İlgiyi 20 Kat Artırdı (Puhutv'de Ücretsiz İzle)", November 27. Available at: https://www.ntv.com.tr/sanat/emmy-odulu-sahsiyete-ilgiyi-20-kat-artirdi-puhutvde-ucretsiz-izle,uXf_MYPdg0250le1hQxcKA [Accessed: November 12, 2021].
- NTV*. 2020. "Babil'in Süleyman'ı Mesut Akusta: Dizinin Sosyal Mesajları Var", October 9. Available at: [https://www.ntv.com.tr/galeri/yasam/babilinsuleymanimesut-akusta-dizinin-sosyal-mesajlari-var,n0zFtKWQkUOultj8U\]wsGQ](https://www.ntv.com.tr/galeri/yasam/babilinsuleymanimesut-akusta-dizinin-sosyal-mesajlari-var,n0zFtKWQkUOultj8U]wsGQ). [Accessed: November 7, 2021].
- NTV*. 2020a. "Babil'de Tüm Türkiye Bu Sahneye Kilitlendi", *NTV*, February 15. Available at: [https://www.ntv.com.tr/galeri/yasam/babilde-tum-turkiye-bu-sahneye-kilitlendi,imPgHgvwS0WnTon\]QmK2BA/sMpnku4HGk-Jx4nrMvj4tA](https://www.ntv.com.tr/galeri/yasam/babilde-tum-turkiye-bu-sahneye-kilitlendi,imPgHgvwS0WnTon]QmK2BA/sMpnku4HGk-Jx4nrMvj4tA) [Accessed: November 7, 2021].
- NTV*. 2020b. "Babil Yine En Çok İzlenen Dizi Oldu", March 7. Available at: <https://www.ntv.com.tr/galeri/yasam/babil-yine-en-cok-izlenen-dizi-oldu,30FrOa2TS0WA18ENCiCckQ>. [Accessed: November 7, 2021].
- NTV*. 2020c. "Onur Saylak: Şahsiyet'te Öz ve Biçim İlişkisi Üzerine Çalıştık", November 28. Available at: https://www.ntv.com.tr/galeri/sanat/onur-saylak-sahsiyette-oz-ve-bicim-iliskisi-uzerine-calistik,rYv_01q7jUWPD6I7PX_A [Accessed: November 18, 2021].
- Nye, Joseph Samuel, Jr. 2008. „Public diplomacy and soft power”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616/1: 94–109.
- Ordeix-Rigo, Enric, and Duarte, João. 2009. "From Public Diplomacy to Corporate Diplomacy: Increasing Corporation's Legitimacy and Influence", *American Behavioral Scientist*. 53/4: 549–564.
- Ranini TV*. 2020. "Babil, Şimdiye Kadar 70'den Fazla Ülkeye Satıldı", June 7. Available at: <http://www.ranini.tv/haber/40838/1/babil-simdiye-kadar-70den-fazla-ulkeye-satildi>. [Accessed: November 7, 2021].
- Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Relations between Turkey and Serbia", <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/reasons-between-turkiye-and-serbia%20.en.mfa> [Accessed: June 2, 2022].

- Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Trade. 2021. "Serbia", Available at: <https://www.trade.gov.tr/free-trade-agreements/serbia>. [Accessed: June 2, 2022].
- Sabah*. 2020. "Bir Zamanlar Çukurova'ya Latin Amerika'dan 2 Büyük Ödül", December 4. <https://www.sabah.com.tr/galeri/magazin/bir-zamanlar-cukurovaya-latin-amerikadan-2-buyuk-odul>. [Accessed: November 7, 2021].
- Singh, J.P, MacDonald, Stuart & Son, Byunghwan. 2018. *Soft Power Today: Measuring the Influences and Effects. (A Study commissioned by the British Council from the University of Edinburgh)*. Edinburgh: The Institute for International Cultural Relations School of Social and Political Science, The University of Edinburgh.
- Son TV. 2018. "Bir Zamanlar Çukurova Son Bölümüyle Reyting Rekoru Kırdı! Bir Zamanlar Çukurova 13. Son Bölüm İzle", December 7. Available at: <https://www.son.tv/bir-zamanlar-cukurova-son-bolumuyle-reyting-rekoru-kirdi-bir-zamanlar-cukurova-13-son-bolum-izle/> [Accessed: November 7, 2021].
- Son Dakika. 2020. "Star TV'nin Yeni Dizisi Babil, Sosyal Medyada Dünya Gündemine Oturdu!", January 17. Available at: <https://www.sondakika.com/magazin/haber-babil-dizisi-sosyal-medyada-gundem-oldu-binlerce-12828343/> [Accessed: November 10, 2021].
- Sözcü*. 2020. "Şahsiyet Almanya'daki İlk Türk Dizisi Oldu", October 10. Available at: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/hayatim/kultur-sanat-haberleri/sahsiyet-almanyadaki-ilk-turk-dizisi-oldu/> [Accessed: November 10, 2021].
- Tooistanbul*. n.d. "The Incredible Growing Interest in Turkish TV Shows". Available at: <https://www.tooistanbul.com/en/the-incredible-growing-interest-for-turkish-tv-shows/> [Accessed: October 07, 2021].
- Wikipedia. 2022. "Binbir_Gece". Last modified on 23 August 2022, at 21:03. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binbir_Gece [Accessed: November 09, 2021].
- Yeni Akit*. 2021. "Uyanış Büyük Selçuklu Yapımcısı Emre Konuk'tan Açıklama! Sultan Alp Arslan İle İlgili Mini Dizi Müjdesi", February 11. Available at: <https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/uyanis-buyuk-selcuklu-yapimcisi-emre-konuktan-aciklama-sultan-alp-arслан-ile-igli-mni-dizi-> [Accessed: October 20, 2021].
- Yenilmez, Özlem. 2021. "Şahsiyet'in Meksika Uyarlaması HBO Max'te Yayınlanıyor", *Beyazperde*, September 15. Available at: <https://www.beyazperde.com/haberler/diziler/haberler-99943/> [Accessed: November 09, 2021].
- Zicheng, Ye and Zhang, Qingmin. 2013. "China's Contemporary Diplomacy", *Pauline Kerr & Geoff Wiseman, Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices*. 282–299.

Gülümser Deniz BAYRAKDAR
Fatma MEMICI
Levent SOYSAL
Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Türkiye

KODIRANJE MEKE MOĆI: MATRICE TURSKIH TV SERIJA

Apstrakt

Rad se zasniva na rezultatima jedne faze medijske analize u okviru projekta TÜBİTAK-MoESTD: 220N370_TV serije: *komparativna perspektiva – Od geopolitike do geokritike – Srbija i Turska*. Kroz analizu odabranih turskih TV serija, u štampi i na društvenim mrežama, kategorisani su kodovi meke moći ugrađeni u njihove narative. Tematska matrica zasniva se na tekstualnoj analizi odabranih turskih TV serija (*Vavilon (Babil, 2020)*, *Persona (Şahsiyet, 2018)*, *Buđenje velikog Seldžučkog carstva (Uyanış: Büyük Selçuklu, 2020–2021)* i *Bilo jednom u Çukurovoj (Bir Zamanlar Çukurova, 2018–2022)*) i integrisana je sa ključnim rečima iz štampanih medija i sa društvenih mreža, koje se prvenstveno odnose na koncept meke moći. Serije *Persona* i *Vavilon* predstavljaju kontranarative koji ne funkcionišu u okviru tradicionalne zone komfora, gde se uobičajeno primenjuje pojam meke moći, već govore iz perspektive koja polazi od margine ka centru (Bhabha 2013), dok serije *Bilo jednom u Çukurovoj* i *Buđenje velikog Seldžučkog carstva* funkcionišu kao ponovno uspostavljanje patrijarhata i „transmitskih” turskih korena.

Ključne reči: turske TV serije, meka moć, geopolitika, geokritika

Milena KVAPIL¹
Fakultet dramskih umetnosti
Univerzitet umetnosti u Beogradu

SAVREMENE SRPSKE TELEVIZIJSKE SERIJE I MEKA MOĆ²

Apstrakt

TV serije, trenutno najpopularnija i najuticajnija forma umetnosti i zabave, postale su moćno sredstvo za promociju različitih socijalnih, geopolitičkih, ekonomskih i kulturnih vrednosti, kako na lokalnom, tako i na međunarodnom nivou. Prvobitno se odnoseći na uticaj popularne kulture Sjedinjenih Američkih Država, ispoljavanje geopolitičkog uticaja putem „meke moći” postalo je prisutno i očigledno i u okviru manjih nacionalnih (i/ili regionalnih) kinematografija/produkcija. Srpska TV produkcija, po svemu sudeći, dosegla je vrhunac u periodu 2015–2022. godine, koji se ogleda u kvantitetu proizvedenih TV serija, ali i njihovom kvalitetu. U cilju uspostavljanja adekvatnog modela, kada su u pitanju sredstva promocije raznih tema/narativa, kako na unutrašnjem (prema domaćoj publici) tako i na međunarodnom nivou, obratićemo pažnju na primere izraelske i nordijske TV produkcije. Ispitivanjem različitih elmenata (žanra, teme, narativa) odabranih visokokvalitetnih TV serija, dolazimo do određenih obrazaca koji doprinose ideji reprezentacije, promocije i preispitivanja raznih agendi, na primer onih koje se odnose na nacionalna/istorijska, društvena, rodna uslovljena, ali i druga pitanja.

Ključne reči: geopolitika, meka moć, Srbija, TV serije, nacionalna produkcija

Uvod

Uticaj televizijskih serija predstavlja posebno zanimljivu temu jer prevazilazi okvire interesovanja isključivo teoretičara ekranskih medija i može se izučavati i u širem pop-kulturom, ali i geopolitičkom kontekstu. Kada govorimo o geopolitici serija kao fenomenu, nameće se pojam *meke moći*, koji iako nije nov, sada je više nego ikad aktuelan i prisutan. Izraz *meka moć* uveo je

1 mkvapil@yahoo.com

2 Rad predstavlja (uvodni) deo većeg istraživanja u okviru izrade doktorske disertacije na FDU.

početkom 21. veka profesor Robert Nye (Robert Nye) u knjizi *Soft Power – the Means to Success in World Politics* (Nye 2004), baveći se prevashodno temom neophodnosti drugih sredstava uticaja pored tradicionalne *tvrde moći*, koja se pre svega odnosi na vojnu i ekonomsku moć država. Pod mekom moći on podrazumeva druge načine i sredstva za *preoblikovanje* izbora ljudi. Takođe naglašava da meka moć nije isto što i uticaj, već da se radi o *privlačenju drugog* i to kroz elemente kao što su vrednosti (*values*), kultura (*culture*) ili politike (*policies*). Umetnost i industrija zabave čine bitne faktore meke moći. Erik Fator (Eric Fattor) čak definiše industriju zabave kao „arsenal” kojim se služi „američka imperija” (Fattor 2014). Meku moć možemo prepoznati na više nivoa – lokalnom, regionalnom i globalnom. Dok se ovaj fenomen ranije ispoljavao kroz druge oblike kulture i umetnosti, danas možemo reći da su igrane TV serije preuzele primat jer se radi o trenutno najdominantnijem, medijski najekspoziranijem i najmasovnije konzumiranom obliku umetnosti, posebno u kontekstu dominacije striming servisa dostupnih na gotovo celoj planeti, kao što su HBO, Netfliks (Netflix), Amazon ili Dizni plus (Disney+), zatim sve većoj dostupnosti sadržaja putem kako klasičnih, tako i kablovskih TV stanica, ali i drugih formalnih i neformalnih digitalnih kanala.

U poslednje vreme na globalnoj, ali i domaćoj sceni sve je više primera da se igrani serijski program u široj javnosti zapravo percipira kao dokumentarni ili čak kao informativni i edukativni sadržaj. Dok informativni TV programi sve više zalaze u domen *info-zabave* (*infotainment*), a tradicionalni mediji polako gube trku sa neformalnim izvorima informacija (pre svega društvenim mrežama), svedoci smo da igrani TV sadržaji počinju da se prepliću sa događajima iz stvarnog života, pa i da na njega utiču. Teoretičar Dominik Mojsi (Dominique Moisi) primećuje kako su serije postale „neiscrpni izvor inspiracije samim političarima, jedno od najboljih sredstava za prenošenje njihovih poruka sve široj i različitijoj publici” (Mojsi 2016: 12). Sa jedne strane, imamo uticaj društvenih i političkih događaja na serije, dok istovremeno sve više ljudi misli da je ono što vide u serijama veran odraz društveno-političke realnosti. Osvrnimo se samo na neke poznate slučajeve: britanska kraljevska porodica zvaničnim putem zatražila je od striming platforme Netfliks da stavi napomenu u uvodnu špicu igrane serije o životu kraljice Elizabete II *Kruna* (*The Crown*, Peter Morgan, 2016) da su prikazani događaji fikcija (O’Connor 2020). Domaća javnost i političari burno su reagovali na seriju *Porodica* (Bojan Vuletić,

2021), koja se bavi hapšenjem Slobodana Miloševića iako se radilo o slobodnoj umetničkoj interpretaciji istorijskog događaja (*Danas* 2021). Regionalni i domaći politički lideri citiraju fiktivne događaje iz domaće špijunske serije *Državni službenik* (Predrag Antonijević, Dimitrije Vojnov, 2019) kao da su se zaista dogodili (Srpski pokret „Dveri” 2020). Svetski ekonomski stručnjak Branko Milanović na svom nalogu na *Tviteru* iznosi impresije o danskoj igranoj TV seriji *Premijerka* (*Borgen*, Adam Price, 2010) poistovećujući je sa danskom politikom i stanjem u skandinavskom društvu (Milovanović 2020). Ljudi sve više informacija o pojedinim istorijskim ličnostima ili događajima, pa i o čitavim zemljama i narodima dobijaju preko serija, manje ili više nesvesni činjenice da je u pitanju umetnička fikcija, koja ne mora da ima puno (ili čak uopšte) veze sa realnošću. Ovakav medijski (i društveni) kontekst stvara uslove da se igrani TV sadržaji potencijalno mogu iskoristi kao sredstvo meke moći, odnosno da se kroz njih stvara, plasira, popularizuje ili menja željena slika o određenom narodu, državi, njenoj politici, društvu, vrednostima i identitetu. Ovde je važno odmah naglasiti da se ta slika može plasirati ne samo inostranoj publici, već i sopstvenoj, s obzirom na to da domaća publika obično ostaje u ubedljivoj većini uprkos sve prisutnijem uspešnom plasiranju serija i van granica jedne zemlje.

Postoje izvesni pokazatelji³ da se možda i približavamo kraju „zlatnog doba” kad se radi o produkciji domaćih *kvalitetnih* (*high quality*) televizijskih serija (Caldwell 1995), pogotovo kada je reč o njihovom kvantitetu, koji je u jednom momentu bio daleko iznad proseka drugih evropskih zemalja koje se mogu porediti po veličini sa Srbijom. Ovo je dovelo i do povećanog interesovanja ne samo među publikom, već i među kritičarima, pa serije (naravno ne samo domaće) zauzimaju prominentno mesto kad su u pitanju medijske reakcije – uglavnom u vidu kritika, prikaza i esejističkih osvrtā, kako u zvaničnim štampanim i onlajn medijima, tako i u vidu mnogobrojnih blogova, vlogova, postova na društvenim mrežama i drugih digitalnih *samizdat* formata.

Globalni kontekst

Da bismo temu stavili u neophodan širi kontekst (jer bitno je naglasiti, ne radi se o lokalnom, već o globalnom fenomenu), potrebno je u najkraćim crtama mapirati neke primere geopolitičkog uticaja, odnosno meke moći televizijskih serija u inostranstvu, sa naglaskom

3 Na prvom mestu smanjivanje broja proizvedenih serija tokom 2022. u odnosu na prethodne godine.

na TV serijski program malih nacionalnih produkcija u poslednjih 20 godina. Možda najbolji primer za to su TV produkcije Izraela, kao i nordijskih zemalja (Švedska, Danska, Norveška, Finska, Island), koje čine jedan zajednički regionalni kulturni, ali i društveni korpus (prevashodno u internacionalnoj javnosti prepoznat kroz žanr *nordic noir*, mada je poslednjih godina prisutna sve veća tematska i žanrovska raznolikost). Ova dva primera odabrana su iz nekoliko razloga: u pitanju su relativno mala pojedinačna tržišta, serije su isključivo na lokalnim jezicima (što je svakako velika barijera u poređenju sa onima na engleskom ili španskom jeziku); uz to, ove zemlje nisu do sada percipirane kao globalno veoma uticajne kad su ekranske umetnosti u pitanju.⁴ Uprkos ovim preprekama, izraelske i nordijske serije postale su veliki internacionalni uspeh. Kada se radi o Izraelu, osim emitovanja serija u inostranstvu, tu je i fenomen izuzetno uspešne franšizne prodaje odnosno snimanja stranih rimejk verzija, među kojima su svakako najpoznatije serije *Na terapiji* (*B'Tipul*, Hagai Levi, 2005) i posebno *Ratni zarobljenici* (*Hatufim*, Gideon Raff, 2009), čiji je američki rimejk, serija *Domovina* (*Homeland*, Alex Gansa, Howard Gordon, 2011), doživela izuzetan internacionalni uspeh. Kod nordijskih serija, osim međunarodne popularnosti originalnih serija, neke od njih su dobile i po nekoliko rimejk verzija – najpoznatije su svakako *Most* (*Bron/Broen*, Camilla Ahlgren, 2011) i *Ubistvo* (*Forbrydelsen*, Soren Sviestrup, 2007). Važno je naglasiti da uticaj izraelske, odnosno nordijske TV produkcije, kada se radi o promovisanju određenih društveno-političkih ili kulturalnih agendi, nije isti.

U slučaju Izraela, obrasci koje prepoznajemo kako žanrovski, tako i tematski, pre svega su usmereni na pitanja nacionalnog identiteta, problematiku unutrašnje i spoljne bezbednosti, odnosno terorizma, posttraumatska sećanja vezana za ratna iskustva, ali i (ne)posredno isticanje snage i odlučnosti celokupnog društva kada je u pitanju odgovor na mnogobrojne geopolitičke i bezbednosne izazove. U nordijskoj produkciji, akcenat je na kriminalističkom žanru, koji postavlja formalni okvir za dublje psihološke i socijalne analize kako društva, tako i pojedinca, kroz insistiranje na svojevrsnom kontrapunktu između globalne percepcije nordijskih zemalja kao „najsrećnijih” ili „socijalno najpravednijih” i naličju patologije, kriminala, bolesti zavisnosti i psiholoških problema koji su veoma prisutni. Bitno je međutim naglasiti da uprkos svom prevashodno „mračnom” diskursu u tematskom/žanrovskim

⁴ Osim naravno na individualnom nivou, zahvaljujući uticajnim autorima kao što su na primer Ingmar Bergman ili Lars von Trir (Lars von Trier).

smislu, nordijske serije nose visok nivo estetizovanog prikaza stvarnosti (od prirodnih lepota, preko urbanog pejzaža pa sve do industrijskog dizajna i arhitekture), koji svakako doprinose promociji ovih zemalja kao turističkih destinacija ili poželjnih proizvođača različitih komercijalnih brendova. Iz ovoga možemo zaključiti da se meka moć TV serija zapravo može koristiti za vrlo raznorodne agende, shodno društveno-političkoj realnosti određenih zemalja (ili regiona), kao i njihovim aktuelnim potrebama i ciljevima (političkim, ekonomskim, kulturalnim).

Srbija 2015–2022.

U kontekstu Srbije u periodu od 2015. do 2022. godine, svedoci smo značajne proliferacije domaće igrane televizijske produkcije – kako u kvantitativnom smislu (snimalo se i po više desetina serija godišnje), tako i u pogledu kvaliteta – relativno visokih budžeta koji omogućavaju zavidne produkcione vrednosti (*production values*). Neke od serija mogu se porediti sa ostvarenjima na mnogo većim i razvijenijim tržištima, imajući u vidu angažovanje vodećih autora, saradnika i izvođača, zatim iz aspekta popularnosti samih serija, njihove gledanosti, reakcija stručne i opšte javnosti lokalno i regionalno, prisustva na međunarodnim smotrama i festivalima, pa i činjenice da su neke domaće serije komercijalno prikazivane u inostranstvu, odnosno da je format franšizno prodat stranim tržištima.⁵ Sve ovo govori u prilog tome da serije zaslužuju pažnju ne samo kao deo kreativne industrije iz komercijalnog ugla, ili kao umetnički artefakt, već da njihov uticaj u Srbiji, regionu pa i šire, može da se posmatra i iz ugla promovisanja društvenih, političkih, nacionalnih, identitetskih i državnih agendi.

Fokus je na *high quality* radovima – dakle ovaj put neće biti reči o sitkomima, telenovelama i slično, već samo onima na visokom produkcionom i autorskom nivou, odnosno serijama koje su imale značajan odjek (gledanost, medijske reakcije, fandom, šira popularnost u regionu itd.). Ovo razgraničenje je neophodno s obzirom na hiperprodukciju u kojoj značaj većine serija ne prevazilazi prevashodnu komercijalno-zabavnu svrhu. Početak odabranog vremenskog okvira poklapa se sa nekoliko važnih događaja – u martu 2015. počinje emitovanje hrvatske serije *Crno-bijeli svijet* (Goran Kulenović, 2105), prve *high quality* serije posle raspada Jugoslavije koja je doživela veliki regionalni uspeh; dalje,

⁵ Primeri za ovo bila bi serija *Besa*, koja je kao format prodana za tržište Bliskog istoka (*Vreme* 2020), dok se serija *Državni službenik* prikazivala na inostranim tržištima, čak i u Brazilu (*Euronews* 2021). Takođe serija *Nečista krv – greh predaka* regionalno je dostupna na platformi Netflix.

sa početkom realizacije za ovo istraživanje značajne srpske serije *Ubice moga oca* (Predrag Antonijević, Nataša Drakulić, Marko Mišković, 2016), a uskoro i premijerom hrvatske serije *Novine* (Ivica Đikić, Dalibor Matanić, 2016), koja je takođe označila preokret u dotadašnjem pristupu serijama u lokalnom/regionalnom kontekstu.

Za početak, odabrane serije možemo podeliti u nekoliko tematskih grupa: posttranziciona Srbija – kriminal, korupcija, klasno raslojavanje: *Ubice moga oca*, *Besa* (Srđan Šaper, Tony Jordan, Igor Stoimenov, 2018), *Grupa* (Dragan Đurković, Uroš Tomić, 2019), *Južni vetar* (Miloš Avramović, 2020), *Tajkun* (Đorđe Milosavljević, 2020), *Močvara* (Milena Marković, Oleg Novković, 2020), *12 reči* (Jelena Stolica, 2020), *Jedini izlaz* (Marko Popović, Darko Nikolić, 2021); zatim preispitivanje istorije, nacionalni i postjugoslovenski diskurs: *Senke nad Balkanom* (Dragan Bjelogrić, 2017), *Kralj Petar I* (Milovan Vitezović, Petar Ristovski, Vladimir Ćosić, 2019), *Porodica*, *Nečista krv* (Vojislav Nanović, Milutin Petrović, 2021). Sledeću grupu objedinjuje tema *sive zone* uticaja – geopolitika i centri moći: *Državni službenik*, *Besa*, *Kljun* (Jelena Gavrilović, Uroš Tomić, 2021), *Crna svadba* (Nemanja Cipranić, Strahinja Madžarević, 2021). Posebnu grupu čine egzistencijalne teme u kontekstu društvene realnosti i generacijska pitanja: *Jutro će promeniti sve* (Goran Stanković, Vladimir Tagić, 2018), *Grupa*, *12 reči*, *Kalkanski krugovi* (Đorđe Milosavljević, 2021), *Blok 27* (Ivan Knežević, 2022).

Kada su u pitanju žanrovi, serije su inače specifične po tome da često predstavljaju kombinaciju dva žanra ili više njih. Kako ističe Aleksandra Milovanović u knjizi *Ka novim medijima*: „Pogrešno je pretpostaviti da je žanrovska klasifikacija jednostavna, već se radi o otvorenom sistemu koji je otvoren za redefinisane” (Milovanović 2019: 79). Ovde je važno naglasiti i uticaj svetske TV produkcije na domaće serije. Osim komercijalnih razloga kojima se vode emiteri, odnosno producenti, tome doprinosi svakako i očigledna inspiracija koju domaći autori (kreatori, scenaristi, reditelji) crpe iz svetski poznatih serija. U tom smislu, žanrovski ubedljivo prednjači kriminalistički: *Ubice moga oca*, *Besa*, *Grupa*, *Južni vetar*, *Tajkun*, *Močvara*, *12 reči*, *Jedini izlaz*. Slede serije koje pored kriminalističkog, sadrže i elemente paranormalnog, odnosno naučne fantastike: *Crna svadba*, *Kljun*, *Kalkanski krugovi*, *Blok 27*. Naredni žanr su istorijske, odnosno pseudoistorijske drame (za koje opet valja napomenuti da sadrže i neke druge žanrovske elemente): *Senke nad Balkanom*, *Kralj Petar I*, *Porodica*, *Nečista krv*. Serija *Državni službenik* je špijunski triler, dok je *Jutro će promeniti sve* savremena egzistencijalna drama.

Kao što naglašava Eskenazi, žanr je povezan sa „narativnim modelom koji se koristi u okviru određenog kulturnog miljea”, a taj narativ se obrađuje u skladu sa određenim pravilima (Eskenazi 2010: 22), s tim da ovde taj kulturni milje moramo posmatrati globalno, s obzirom na već pomenuti očigledni uticaj velike dostupnosti svetskih serija kako autorima i producentima, tako i široj publici.

Profesorka Nevena Daković u knjizi *Balkan kao filmski žanr* naglašava da nacionalni film treba shvatiti kao „industrijsku i diskurzivnu praksu, ali i kao delo kulture odnosno kulturne strategije” (Daković 2008: 23). Teoretičarka Mete Hjort nas podseća da se „tema nacije može razviti tokom gledanja filma ukoliko su relevantni elementi naglašeni ili stavljeni u prvi plan. Drugim rečima, radi se o usmeravanju pažnje publike na one elemente koji označavaju naciju i to kroz ključne tačke narativa.” (Hjort 2005: 101). Oba citata po analogiji možemo primeniti i na igrane TV serije. Mapiranjem pomenutih serija nalazimo zajedničke obrasce čiji je cilj uspostavljanje, utvrđivanje, promovisanje ili pak promena određenih društvenih, političkih, nacionalnih i identitetskih narativa, pa se u tom smislu mogu tumačiti kao sredstvo meke moći. Neki od glavnih narativa koje u ovom kontekstu možemo da prepoznamo su: (1) preispitivanje (pogotovo recentne) istorije i njenih populističkih efekata na današnje društvo; (2) geopolitičke tendencije (igre moći tajnih službi na lokalnom i globalnom nivou), (3) uspostavljanje novih odnosa društvene i političke moći (kroz preispitivanje tema tranzicionog društva ili pak neoliberalnog kapitalizma u kontekstu Balkana); (4) egzistencijalni problemi pojedinca (pitanja perspektive mladih, dobitnika i gubitnika tranzicije, teme migracija) i (5) društvene teme (kao što su rodna ravnopravnost, položaj manjina i pitanje decentralizacije).

Kada se radi o istoriji, uočljiva su dva pristupa: novo čitanje nacionalne prošlosti (*Nečista krv*, *Kralj Petar I*, *Senke nad Balkanom*), kao i preispitivanje recentnije (post)jugoslovenske istorije, sa kojim se srećemo na prvom mestu u seriji *Porodica*, a delimično i u serijama *Kljun* i *Državni službenik*. Ove dve serije bitne su za druge relevantne teme, a to su posmatranje politike i geopolitike kroz prizmu (de)mistifikacije tajnih službi. Dok se u seriji *Kljun* tajne službe dovode u vezu sa paranormalnim aktivnostima,⁶ u *Državnom službeniku* susrećemo se kako sa demistifikacijom, tako

6 Moguće je povući paralelu sa svetski poznatom serijom *Stranger Things* (Matt Fuffer, Ross Duffer, 2016), koja je očito inspirisala autore, a koja takođe obrađuje temu zloupotrebe dece sa paranormalnim sposobnostima od strane obaveštajnih službi.

i sa izvesnom rehabilitacijom tajnih službi⁷ (BIA), naročito kroz eksponiranje izrazito pozitivnih i atraktivnih glavnih junaka⁸ kao paradigme „novog srpskog junaka“. Osim afirmacije svojevrsnog novog (modernog) patriotizma sa kojim se susrećemo u ovoj seriji, zanimljivo je da se u njoj pojavljuje još jedna važna tema, a to je tretman kosovskog mita, kako kroz samu radnju serije, tako i kroz naglašen lajtmotiv ikoničke umetničke slike *Kosovka devojka* Uroša Predića. Kroz seriju (posebno u prvoj sezoni) ovaj mit se upadljivo provlači kao aktuelno geopolitičko pitanje, a prisutan je i njegov dublji, simbolički nivo. Tema Kosova pojavljuje se i u seriji *Ubice moga oca*, jer se eponimno nerazjašnjeno ubistvo iz prošlosti dogodilo upravo na Kosovu i Metohiji, na kome je otac glavnog junaka službovao kao pripadnik policije.⁹

Motiv paranormalnog, osim što svakako nosi žanrovsku atraktivnost i daje izvesnu slobodu u kreiranju naracije, u slučaju srpskih serija ima i dublji značaj. Elementi kao što su lokalna vlaška magija (serije *Crna svadba* i *Kalkanski krugovi*), zatim okultne i paranormalne tajne organizacije od desničarskih neonordijskih kultova, sa kojima se susrećemo u seriji *Senke nad Balkanom*, pa do moderne (zlo)upotrebe paranormalnih sposobnosti u vojne svrhe, kao što je slučaj sa serijom *Kljun*, ili misterioznih kriminalističkih slučajeva smeštenih u aktuelno urbano okruženje u seriji *Blok 27*, zapravo se mogu čitati i kao kritika izvesne patologije društva, bilo da se radi o višegeneracijskoj „ukletosti“, odnosno prenošenju ili pak o tumačenju da se za (neka) zla i nesrećne istorijske ishode često eskapistički krivi neko ili „nešto“ van domena ljudskog saznanja i realnosti.¹⁰

Još jedna tema koja se bar donekle javlja pod uticajem stranih serija, ali na našim prostorima ima dodatni značaj, jeste pitanje proliferacije ženskih likova u (za srpsku, odnosno jugoslovensku kinematografiju) netipičnim zanimanjima i karakterizaciji. Na prvom mestu to su mnogobrojne policajke ili pripadnice bezbednosnih službi (*Kljun*, *Besa*, *Močvara*, *Ubice moga oca*, *Državni*

7 Kao inspiracija autorima ove serije poslužila je američka serija *Berlin Station* (Olen Steinhauer, 2016), a svakako se može naći i dosta sličnosti sa serijom *Homeland*.

8 U tom smislu, *Državni službenik* je prvi primer u savremenoj srpskoj produkciji u kome su pripadnici Službe (barem neki) prikazani kao pozitivni, iako kontroverzni i kompleksni likovi. Kontroverza postaje zaštitni znak ovakvih medijskih tekstova. Kako zapaža Mojsi: „Dualistička podela sveta više ne postoji. Rđavih ima na obe strane. Javlja se čak i svesna volja za empatijom prema drugom.“ (Mojsi 2016: 95). Ovo važi kako za neprijatelje, tako i za naše, tj. glavne junake.

9 Motiv Kosova je pravi primer *mythomoteur-a* ili *pokretačkog mita nacija*, o kome piše Entoni Smit (Anthony D. Smith) u knjizi *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1991).

10 Ovaj diskurs prisutan je i kad se radi o domaćem filmu – podsetimo se legende o drekavcu, koja se pominje u filmu *Lepa sela lepo gore* (Srđan Dragojević, 1996) ili još eksplicitnije kroz lik Hromog Dabe, odnosno Šejtana u filmu *Neprijatelj* (Dejan Zečević, 2011).

službenik, Blok 27), a imamo i dva zanimljiva primera ženskih likova kao liderki tajnih društava, odnosno organizacija koje se bave paranormalnim/okultnim pojavama (*Senke nad Balkanom, Crna svadba*). U prvom slučaju, gotovo sa sigurnošću iščitavamo uticaj *nordic noir* serija, koje su u velikoj meri proslavili kompleksni ženski likovi policajki (na primer Sara Lunden u *Ubistvu*, odnosno Saga Noren u *Mostu*), ali za razliku od nordijskog društva, u kome je već i u realnom životu dostignut veoma visok nivo rodne ravnopravnosti, za balkanske uslove ovakva reprezentacija se više čini kao želja ili predlog autora za pokretanje nekih promena nego kao autentičan odraz realnosti.

Kada govorimo o Balkanu, dolazimo do još jednog obrasca koji se prepoznaje, a to je povezanost balkanskih, odnosno postjugoslovenskih država i naroda. Ovo se naročito primećuje kada su u pitanju kriminalističke priče (na prvom mestu *Besa* i *Južni vetar*, donekle *Državni službenik*), gde stičemo utisak visokog nivoa povezivanja kako kriminalaca, tako i državnih organa (policija, tajne službe). Ovde možemo da govorimo o autentičnom elementu preuzetom iz dnevno-političke realnosti, ali možda i o svojevrsnom obnavljanju šireg regionalnog kulturno-ekonomskog prostora.¹¹

Tema (post)tranzicionog okruženja, odnosno egzistencijalna pitanja koja utiču na pojedince i društvo, prisutne su skoro u svim serijama smeštenim u aktuelnu epohu, bilo da je to osnovna ili preovlađujuća tema (primer serije *Jutro će promeniti sve*), bilo kao bitan podtekst u žanrovski oblikovanim pričama (*Močvara, Tajkun, Blok 27, Južni vetar, 12 reči, Grupa* itd.). Socijalno raslojavanje, siromaštvo, kriminal i korupcija, urušavanje porodice stalni su motivi koji se ponavljaju i apostrofiraju u skoro svakoj seriji, dok se dodatno uvode i novi regionalni društveni problemi kao što je pitanje migranata (*Kljun, Močvara, Državni službenik* – prva sezona).

Zaključak

Efekat „glokalnog”, odnosno kombinacija autentičnih srpskih (ili balkanskih) narativa sa preuzetim i adaptiranim globalnim narativima i žanrovskim obrascima i formatima, iščitava se u velikom broju serija i može se reći da je zajednička karakteristika ne samo domaćih i regionalnih TV serija, već da je to fenomen koji se prepoznaje i u drugim manjim, nacionalnim kinematografijama odnosno produkcijama. Kada se radi o uticaju serija izvan domena

11 Ovde bih se osvrnula na sve češće primere koprodukcija ali i uzajamnog „gostovanja” glumaca iz različitih zemalja, na prvom mestu Srbije i Hrvatske, ali i Crne Gore, BiH, Makedonije, Bugarske i Albanije. Najizrazitiji primer takve saradnje je svakako serija *Besa*.

umetnosti i/ili zabave, možemo zaključiti da one postaju sve relevantnije sredstvo u plasiranju određenih agendi ili narativa. Kako navodi Dominik Mojsi u knjizi *Geopolitika televizijskih serija*, „Serije mogu biti anticipacija naše budućnosti, ali i često idealizovana rekonstrukcija naše prošlosti ili njena karikaturalna slika, što je u oba slučaja samo odraz naših sadašnjih opsesija” (Mojsi 2016: 19). Autorka Daković podseća da kada promišljamo ekranska dela koja se bave savremenim živim temama, važno je imati na umu da „pored odraza aktuelnosti, serije pišu naslućenu budućnost ili ispituju reakcije javnog mnjenja” (Daković 2019: 20). Na osnovu ove preliminarne i skicirane analize elemenata meke moći u domaćom TV serijama, možemo zaključiti da izvesni obrasci postoje i da se pre svega tiču preispitivanja istorije (uključujući tu i pitanje nacionalnog identiteta i mitova), zatim problema savremenog posttranzicionog balkanskog društva, ali i otvaranja novih tema kao što su rodna ravnopravnost, odnos prema migracijama i drugim globalnim fenomenima. Važno je napomenuti da se većina ovih pitanja u najvećoj meri samo konstatuje, manje ili više živopisno odslikavajući realnost, dok se nešto ređe ispoljava stav, otvorena kritika ili predlog/predikcija potencijalnih odgovora. Za ovo drugo primer bi mogla biti pomenuta reafirmacija patriotskog diskursa kroz vrlo aktuelne žanrovske forme (*Državni službenik*, *Senke nad Balkanom*) ili afirmacija ženskih junakinja van tradicionalističkog balkanskog stereotipa (*Državni službenik*, *Kljun*, *Besa*, *Blok 27*, *Ubice moga oca*).

U knjizi *Demon in the Box*, autorka Taša Oren (Tasha Oren) citira Goldu Meir (Golda Meir), nekadašnju premijerku Izraela, koja je izjavila da je „Televizija samo kutija i ono što u nju stavimo, to ćemo od nje i dobiti” (Oren 2004:137). Iako televiziju već odavno ne predstavljaju kutije već sve tanji i sofisticiraniji elektronski (često interaktivni i mobilni) ekrani, međusobno povezani i umreženi putem interneta, suština ostaje ista. Za sadržaj koji će gledaoci „dobiti iz kutije”, zaslužan je (ali i odgovoran) onaj koji taj sadržaj stvara, a to su sa umetničke strane kreatori serija, a sa poslovne strane produkcije i emiteri. Zato će biti zanimljivo u nastavku ovog tek započetog istraživačkog procesa ispitati ne samo koji su sve to elementi meke moći u savremenim domaćim serijama, već odakle oni potiču, odnosno, da li se može govoriti o nekom planskom i sistemskom pristupu kada su u pitanju donosioci odluka (producenti, emiteri, autori).

Literatura i izvori

- Caldwell, John T. 1995. *Televisuality: Style, Crisis, and Authority in American Television*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Daković, Nevena. 2008. *Balkan kao (filmski) žanr: slika, tekst, nacija*. Beograd: Fakultet dramskih umetnosti. Eskenazi, Žan-Pjer. 2013. *Televizijske serije*. Beograd: Klio.
- Fattor, Eric M. 2014. *American Empire and the Arsenal of Entertainment*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hjort, Mette. 2000. "Themes of Nation" in M. Hjort & S. MacKenzie (eds.) *Cinema and Nation*, London and New York: Routledge, 95–110.
- Milovanović, Aleksandra. 2019. *Ka novim medijima: Transmedijalni narativi između fima i televizija*. Beograd: Fakultet dramskih umetnosti i Filmski centar Srbije.
- Mojsi, Dominik. 2016. *Geopolitika televizijskih serija*. Beograd: Klio.
- Nye, Joseph S. 2004. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Oren, Tasha G. 2004. *Demon in the Box. Jews, Arabs, Politics, and Culture in the Making of Israeli Television*. London, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Smith, A.D. 1991. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell.

Vebografija

- Danas. 2021. „Porodica i reakcije”. Dostupno na: <https://www.danas.rs/dijalog/redakcijski-komentar/porodica-i-reakcije/> [Pristupljeno: 6. avgust 2022].
- Euronews. 2021. „Državni službenik stigao do Brazila”. Dostupno na: <https://www.euronews.rs/kultura/aktuelno-iz-kulture/17762/drzavni-sluzbenik-stigao-do-brazila-popularnu-seriju-pratice-30-miliona-ljudi/vest> [Pristupljeno: 6. avgust 2022].
- Medojević, Nebojša. 2020. *Twitter*. Dostupno na: <https://twitter.com/NebojsaMedojevi/status/1330905759891263488> [Pristupljeno: 6. avgust 2022].
- O'Connor, Roisin. 2020. „Netflix refuses to add disclaimer to The Crown over show's historical inaccuracies”, *Independent*, December 5, 2020. Dostupno na: <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/netflix/the-crown/the-crown-netflix-fact-fiction-royal-family-disclaimer-b1766947.html> [Pristupljeno: 6. avgust 2022].
- Srpski pokret „Dveri”. 2020. *Twitter*. Dostupno na: <https://twitter.com/SPDveri/status/1326873016370929664> [Pristupljeno: 6. avgust 2022].
- Vreme. 2021. „Međunarodni rimejk”. Dostupno na: <https://www.vreme.com/dodatno/medjunarodni-rimejk/> [Pristupljeno: 6. avgust 2022].

CONTEMPORARY SERBIAN TV SERIES AND SOFT POWER

Abstract

TV series, presently the most popular and influential form of art and entertainment have become powerful vehicle for promoting various social, geopolitical, economic and cultural agendas, both on local and international level. Originally referring mostly to the influence of pop culture from the USA, exercising of geopolitical influence though “soft power” has recently become present and obvious also within smaller national (and/or regional) cinematography/productions. Serbian TV production has arguably reached its peak in the period between 2015 and 2022, both regarding the quantity and quality of produced TV series. In order to set an adequate framing when it comes to means and intentions of promoting various topics/narratives both internally (towards local viewers) and internationally, we refer to the examples of Israeli and Nordic TV production. By examining the various elements (genres, topics, narratives) of chosen high-quality TV series, there are certain patterns which contribute to the idea of presentation, promotion and questioning of various agendas, for example national/historic, social, gender-related and others.

Key words: geopolitics, soft power, Serbia, TV series, national

Gergana DONCHEVA¹
Institute of Balkan Studies & Centre of Thracology,
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

THE BULGARIAN TELEVISION SERIES: CONTEXT, DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTERISTICS (2000–2022)

Abstract

The article presents a brief overview of the production of Bulgarian TV series, made during the period from 2000 until the present day. The text outlines the elements of the context that enabled a rapid production development: 1) major changes in the pattern of television viewing, as well as the profile of the viewers; 2) understanding “small” screen production as a rescue option for the work and professional development of directors, screenwriters, cinematographers and actors in the conditions of limited financial resources; 3) Bulgarian series as a logical response to the sensational global and local success of Turkish series. With the introduction of product placement practice in 2010, a golden era began since more and more advertisers were willing to invest in TV content characterized by a variety of genres, good visual design and topics related to Bulgarian reality. In an effort to find a suitable formula, producers rely not only on American and Western European models, but actively borrow ideas, plots and characters from numerous Balkan TV series.

Keywords: BNT, Bulgarian TV series, national success

Context

The year 2011 was the one in which enthusiastic statements were expressed in Bulgaria about “the blossom of domestic TV series” as a logical “response to Turkish TV series” (Vasileva 2011). After a long domination of Turkish TV series, local TV industry managed to produce series whose plots and visual style captured the attention of Bulgarian audiences. However, for this crucial moment to have happened, several important prerequisites had to be accomplished.

Firstly, during the decades of the long transition period (1989–2007) a key change took place: the conservative spectator

1 gergana.doncheva@balkanstudies.bg

from the era of socialism slowly transformed himself/herself into a modern media product consumer. Also, the pattern of TV watching changed dramatically: from a communal experience shared by the family members in the evening, the process became more individualized thanks to different electronic devices and 24h access to TV content (Vasileva 2011). Secondly, Bulgarian media market is small and relies heavily on foreign investments from the European audio-visual space as its constituent part. In Bulgaria, TV series were a compromise between filmmakers and producers due to restricted financial resources. In effect, this form of filmmaking provided an opportunity for permanent employment of directors, cinematographers, script writers and actors. Gradually, a specific industry was taking shape and today it has its clear characteristics and loyal audience. Thirdly, new Bulgarian TV series were an unequivocal answer to the tangible presence of foreign TV movies and series: above all Turkish, Latin American, Indian and others, that prompted local producers to explore in depth specific preferences and tastes of Bulgarian spectators and, later, to create their own formulas for series with a domestic brand. The detailed analysis showed that the Turkish soap opera following the model of the Arabic fairy tale (Vasileva 2011; Borisova 2014:10) had the biggest success in Bulgaria, and it was not accidentally that the TV series *One Thousand and One Nights / Binbir Gece* (2006–2009) broadcasted on Nova TV from 8th December 2008 to 18th June 2009 achieved grandiose success. It was the first Turkish TV series aired on a Bulgarian TV channel (Borisova & Palova 2011: 40; Popova 2021: 38) that stirred the imagination and passions of the audience and generated strong vivid interest in Turkish popular film and TV industry.

It is essential to note that Turkish, Latin American and Indian TV series were and, still are broadcasted on private channels. The fact that Bulgarian State Television (BNT) has never aired such content (Popova 2021: 37) clearly reveals an explicit policy: these cultural products and their values are inappropriate for Bulgarian audiences. Nevertheless, the appearance of Turkish series in Bulgaria turned into a media phenomenon whose nature and dimensions were comparable with the reactions triggered in the rest of the Balkan or Middle Eastern countries. The reception could be defined as contradictory – from genuine admiration to total negation. Speaking about the Bulgarian imagined community of fans of the Turkish series, researchers pointed out that the message

of the Turkish movies and series resonated with a fundamental necessity for a more human TV spectacle. The respondents declared, during the interviews, that they were disgusted and fed up with American films in which the dominance of brutality, blood, violence, alienation and sex became unbearable. They expressed longing for something else: American dream in Turkish style (Ninova 2013). Moreover, according to the media expert Georgi Lozanov, the Turkish series transformed successfully the Bulgarian attitude towards its southern neighbour. Before the appearance of Turkish TV series this attitude was based on education received in elementary school, after literary works written during the period of national Revival. Today, the quoted movies show that Turkey cannot be read and understood solely through codes of the past (Lozanov 2009). The mixture of modern Western European vision and the nostalgia for traditional and united family as well as the similar mentality, elements from daily routine and the practices inherited from the times of the Ottoman Empire attracted Bulgarian public. On the other end of the spectrum are the opponents who rejected angrily “the invasion” of these titles perceiving them as a soft power instrument employed by Turkish cultural diplomacy.

Development

The history of Bulgarian TV series started in the 1960s (Bulgarian State Television was established in 1959) – and the first Bulgarian TV series were made in 1966 – *The Family Kalinkovs / Semeistvo Kalinkovi* based on the scenario written by prominent author Nikolay Haitov (Doncheva 2014: 17). From the very beginning, Bulgarian TV series were created under the influence of American mass culture model though their ideological message was in accordance with the epoch of communism.² The mentioned series was a family one, unlike the majority of the TV series aired later that were devoted to heroic personages and historical events (Doncheva 2014: 17). The most emblematic titles from those days were *At Every Kilometer / Na vseki kilometar* (1969) – an adventurous partisan narrative and *Captain Petko Voyvoda / Kapitan Petko voivoda* (1981) – a story about the Ottoman Empire and the struggle for emancipation (both movies were made by the famous director Nedelcho Chernev).

In the 1990s only Bulgarian State Television had enough financial resources to invest in TV series so that the glorious

² Not surprisingly this process is much more visible in Yugoslavia and in post-Yugoslav states because of the specific status of SFR Yugoslavia in the Cold War era (see Daković 2008).

past on the screen was quickly replaced by new reality of tough men who dominated the criminalized society in transition. An illustrative example for this trend was *Danube Bridge / Dunav most* (1999). However, several series concerning family and ordinary daily life were made, too. Namely, *Patriarchat / Patriarhat* (2005), *The Sparrows in October / Vrabtsite prez oktomvri* (2006), *Wolf Church / Tsurkva za vultsi* (2007), *Lyudmila and Ruslan / Lyudmila i Ruslan* (2007). Unfortunately, they did not manage to impress the spectators.

In the following years, gradually emerged private TV channels such as: bTV (2000), Nova TV (2003), TV7 (2005 that closed down in 2016). The independent producer became the fundamental figure, the one who would change not only fiction of the small screen but also introduce innovative reality formats, talk shows and cultivate a new type of audience.

In 2002 bTV broadcasted *She and He / Tya i toi* (2002–2008) – a Canadian sitcom originally created by Guy Lepage (Wikipedia 2022c); in 2004 Nova TV made *Hotel Bulgaria*; and TV7 – in 2006 aired *Unexpected Turn / Neochakvan obrat*. Although the latter two movies did not achieve considerable success, they marked an initial stage in the development of the TV series.

The next significant phase in the development of Bulgarian TV movies began with the realization of *Forbidden Love / Zabranena lyubov* (2008–2011) adapted format version produced by *Freemettle Media*. This format, entitled *Sons and Daughters* (Grundy drama), came into reality for the first time in Australia and was sold in Sweden, Indonesia and Greece. Later it was transformed into *Forbidden Love / Verbotene Leibe* for the German channel ARD (Wikipedia 2022d). The Bulgarian version of *Forbidden Love* had a very high ratings and, more importantly, it turned out to be a good professional training and experience for many actors, directors and scriptwriters. The basic team of scriptwriters continued to work successfully together on other projects. As a whole, the most gifted and distinguished filmmakers in Bulgarian cinema today, such as Viktor Bozhinov, Pavel Vesnakov, Stanislav Donchev, Petar Valchanov, Viktor Chuchkov Jr., Dimitar Kotsev, Dragomir Sholev, Zornitsa Sophia, Iliyan Dzhevelev worked hard for different television channels and made TV series that helped them in their professional development.



Forbidden Love / Zabranena lyubov (2008–2011)

The production practices on Bulgarian State Television appeared in 2010, when Mrs. Viara Ankova became the director general. Consequently, competitions of independent producers of TV shows were organized (Vasileva 2011). Step by step, the policy of state television changed and it became open to more commercial initiatives.

The period between 2010–2021 marked a new fruitful stage when several very successful TV series were made. The domestic public discussed them zealously and looked forward to watching the new episodes. This boom evolved from the important change such as the introduction of the so-called “product placement” practice which was officially and legally regulated. This drew the interest of potential advertisers who were willing to invest in domestic TV films and series. *Glass Home / Stuklen dom* (2010–2012) was realized thanks to, for Bulgarian standards, huge sponsorship and successful techniques of “product placement” – for the first time used in this movie. The titles exploiting most often the mentioned secret advertisement practices were *Glass Home*, *Under Cover / Pod*

prikritie (2011–2016), *Shmenti-kapeli: The Legend* (2013–2014) (Doncheva 2014: 58–59). The TV channels started to produce 4 to 5 TV series annually and later, the number grew to 7 or 8, which was a significant number for the Bulgarian market. These TV series achieved high ratings and, obviously, audiences liked them.

Advertisers preferred to pay for advertisements incorporated in the text and narrative of the series because the life expectancy of a TV series is longer in comparison with other TV shows and frequently it could be broadcast again (Doncheva 2014: 61). Speaking about the current situation, we can conclude that TV industry is already lucrative enough in order to ensure good profits for its creators.

Characteristics

The first domestic TV series were based on recognizable, popular national patterns. In addition, the key factor defining ‘the new generation’ TV series was the genre diversity as well as a profound interest in plots concerning domestic reality (Vasileva 2011). The impact of the productions made by independent producers who were innovative, ambitious, popular, and had a wide social recognition, was evident.

Turkish TV series served as a role model for Bulgarian ones – predominantly those with the topic of family and its values. The high rating of Bulgarian TV series from 2011 onwards, thus, is recognised to have stemmed from: quality cinematic vision, local reality and genre diversity.

The majority of the narratives were dramas (family, adventurous, detective, epoch drama, legal, romantic, teen drama, medical, political) followed by comedy, while the first (medical) sitcom was created in 1999 – *Clinic on the Third Floor / Klinika na tretia etazh*. There were attempts in mockumentaries and TV series for children. More specialized genres appeared after the key audience research and analysis of the viewers reactions and reception. The TV longest running series (with the highest) number of seasons were *Sophians in Excess / Stolichani v poveche* (2011–2019) – 13 seasons, followed by a medical drama *Stolen Life / Otkradnat zhivot* (2016–2021) – 11 seasons. The one with the highest rating was *Sophians in Excess* which traced the complicated and absurd relations between two families having different role models: the first one is dominated by father and the other by mother.

Glass Home was aimed for young audience for whom a shopping centre is a bright metaphor of an urban, fashionable lifestyle. However, and quite unexpectedly, it turned out that the series also attracted the older spectators living in remote, peripheral towns and villages.



Glass Home / Staklen dom (2010 – 2012)

The grandiose success of Bulgarian State Television was the realization of the project *Under Cover* designed as a hybrid between the Russian TV series *Brigade* and the British *Phantoms* (Vasileva 2011). The famous Italian actor Michele Placido was invited to participate in this Bulgarian production which was later sold in different countries.

The competitive struggle between the state and private televisions defined and facilitated the creation of many successful TV series such as *Sophians in Excess*, *Glass Home*, *Under Cover*, *Seven Hours Difference / Sedem chasa razlika*, *Condominium / Etazhna sobstvenost*, *The English neighbour / Angliysiyat sused*. They appealed to various social target groups and demonstrated the existence of different audiences having different expectations from and notions of TV entertainment.

The majority of the TV series narrated the history of the society during the era of transition often through a private family story (Vasileva 2011). Logically, the most frequent and repetitive themes were: the criminal underground, organised crime and the criminalisation of the state; the emergence of a reordered class society, seeking for personal happiness abroad; family – modern or patriarchal – and its significance in the periods of constant crises.

It is interesting to trace the dynamics of the debates about the Turkish and the Bulgarian TV series shown in the primetime. In 2012, in Bulgaria, just as in the rest of the Balkan countries, an eager discussion developed around the epoch drama *The Magnificent Century / Muhteşem Yüzyıl* (2011–2014). The spectacular series reconstructing the events from the Golden Age of the Ottoman Empire during the rule of the Sultan Suleyman and offering its historical interpretation was highly contested. As a result of the public debate in media, bTV and Nova TV refused to air the series leaving to TV7 to take the risk. The premiere of *The Magnificent Century* in Bulgaria on 12th September 2012, attained the highest rating, eliminating the reality show *VIP Brother 2012* on Nova TV and new Bulgarian TV series that were broadcast on bTV *Where is Magi? / Kude e Magi?* In order of restoring its leading position, bTV bought the Turkish hit title *What is Fatmagul's Fault? / Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne?* And, thus, managed to lure back the TV spectators (Zhekova 2014: 172). However, Balkan influence is not reduced to just this example. The similar practice is identified in various adaptations (and licensed series): *We, Our Relatives and Your Relatives / Nie, nashite i vashite* (2017) was a comedy sitcom inspired by the American *Step By Step* (1991) but also by the Serbian *The Family Sindelić / Sindelići* (2013) which in turn was an adaptation of the Spanish series *The Family Serrano / Los Serrano* (2003) (Wikipedia 2022b).

Further, *Dear Legatees / Skupi naslednitsi* (2018) (Wikipedia 2022c) was the Bulgarian version of the Croatian format *Whichever Way the Ball Bounces / Kud puklo da puklo* (2016) while *Scars / Belezi* (2021) (Wikipedia 2022) was an adaptation of the Turkish *The Children of my Sister / Kardes Çocuklari* (2019) whose original version had never been shown on Bulgarian TV screens. At the same time, there was a reverse process, too: the Bulgarian TV series *Relationships / Vruzki* (2015) was bought by Fox Networks Group and Fox Life, and aired simultaneously on the territory of eight Balkan countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro and Croatia.

The ever increasing success of the TV series in Bulgaria indicates that, contrary to the expected, local models were built up not only after the American and Western European patterns but also were made by borrowing ideas, plots and characters from Balkan productions.³ This trend is entirely understandable having in mind

3 Many of the Balkan TV series are acculturated and appropriated versions of foreign originals. Sometimes Turkish producers make "local interpretations" even of the Southern Korean formats and later sell them to other producers (see Popova 2021: 42).

the region's shared culture and mentality. Moreover, after a long period of researching profile of the local audiences, the producers dared to offer a TV content reflecting domestic reality, thus enabling the audiences to identify themselves with the local characters and stories. The narratives about the transition gradually faded away and at their places appeared stories from luxury suburbs, original detective movies such as *The Devil's Throat / Diavolskoto gurlo*; ambitious epoch dramas such as *The Tree of Life / Durvoto na zhivota*; musical and teen TV series – *Revolution Z / Revolyutsia Z*; adventurous – *The Gate / Portalat*. It is obvious that this trend will continue and the TV series to come will be created with specific target social groups in mind.

Literature and Sources

- Борисова, Евдокия. 2014. Мелодрамата в телевизионния сериал. Шумен: ШУ „Константин Преславски“.
- Борисова, Евдокия, Фатме Палова. 2011. „Турските сериали на българския телевизионен екран. Пир или пиар по време на криза?“ В Изследване на медиите: Студии, статии, есета (отг. ред. Елка Добрева). Шумен: ШУ „Константин Преславски“, 40–69.
- Василева, Мая. 2011. „Сериали в повече (Телевизионното кинотворчество в търсене на българската мечта)“, *Newmedia21.eu*. Available at: <https://www.newmedia21.eu/analizi/seriali-v-poveche-televizionno-kinotvorchestvo-v-trsene-na-blgarskata-mechta/> [Accessed: May 15, 2022].
- Daković, Nevena. 2008. “City Foxes/East-West Soap (Belgrade/New York)” in S.M. Herrmann, K. Koenen, Z. Kusmierz & L. Schmieding (eds.) *Ambivalent Americanizations. Popular and Consumer Culture in Central and Eastern Europe*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 105–120.
- Дончева, Теодора. 2015. Дискретният чар на рекламата: Продуктовото позициониране на екрана. София: Рива.
- Жекова, Ваня. 2014. „Каква е вината на Фатмагюл?“, *Българска етнология*, №2: 157 – 175.
- Лозанов, Георги. 2009. „Ятаганът стана прахосмукачка“, *24 часа*. Available at: <http://www.24chasa.bg/Artide.asp?ArtideId=246078> [Accessed: May 15, 2022].
- Нинова, Владислава. 2013. „Двусмисленото възприятие на турските сериали в България“, 1 част, Либерален преглед. Available at: <http://www.librev.com/index.php/discussion-culture-publish-er/2090-2013-06-18-08-19-58>, [Accessed: May 15, 2022].

- Попова, Жана. 2021. „Политически послания в турските сериали по българските телевизии и ‘Нетфликс’”, Медиалог, №10, с.: 37–53.
- Wikipedia. 2022. „Белези”. Last modified on 8 April 2022 at 13:09h. Available at: <https://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Белези> [Accessed: May 15, 2022].
- Wikipedia. 2022a. „Ние, нашите и вашите”. Last modified on 18 August 2022 at 17:38h. Available at: https://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ние_нашите_и_вашите [Accessed: May 15, 2022].
- Wikipedia. 2022b. „Скъпи наследници”. Last modified on 21 August 2022 at 17:54h. Available at: https://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Скъпи_наследници [Accessed: May 15, 2022].
- Wikipedia. 2022c. „Тя и той”, Last modified on 22 August 2022 at 13:57h. Available at: https://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Тя_и_той [Accessed: May 15, 2022].
- Wikipedia. 2022d. „Забранена любов”, Last modified on 19 September 2022 at 05:35h Available at: https://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Забранена_любов [Accessed: May 15, 2022].

Gergana DONCHEVA
Institute of Balkan Studies & Centre of Thracology,
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

BUGARSKE TV SERIJE: KONTEKST, RAZVOJ I KARAKTERISTIKE (2000–2022)

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad predstavlja kratak pregled bugarske produkcije TV serija snimljenih u periodu od 2000. godine do danas. Na početku, tekst ocrtava elemente konteksta koji su omogućili nagli produkcionni razvoj: 1) velike promene obrasca gledanja televizije, kao i profila gledalaca; 2) poimanje „malog“ ekrana kao spasonosne opcije za rad i profesionalni razvoj reditelja, scenarista, snimatelja i glumca u uslovima ograničenih finansijskih sredstava; 3) bugarske serije kao logičan odgovor na senzacionalan svetski i lokalni uspeh turskih serija. Uvođenjem prakse plasmana proizvoda 2010. godine, započela je zlatna era jer je sve više oglašivača bilo spremno da ulaže u različite TV sadržaje koje odlikuje raznovrsnost žanrova, dobar vizuelni dizajn i teme vezane za bugarsku stvarnost. U nastojanju da pronađu odgovarajuću formulu, producenti koriste ne samo američke i zapadnoevropske modele, već aktivno pozajmljuju ideje, zaplete i likove iz balkanskih TV serija.

Ključne reči: BNT, bugarske televizijske serije, nacionalni uspeh

II

OTHER FORMATS OF THE SMALL SCREENS

DRUGI FORMATI MALIH EKRANA

UDK 316.774(497.11)"20"
659.3/.4(497.11)"20"
32.019.5:654.19(497.11)"20"

Sunnie RUCKER-CHANG¹
The Ohio State University

SERBIA AND SERBS IN THE WORLD: THE IDEAL AS PRESENTED IN THE *VI STE SVET* (*YOU ARE THE WORLD*) CAMPAIGN

Abstract

In this article, I will address the US Embassy in Serbia *You are the World* micro-movie campaign, what seems to be the aims of the program, how the campaign was received in some Serbian online periodicals, and how by reimagining the image of Serbia, the campaign is also potentially setting a framework for reconfiguring Serbian-United States relations, and, in doing so, attempting to establish anew an important relationship that has been strained since the NATO bombing of 1999. It is clear that the movies are not simply about the individuals or their accomplishments, but rather something else. The something else is also the subject of this article.

Keywords: *Vi ste svet*, micro-movie, *velika*, world, hero

The *Vi ste svet* campaign was initiated and sponsored by the American Embassy in 2018 and continues today. It consists of a series of micro-movie² featuring important Serbian monuments, landscapes, and cultural figures with connections to Western Europe and/or the United States. All figures included in the campaign contributed in some significant way to the development of Serbian and/or Western culture. The films are available online as well as by way of television commercials with some figures memorialized and/or acknowledged only through the website whereas others were given their own that aired on the national Serbian channels RTS1 and RTS2. The website offers the following language about the campaign, "the US embassy recognizes those who dream the dreams of the entire world", and this language providing insights into the objectives of the campaign, namely that it is meant to be a recognition of the work of these important individuals but also to

1 rucker-chang.1@osu.edu

2 Given the production quality, informative content of the film in addition, the short duration, as well as the digital nature of these films, I am choosing to use the term micro movie or simply video as opposed to a commercial or advertisement (see Prasad 2017).

invite others in Serbia to “dream big” and dream the dreams that will remake the world. It is also a call to recognize the significant contributions that Serbs have made to the world, which opens a space to acknowledge the importance that Serbs have played in the world, and therefore Serbia as well. It also extends importance to the connection between the US and Serbia, which also challenges those who watch the videos and engage with the website to think differently about Serbia and Serbs. It further challenges the viewer to associate the idea of greatness and size beyond its previous cultural iterations that connects the nation to irredentism, conflict, and regional antagonisms to push for a reimagination of the way that size and greatness are associated with Serbia. Included in the campaign, as noted on the website, are Mira Trailović, Charles Simić, Mihajlo Pupin, Milunka Savić, Volt Bogdanić, Ivo Andrić, Borislav Pekić, and Nikola Tesla. The videos are of impeccable production quality and are enjoyable to watch for their quality and content.



Vi ste svet – Website cover page

In addition to these individuals, the famous basketball player, Vlade Divac (born in 1968), and tennis star, Novak Đoković (born in 1987), are also featured on the introductory campaign. These two also do not receive their own stand-alone video, presumably because they are sufficiently known and do not need to be introduced, or recognized, to use the language of the campaign, for their greatness and contributions to the world. Those who are well-known and do not require a full video for others to learn about and/or recognize their significance/importance in global advances, including Vlade Divac and Novak Đoković. These two Serbs are uniquely known the world over both for their sports acumen, their connections to Serbia by way of their business investments and philanthropy there. Although these two men represent two

very different generations, their mark on Western (European and American) culture and sports specifically is well known. Similarly, Nobel Prize winning Yugoslav author Ivo Andrić (1892–1975) whose work, *Bridge over the Drina* (*Na drini ćuprija*), is frequently listed among important literary works and subject matter for world literature. As the only person from Yugoslavia to win a Nobel Prize (1961), his literary accomplishments and contributions are always memorialized. Moreover, within the region Andrić is claimed by more than one of the Yugoslav successor states and is, therefore very well-known and disputed and therefore directly claiming him within Serbian space could be more than controversial. This is also the case for well-known Nikola Tesla (1856–1943) who appears in the initial video, but whose nationality is claimed equally by Serbia and Croatia. In this article, I will address the US Embassy in Serbia *You are the World* micro-movie campaign, what seems to be the aims of the program, how the campaign was received in some Serbian online periodicals, and how by reimagining the image of Serbia, the campaign is also potentially setting a framework for reconfiguring Serbian-United States relations, and, in doing so, attempting to establish anew an important relationship that has been strained since the NATO bombing of 1999.

Theme One: When can a country say that it is great/large?

The first video in the campaign begins with the following phrase: “When is it possible to call a country great (velika)” and features an image of the globe followed and quickly moves to a sunrise over Belgrade, followed by a notable features of the Serbian landscape: sunflower fields, religious grounds, and rivers among other things.



Vi ste svet, screen grab. Source: *Vi ste svet*, www.vistesvet.com

Juxtaposing the word *velika* (great/large) with Serbia can be fraught. It connects the contemporary country to Serbia's history of irredentism with roots in the 19th century, the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, as well as the conflicts of the 1990s and 2000s to the contemporary contentious opinions about Kosovo independence in Serbia.

This period has had a significant impact on Serbia as it moved the country from the position of an ideal, even destination country that housed the capital of the Yugoslav federation and was at the center of Yugoslav culture, to a small land-locked country with minimal resources, no outlets to ports, newly-created hard borders with the neighboring countries that were not just neighbors but once co-nationals, and outside of multicultural identities of which they used to be a part. So, the choice to pair Serbia and *velika* as the initial line of the campaign illustrated that the *Vi ste svet* campaign would be a reimagining Serbian connections as well as repositioning Serbia as great but through different means. The greatness would not be based on geography, leadership, or the possibility of reincorporating lost territory. It would be great because of its people, their dreams, and actions that changed the world, not just Serbia. This campaign was going to move the association of Serbia with *velika*; and it was also going to help change the image of post-conflict Serbia, from just an inward-looking landlocked country to one with global connections and, perhaps, most importantly, for the American creators, connections to the United States and Western Europe.

Theme Two: Serbian Women

The most significant figure, as it is presented in the campaign anyhow, is Milunka Savić (1890–1973), who has four separate videos created in her honor. She is recognized for her courage on the battlefield during the First World War and her ability to show grace and tolerance toward her enemies. On the battlefield she is shown as someone who had no desire to continue fighting with the enemy and convinces the other soldiers to stop fighting to recognize that the people on the other side are still people. The language of tolerance and patience is continued into the other video where it narrates that she single-handedly captured 23 soldiers but 10 years after the battle, a foe sends his son to her so that he can study in Belgrade because he knew that Savić would care for him. Predictably, she allows the young man to stay in their house with whom Savić's daughter falls in love and they marry. The video ends

with the following line: “A foe that you fight can become a friend that you fight for, and the conflicts from the past remind us that, after all, we are fighting for the future together”, which is similar to the other Savić video that ends by relaying that Savić knew “that the future begins when you finish conflicts. She did not battle foes but battled her whole life for life”.

Savić is therefore presented as someone who was able to show grace despite conflict and share the little that she had with whomever needed it. In this way, she presents not so much as a historical figure but as someone who was larger than life, almost saint-like and sacrificial nature. She is the singular figure featured in the series without ties beyond Southeast Europe. She is also the only one given so different videos and she is also the only one who is positioned in such distant historical frames. Finally, she is the only one who is offered as a motherly type, which elevates her almost to the point of not being believable. Even if she exemplified such grace, kindness, and courage, her use in this campaign appears to present an ideal moral standard that would be difficult for most to uphold. As such, her presentation seems almost as a hagiography rather than simply a biography.

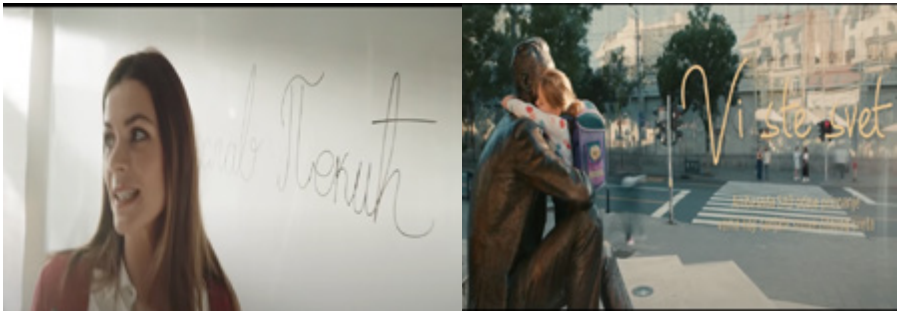


Milunka Savić, screen grab. Source: Vi ste svet, www.vistesvet.com

Her story stands in great contrast to Mira Trailović (1924–1989), who is the only other woman among the figures included in the campaign. She was a dramaturge and is celebrated in the campaign for her acting accomplishments throughout Europe and the United States. She is celebrating for the fact she “converted the theater into the center of the free world”. The video about her closes with a tribute to all the great women who have “given the world”. The tribute to Trailović is much more in keeping with the others featured in the campaign who have extensive ties to “the West” and is unremarkable in that regard.

Theme Three: Serbian-American Ties

Among the list of great Serbs there are a number of writers. I have already discussed Ivo Andrić, but other writers in the campaign include Charles Simić and Borislav Pekić. In the campaign these writers are tasked with being more than writers and more than Serbs. Charles Simić is known for holding a high position in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and Borislav Pekić (1930–1992) is celebrated for being a freedom fighter. Pekić is also presented as someone who is central to the Serbian literary canon as he is introduced by way of a female teacher who is presumably teaching his works to her young students.



Borislav Pekić, screen grab. Source: *Vi ste svet*, www.vistesvet.com

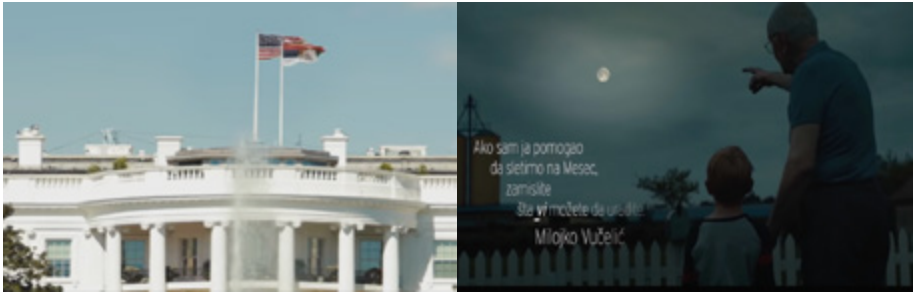
The campaign featuring Pekić ends with one of the young girls from the female teacher’s classroom hugging the statue of Pekić that is located centrally in Belgrade in one of the theatre districts of the city, recalling his work not just on literature but the stage as well. Thus, his timeliness and significance to Serbian culture, centrality to the city center of Belgrade, as well as his ability to connect vertically across generations. According to the videos, Pekić was not just a Serbian writer. He was a political activist who was imprisoned for his work with specific is a reference to his involvement with Association of Democratic Youth of Yugoslavia as well as a period late in his life where he found himself at odds with the Milošević government as well. Also relevant, he, like most in this campaign, lived a great deal of his life outside of his country of birth, London for him specifically. The final line of the video featuring Pekić includes the quote “Čast neće zavisiti od toga odakle dolazimo nego kuda idemo” (“Honor will not depend on where we come from but where we go”), which ties directly into what seems to be one of the fundamental goals of the campaign, namely to look to move beyond the past to look toward the future.

Charles Simić (born in 1938) too is an author who holds prominence in this campaign. He, similar to Pekić spent most of his life outside of his country of birth as well. As such, he is better known as an American poet with Serbian origins, which is important in the context of the *You are the World Campaign* since the focus of the campaign was not simply on Serbs exclusively, but rather focused on Serbs who were global citizens and therefore contributed to the world in significant ways. Simić, like others on this campaign were, arguably, as much American as they were Serb, which brings into question the stated goals of the campaign. It is clearly as much a push to connect Serbia to the United States at a time when the two countries have difficult relations as much as it is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of Serbs. It is no mistake that the majority of individuals of focus in this campaign have ties to the Western world – some in Europe but most in the United States. He, similar to Walt Bogdanić (born in 1950), is better known as American than Serb and the campaign articulates their position as Americans in interesting ways. Firstly, they pair them together in one short film and secondly, they reference Simić by way of his Belgrade upbringing. Secondly, on the webpages that reference the two of them, they are connected with the following phrase: “A life devoted to the search for truth,” illustrating that they both dedicated their work and their craft to truth-seeking. Although it does not say anything about the fact that they sought their truth through the language of English and an ocean away from Serbia. Simić is referenced as a Belgrader who became an important American writer and Bogdanić simply as an investigative journalist who is one of the collective You (One of You / jedan od vas).

The other heroes who are given individual shorts include Mihajilo Pupin (1854–1935) and Milojko Vučelić (1930–2012) both of whom were scientists and referenced by their achievements in the US, Pupin for his leadership of the New York Academy of Sciences but also because he was responsible for the only time that the Serbian flag flew in front of the American flag.³

Milojko Vučelić, also known as “the Serbian Apollo”, and is included because of his work at NASA on the US Space program Apollo. He, similar to Simić and Bogdanić is better known as an American than a Serbian.

3 For more information, see *U.S. Embassy in Serbia 2020*.



Mihajilo Pupin and Milojko Vučelić, screen grab.

Source: Vi ste svet, <https://www.vistesvet.com>

The individuals included in the campaign exemplify some examples of what Serbia's "citizens have given to the world". They were much more than their citizenship. Despite most of these individuals being born in either the kingdom or republic of Yugoslavia, with Savić being the sole exception, they are primarily presented as Serbs. For most of these individuals this is complicated, given that their origins were not simply Serb and, in some cases, particularly the ones who did not receive their own micro movies, they are disputed and claimed by multiple populations in former Yugoslav space. However, these individuals are claimed in this campaign as among the "You" as in the "one of you" ("jedan od Vas") which is how the majority of the videos begin illustrates the intended reach of the idea of Serbia and Serb.

Overall, the videos are of high quality and offer useful history lessons on important cultural figures. However, it must be questioned by the campaign uses the term "great" in this campaign and why so many of the figures featured spent very little of their lives in Serbia. The campaign also raises questions about the limits of the "You" referenced in the videos and even the connections that the individuals referenced in the videos all have to Serbia. Given the consistent role that the diaspora has in local politics and even in culture, it is, perhaps, not such a surprise that even Serbian-Americans would be included in this campaign.

Clearly one of the most important lessons to take from the campaign comes from the Milunka Savić videos and the larger-than-life image that that the campaign creates for her. Through her, viewers are meant to understand how to treat enemies and how foes can work together to create a better future – lessons that could potentially be relevant for Serbs in their interactions with foes, perhaps Americans specifically. However, because the campaign

features people who are inclusive of that “You” that are defined, at least in part, by their Serbian heritage rather than their Serbian passports, the campaign is testing the limits of the nation and its ability to reach beyond the geographical borders of Serbia. While it proves that Serbia is indeed, a “land of people and big dreams” it is unclear whose dreams they are. It seems that the dreams and might of the country as well as the framing of the Serbian heroes as they are presented in the videos are not convincing important Serbian publics.

For example, in a *Novi standard / New Standard* issue dating September 12, 2020, reporter Isidora Smolović asserts that the videos are actually preparing Serbs for the separation of Kosovo from Serbia. She asserts that the production quality of the *Vi ste svet* videos and their constant appearance on public television, particularly among low quality sing-song Serbian advertisements in Bollywood style, makes them difficult to ignore. She goes on to compare the campaign to “boiling a frog” such that the spectator does not realize that they are being tricked into taking a particular view of history that should look back instead of forward (Smolović 2020). Similarly, an article from the *Informer*, presents two views, one from historian Dejan Ristić who asserts the campaign is simply trying to remember Serbs of the deep ties between the US and Serbia and another that states that the campaign is “banal” and that a country that bombed them has no right to remind them of their size (Janjić 2022), so there was some commentary within the public in Serbia to support this idea. Equally interesting commentary about this comes from an article in the Serbian periodical *Novosti* dated January 16, 2022 where the professor and writer Slobodan Vladušić explains how the commercials offer only half truths about the heroes featured in the videos. Particularly interesting is the final commentary suggesting that the American embassy should have thought less about “jedan od vas” and more about “jedan od njih” (“one of them”), “about slaughter of the Indians, from atom bombs to drones and then understand that we do not want to be the kind of world that they are” (Rodić 2022). So, perhaps, even if Serbia is the world, the fact that it is framed from the outside and from a former, and arguably current foe, lessens the message as it seems that the focus was not received so much as focused on the message but on the messenger, which was clearly not the goal of the campaign.

Literature and Sources

- Janjić, Jelena. 2022. "“Vi ste svet’ iritira Srbe... Ili nas podsećaju da su Srbija i SAD prijatelji 140 godina? Šta nam to Amerika poručuje, zašto koriste Milunku Savić, Pupina, Teslu, Pekića?!””, *Informer*, 11 March, 2022., available at: <https://informer.rs/vesti/politika/684750/milunka-savic-heroina-ste-svet> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- New York Review of Books*. n.d. "Borislav Pekić". Available at: <https://www.nyrb.com/collections/borislav-pekić>. [Accessed: September 29, 2022.]
- Prasad, Sylvie E. 2017. *Creative Mobile Media: A Complete Course*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company.
- Rodić, Filip. 2022. "Neće moći: A šta ste vi?", *Novosti*. 16 January 2022. Available at: <https://www.novosti.rs/vesti/kolumne/1076189/nece-moci-sta-ste> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- Smolović, Isadora. 2020. "Šta je cilj kampanje ‘Vi ste svet’ ambasade SAD", *Novi Standard*, 9 December, 2020. Available at: <https://standard.rs/2020/12/09/i-smolovic-sta-je-cilj-kampanje-vi-ste-svet-ambasade-sad/> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- U.S. Embassy in Serbia*. 2020. "The Day Serbian and U.S. flags Flew Together Over the White House", January 1, 2020. Available at: <https://rs.usembassy.gov/day-when-the-serbian-and-u-s-flags-flew-together-over-the-white-house/> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- US Embassy in Serbia*. "Vi ste svet". Available at: <https://www.vistesvet.com> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- Vi ste svet. 2018. "Vi ste svet". *Youtube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgRFtjXMInA> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- Vi ste svet. 2019. "Vi ste svet – Apolo 60 Sec". *Youtube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tdffBP6M7k> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- Vi ste svet. 2020. "Vi ste svet – Borislav Pekić". *Youtube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Obf50PUOdU> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- Vi ste svet. 2022. "Vi ste svet: Milunka Savić – Budućnost." *Youtube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCf51ffYHbY> [Accessed: September 29, 2022].
- Vi ste svet. 2022. "Vi ste svet: Milunka Savić – Heroj". *Youtube* [video]. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhnrRyE_7Jo [Accessed: September 29, 2022].

Vi ste svet. 2019. "Vi ste svet – Mira Trailović". *Youtube* [video]. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8b6nMFgE_vs[Accessed: September 29, 2022].

Vi ste svet. 2018. "Vi ste svet – Pupin". *Youtube* [video]. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zu_jLz7zYGU [Accessed: September 29, 2022].

**SERBIJA I SRBI U SVETU: IDEALNA SLIKA
PREDSTAVLJENA U KAMPANJI *VI STE SVET*
(*YOU ARE THE WORLD*)**

Apstrakt

Članak razmatra kampanju *Vi ste svet* Ambasade SAD-a u Srbiji istražujući ciljeve, recepciju u srpskim onlajn izdanjima, kao i način na koji preispitivanjem slike Srbije kampanja uspostavlja okvir za rekonfiguraciju odnosa između Srbije i Sjedinjenih Američkih Država, težeći ponovnom uspostavljanju čvrstih odnosa dve zemlje, narušenih nakon NATO bombardovanja 1999. godine. U skladu sa tim, jasno je da mikrofilmovi koji čine deo kampanje ne predstavljaju samo pojedince i njihova postignuća, već i nešto drugo. Upravo to nešto drugo je predmet ovog članka.

Ključne reči: *Vi ste svet*, mikrofilm, *Velika*, svet, heroj

CAMPAGNES PROMOTIONNELLES ET TRAITEMENT MÉDIATIQUE DE GRANDES COMPÉTITIONS SPORTIVES – LES OUTILS DU SOFT POWER

Abstrait

De nos jours caractérisés par réseautage digitale, les évènements sportifs étant de caractère global et ayant le potentiel de l'engagement du public mondial représentent l'un des principaux espaces pour y créer l'image de la nation et y promouvoir "les valeurs souhaitées". Dans la dernière décennie, en République de Serbie de nombreuses compétitions sportives importantes ont été organisées et suivies de campagnes promotionnelles et d'une présence médiatique, les deux ayant été stratégiquement et d'une manière continue tournées vers la représentation de l'état et de la nation sur la scène internationale. Cette tendance suit une pratique de plus en plus courante d'utiliser de différents niveaux de diplomatie sportive et des stratégies du *soft power* adoptée par les pays en développement, quelle que soit leur taille ou leur potentiel économique. Les recherches sur l'utilisation des secteurs de l'audiovisuel et de la création, qui permettent de créer une image de marque d'une certaine compétition sportive, ainsi que la conception et la production de contenu promotionnel dans les médias, démontrent un rôle élargi du sport faisant de plus en plus souvent partie de la diplomatie culturelle.

Mots clés: le soft power, le contenu de media, l'événement sportif, la création d'images, la campagne promotionnelle

Les valeurs exprimées dans la culture, la politique intérieure et la représentation sur la scène internationale deviennent non seulement une partie de l'identité de l'État, mais aussi un modèle souhaitable auquel aspirent les autres. En ce qui concerne la société civile et le secteur non gouvernemental, ils favorisent les valeurs culturelles par rapport à la force économique, la puissance militaire ou l'agenda politique. Selon le concept de Joseph Nye,

¹ vanjasib@gmail.com

la taille géographique ou celle de la population ne sont pas d'une importance primordiale dans les relations internationales, mais ce sont l'image d'un pays, la promotion de ses valeurs et la diffusion de son influence qui gagnent en importance. Face au *hard power* incarné par les puissances politique, économique et militaire, le *soft power*, c'est-à-dire la capacité à convaincre les autres que vous êtes un modèle et un exemple auquel il faut aspirer, est l'avantage des grandes puissances, mais aussi la chance de petits pays. L'influence qu'un pays peut avoir sur un autre, c'est-à-dire "faire vouloir aux autres la même chose que vous", n'implique pas un système de menaces, de récompenses et de coercition, mais une manière acceptable et populaire de faire passer des messages et de les faire accepter par les autres.

Par définition, le *soft power* signifie amener les autres à vouloir les mêmes résultats que vous souhaitez, et cela nécessite de comprendre les messages que vous envoyez et ajustez en conséquence. Contrairement au *hard power*, le *soft power* dépend de ce qui se passe dans la tête des observateurs. La clé est de comprendre le public cible. (Nye 2019)

Le traitement séparé du concept de diplomatie sportive comme l'une des ressources de la diplomatie culturelle est lié aux travaux de Philip Lane (Lane 2013, 2016), alors que Joseph Nye ne s'est pas directement concentré sur le domaine du sport comme l'un des moyens d'atteindre le *soft power*, sauf pour l'affirmation selon laquelle le *soft power* des États-Unis d'Amérique est enraciné dans des valeurs culturelles qui incluent, entre autres, le sport professionnel, citant le joueur de la NBA Michael Jordan comme exemple (Nye 2004: 2011).

Les trois éléments sur la base desquels Nye manifeste le *soft power* (la culture, les valeurs politiques et le contexte de la politique étrangère) peuvent être vus dans la perspective de grands événements sportifs d'importance mondiale: a) Les valeurs culturelles sont principalement représentées à travers la présentation médiatique au sein de laquelle les manifestations d'ouverture et de clôture des compétitions sportives jouent un rôle particulier, comme une sorte de terrain d'entraînement pour une présentation audiovisuelle attrayante sur les caractéristiques et les réalisations du pays hôte. Dans ce contexte, le contenu des médias fait principalement référence à la description du mode de vie, des valeurs culturelles qui illustrent le mieux les caractéristiques démographiques, mais aussi les beautés naturelles, la patrimoine

historique, les créations artistiques, la cuisine et la musique. Cette catégorie comprend également les expériences des touristes – invités de l'événement – lors de leur séjour pendant la compétition et au contact du public et de la population locale, ce qui peut provoquer des impressions et former des attitudes qui ne sont pas toujours nécessairement positives; b) Les valeurs politiques sont visibles et reconnaissables dans la manière dont la compétition est organisée, ce qui reflète essentiellement le fonctionnement des institutions. À mesure que le début de l'événement sportif approche, l'opinion publique internationale s'intéresse de plus en plus à l'efficacité des institutions, au respect des droits de l'homme et au mode de vie des différentes classes sociales. La perception internationale des valeurs et des normes socialement acceptées de la population nationale concernant le niveau de respect des droits de l'homme, la réalisation de la justice sociale, ainsi que la suppression des inégalités de classe et des préjugés rétrogrades est également importante. Conscients de l'existence d'une attention ciblée supplémentaire de l'étranger, de nombreux mouvements sociaux et organisations non gouvernementales utilisent les événements sportifs comme plateforme pour promouvoir activement leurs programmes; c) Dans le cadre de la politique étrangère, le succès des événements sportifs est moins visible. De ce point de vue, le pays hôte peut réaliser un bénéfice, principalement dans le domaine de la visibilité, qui peut garantir un prestige international nouvellement créé ou renforcé. Il est impossible de séparer complètement cet élément des acquis réalisés dans les deux premières catégories – valeurs culturelles et politiques.

L'organisation de compétitions sportives suscite des potentiels diplomatiques qui attirent des citoyens d'autres pays, ce qui comprend également la participation active des médias mondiaux en tant qu'intermédiaires de communication. Assumer le rôle responsable de l'hôte d'un événement sportif mondial devient de plus en plus un facteur standard de la pratique politique performative et, en tant que tel, représente la preuve de la portée internationale atteinte du message souhaité. La pratique diplomatique réalisée par le biais d'activités sportives vise à améliorer ou à équilibrer le statut et la réputation internationaux en plaçant soigneusement une image souhaitable qui devrait être enracinée dans les caractéristiques réelles de l'État et de la communauté qui est recommandée au public étranger. Joseph Nye vient de souligner l'importance d'atteindre *la crédibilité* comme facteur clé pour une stratégie du *soft power*

réussie entreprise au nom d'un meilleur positionnement d'un pays particulier dans le cadre international (Nye 1990). Les avantages politiques stratégiques sont tout aussi importants que les gains économiques projetés attendus à la suite de l'investissement du pays hôte de la grande compétition. L'application réussie des outils du *soft power* nécessite une capacité très développée à utiliser différents canaux de communication pour indiquer la présence et l'importance des valeurs universellement présentes dans le sport afin d'attirer et de fidéliser un public dans un cadre mondial. Par conséquent, une utilisation soigneusement planifiée et habilement conçue des médias s'agit toujours en fonction d'une stratégie continue du *soft power*.

Grix et Lee (Grix & Lee 2013) affirment que l'organisation de grands événements sportifs fait partie intégrante d'une stratégie du *soft power* fondée sur une nouvelle politique d'attraction ou une nouvelle diplomatie.

Analyser les motivations de l'organisation des plus grands événements sportifs à travers l'exemple de grands pays aux performances économiques importantes réalisées au début du XXI^e siècle – Chine (Jeux Olympiques 2008), Brésil (Coupe du Monde en 2014 et Jeux Olympiques 2016) et Afrique du Sud (Coupe du monde en 2010), les auteurs envisagent une gamme de niveaux d'attraction pour les groupes cibles projetés de l'audience mondiale. En étudiant le rôle constitutif, performatif et discursif des méga-événements sportifs pour atteindre les objectifs définis par l'État dans les relations internationales, ils concluent que ces grandes entreprises et les investissements importants sont des projets d'État visant à étendre l'influence mondiale et à créer un attrait universel continu. En d'autres termes, contrairement aux canaux diplomatiques traditionnels dont l'activité est centrée sur les relations internationales officielles au niveau des institutions gouvernementales et des représentants diplomatiques, la diplomatie sportive dans le cadre de la diplomatie publique vise à façonner l'opinion publique internationale.

L'organisation d'importantes compétitions internationales communique un message fort que le pays hôte est du côté de la préservation des normes universelles telles que le fair-play² – concept qui a une valeur reconnaissable partout. Le sport est un phénomène mondial qui conserve des principes et des valeurs identiques ou similaires dans des contextes socio-économiques

2 fair-play – jeu honnête, sans faille, ouvert dans les compétitions sportives.

très différents, qui, de leur côté, avec leurs caractéristiques interculturelles, surmontent les limites géopolitiques. Investir dans l'organisation de compétitions sportives ouvre la possibilité de générer une attraction positive pour les pays qui se caractérisent par l'exact opposé – les connotations négatives du système politique interne.

De nombreux phénomènes indiquent que la dimension internationale du succès sportif, qu'il s'agisse du succès des représentations nationales à l'étranger ou de l'organisation de compétitions, représente une arène moderne unique dans laquelle s'active la politique d'attraction et ainsi la stratégie du *soft power* est réalisé. L'attraction clé qu'un pays hôte cherche à atteindre se manifeste dans la capacité à communiquer avec succès l'existence de valeurs culturelles partagées profondément enracinées qu'incarne un sport particulier. Les propriétés communes et positives des valeurs universelles des rencontres sportives signifient que les pays hôtes peuvent accroître leur attractivité auprès des publics internationaux en les nourrissant incontestablement dans le contexte de leurs caractéristiques culturelles, sociales et politiques distinctives.

Les pays qui se caractérisent par des valeurs politiques et sociales globalement perçues négativement, qui sont le résultat de certaines circonstances historiques, de problèmes non résolus de respect des droits de l'homme ou de pauvreté, peuvent tirer un bénéfice nettement plus important de la mobilisation de ressources pour la réalisation de la stratégie du *soft power* afin de transformer positivement l'image. Alors, le sport a pour fonction d'annuler les stéréotypes négatifs. Bien que l'amélioration de la perception globale d'un certain pays ne soit pas la seule et première raison d'organiser une compétition sportive, elle est très souvent caractéristique des pays qui partagent une image négative auprès d'une grande partie du public international. L'exemple d'un degré élevé d'investissement dans les stratégies du *soft power* serait celui du Qatar, pays du Moyen-Orient, qui s'est intensément présenté au cours des deux dernières décennies comme mécène des sports de haut niveau, s'efforçant d'atteindre les objectifs diplomatiques d'un acteur mondialement respecté. Ce pays met en œuvre des stratégies de diplomatie sportive en investissant principalement dans le sport international – en organisant les plus grandes compétitions et en achetant des clubs de football sportifs prestigieux. Cependant, cette entreprise complexe et de longue haleine n'a pas toujours

fait l'unanimité au niveau international dans un contexte positif, étant donné que l'attention portée par l'opinion publique mondiale au réexamen de certains segments de la politique intérieure et au traitement des questions humanitaires qui ne sont pas acceptables par normes internationales augmente également. Des événements très médiatisés et intensivement couverts par les médias peuvent, dans une certaine mesure, initier une dynamique pour le lancement des réformes sociales nécessaires qui apportent des progrès démocratiques potentiels (James 2021).

Assurer l'organisation d'une grande compétition sportive s'inscrit parfaitement dans le concept de diplomatie publique, qui s'efforce d'attirer l'attention d'une large audience télévisuelle internationale sur les événements qu'elle conçoit et contrôle. Les cérémonies d'ouverture sont le format du contenu idéal à travers lequel l'objectif de la diplomatie publique est réalisé. Ils contiennent la structure, la célébration et la communication de masse de l'aspect positif de l'histoire et de la culture du pays qui est présenté au public d'autres pays. Ces festivités sont la quintessence de la politique performative des attractions, qui s'efforcent d'agir sur le public tant sur le plan émotionnel que rationnel, ouvrant par la même occasion des opportunités commerciales considérables. Les célébrations de grands événements sportifs sont, au niveau du contenu de la communication, une occasion importante au cours de laquelle les pays hôtes montrent et prouvent leur identité avec les autres, qui est non seulement un élément clé d'attraction, mais aussi une source de légitimité de la globalité. En organisant avec succès un événement sportif et en prouvant qu'il partage des normes universellement valables, un certain pays accroît son prestige et son attractivité internationale, ce qui a pour but ultime de consolider sa position dans le cadre international. En tant qu'effet positif de ce processus, le commerce, le tourisme et le potentiel d'investissement sont renforcés, tout en favorisant le sentiment de réussite et de fierté nationale qui accompagne les grands événements sportifs.

Le traitement télévisé des disciplines sportives qui se déroulent en plein air dans des conditions géographiques spécifiques qui impliquent l'utilisation d'un système complexe d'appareils d'enregistrement dont la fonction de suivi des événements se poursuit continuellement et nécessairement d'un espace à l'autre montre de nombreuses possibilités d'une présentation attractive du pays hôte. Ce groupe de sports comprend principalement le cyclisme et la discipline athlétique du marathon,

tandis que certains éléments d'attractivité extérieure sont également présents dans le triathlon, l'aviron, le rafting, le ski nordique et la course d'automobile. Les retransmissions télévisées des courses cyclistes par étapes les plus prestigieuses à travers la France, l'Italie et l'Espagne (Tour de France, Giro d'Italia et La Vuelta a España) ont en même temps le caractère d'un contenu de voyage dans lequel les sites et les paysages traversés par les sportifs forment un élément indispensable de la couverture médiatique de la compétition sportive, mais aussi un matériel touristique promotionnel prolongé. Des prises de vue aériennes dynamiques permettent aux spectateurs de profiter des scènes de villes médiévales, d'églises de villages, de nombreux bâtiments architecturaux intéressants, mais aussi de la beauté naturelle des rivières, des lacs, des plaines, des zones vallonnées et des montagnes. Bien qu'à première vue ces scènes puissent sembler avoir un caractère secondaire en tant que décor, les informations et les textes préparés pour les commentateurs sportifs, qui sont parfois mis dans le rôle de guides touristiques pour les spectateurs, prouvent le contraire. Les paysages du pays traversé par la course participent à part égale à l'événement et sont porteurs des caractéristiques d'une attraction stratégiquement présentée afin que les téléspectateurs et les amateurs de sport cycliste se retrouvent un jour dans le rôle de touristes curieux.

L'événement sportif le plus récent où l'on peut remarquer les éléments de réalisation du *soft power* est le tournoi final de l'*Euroleague – Final Four* qui est organisé en mai 2022 à Belgrade. C'est la deuxième fois que notre capitale organise le plus grand tournoi européen de basket-ball.³ Dans le matériel promotionnel officiel la Serbie est marquée comme un pays de basket et que le tournoi, initialement prévu à se dérouler à Berlin, mais annulé à cause du respect des règlements COVID-19 en vigueur, "rentre chez lui". Des symboles reconnaissables de Belgrade, tels que sa forteresse et le pont sur Ada, ont fait partie de la conception graphique du logo du tournoi appliqué sur les maillots des joueurs et visible sur les panneaux LED le long du terrain et dans tous les clips vidéo promotionnels.

Comme une sorte d'annonce pour Final4 le site officiel de l'Euroleague a publié un documentaire d'une heure sous le titre *Le pays de MVP joueurs / Land of MVPs* (Euroleague Basketball 2022). À travers une approche biographique détaillée ce film

³ Le premier tournoi final de la compétition Euroleague – Final Four organisé en République de Serbie s'est déroulé du 18 au 20 mai 2018 à Belgrade.

traite le fait qu'en 2021, les joueurs MVP participant dans les trois compétitions les plus importantes venaient justement de Serbie, une situation singulière produite alors pour la première fois. Ce qui est intéressant c'est que la même chose s'est répétée cette année, ce qui est vraiment inhabituel et extraordinaire. Le but d'un riche matériel documentaire était de révéler le secret du succès du basketball serbe. On y souligne particulièrement le processus de formation sportive spécifique, ainsi que le talent des joueurs qui aspirent au succès dès leur plus jeune âge, le soutien de leurs familles, la passion de jouer et de comprendre le sport à un tel point que tout cela, suivi de l'audace, la confiance en soi, la persévérance et la ténacité sont considérés comme des caractéristiques uniques et propres au basketball serbe.

Le concept visuel de ce documentaire comporte des éléments du matériel promotionnel touristique qui nous conduit à travers Sombor, Kopaonik et Valjevo – les lieux d'où viennent les basketteurs couronnés. Leurs interviews sont stratégiquement intégrées dans le cadre du récit. Le motif dominant est qu'un pays quasi insignifiant sur le plan géopolitique occupe le sommet du basketball depuis déjà un demi-siècle. Cette renommée des basketteurs serbes a été manifestement montré au moment après la fin du match final dans lequel une équipe turque (*Anadolou Efes*) a battu une équipe espagnole (*Real*), quand le plus grand drapeau déployé au sol était le drapeau serbe - grâce au meilleur joueur de l'équipe gagnante qui était de nationalité serbe et au soutien lui apporté des spectateurs locaux. C'était une scène spontanée et frappante qui a souligné l'importance du basketball pour notre public, et qui a, en même temps, réalisé une communication forte au niveau mondial.

Le premier tournoi final de l'*Euroligue – Final Four* a également été accompagné de manière promotionnelle par la première du film documentaire *Le berceau du basket-ball / The Cradle of Basketball* (Euroleague Basketball 2018) qui, à travers la visite des terrains de basketball emblématiques de Belgrade situés à la forteresse de Belgrade (dans le parc Kalemegdan), reconstitue l'histoire du développement d'un sport avec une tradition très importante pour notre pays, et vue à travers les yeux des entraîneurs et des contemporains ayant participé à ce processus.

Dans le contexte de l'égalité des sexes, il est important de mentionner Championnat d'Europe féminin de basket-ball. Il y a trois ans, la Serbie l'a coorganisé avec la Lettonie, en partie sur les ailes du succès que l'équipe nationale serbe a récemment remporté.

L'identité visuelle était basée sur le motif de la couronne et de la lettre W (women, winner) qui symbolisait une grande réussite dans le sport féminin. Les mascottes sont nommées d'après l'élément du jeu Pick & Roll, adéquatement colorées aux couleurs nationales. La stratégie promotionnelle était parfaitement conforme à la campagne de la FIBA pour le développement et l'accessibilité de ce sport aux filles de 6 à 15 ans, avec des slogans de campagne mondiale "Her world, her rules" et "Welcome to my playground" (FIBA – The Basketball Channel 2019). C'est l'exemple qui, entre autres, prouve que les compétitions sportives internationales peuvent être mises au service de la promotion et du soutien d'un agenda dont l'objectif n'est pas nécessairement destiné en priorité à un public étranger, mais dont la portée au niveau intérieur est tout aussi importante pour la communauté sociale.

L'un des objectifs proclamés des autorités de la ville de Belgrade est d'organiser au moins une grande compétition sportive chaque année. En octobre dernier, c'était le championnat du monde de boxe amateur. Le suivi télévisé a été diffusé dans 40 pays et la volonté de la Serbie d'organiser de grandes compétitions dans de nombreux sports a été une fois de plus confirmée.

Une courte vidéo promotionnelle parlant du parcours de développement des boxeurs de l'âge des garçons aux champions est présenté par le principal promoteur de la compétition, acteur et star Miloš Biković (Arena Sport TV 2021). En plus de la grande popularité évidente de cet acteur, qui le rend très présent en marketing dans les diverses campagnes, cet engagement a une justification très logique pour le public national, en particulier pour celui de théâtre. À savoir, Biković a réalisé au théâtre l'un de ses rôles les plus importants en interprétant un boxeur dans la pièce *Quand les citrouilles fleurissaient* (*Kad su cvetale tikve*, 1968) de Dragoslav Mihajlović.

Quand on parle du Championnat du monde d'athlétisme en salle à Belgrade, qui a eu lieu en mars dernier, on se souviendra de record de l'athlète suédois Armand Duplantis qui a couru le tour d'honneur portant les drapeaux suédois et serbe. Aussi, souvenons-nous de l'histoire choquante de Jaroslava Mahučih, athlète ukrainienne de saut en hauteur qui s'est rendu à Belgrade pendant trois jours dans des circonstances incertaines et qui a, en remportant la première place, également reçu une publicité mondiale. Ce championnat a été parmi les premiers à servir de plate-forme pour émettre des messages catégoriques contre la guerre.

Conclusion

La tentative d'évaluer le succès des activités du *soft power* ou de la puissance douce à travers l'utilisation du sport dans la catégorie compétitive et organisationnelle est très exigeante et ne dispose pas de paramètres de vérification clairs, à l'exception des données quantitatives sur les visites touristiques dans notre pays. Il est certain que cette stratégie est de plus en plus présente au sein du segment plus large de la diplomatie culturelle, et qu'elle doit être observée sur une période de temps plus longue afin de pouvoir éventuellement évaluer plus précisément son effet cumulatif sur le changement d'image de notre environnement à l'étranger. Il serait important que le trait déterminant du traitement médiatique du sport soit la mise de l'accent sur l'esprit sportif et compétitif, le cosmopolitisme des organisateurs et l'hospitalité traditionnelle serbe comme élément indispensable à la création de l'identité nationale et culturelle. Le contenu promotionnel, la structure des campagnes et la réalisation des segments des retransmissions directes et d'émissions de télévision qui affirment les succès sportifs et organisationnels de notre environnement sont devenus un élément indispensable du discours du *soft power*. Les éléments reconnaissables sont les idées d'une société progressiste, l'égalité des rôles entre les sexes dans les infrastructures sportives, la liberté d'expression et le respect des droits de l'homme dans la République de Serbie en tant que région avec une tradition sportive importante, mais également son rôle actif dans les organisations sportives internationales.

Littérature

- Arena Sport TV. 2021. "PROMO AIBA Svetsko prvenstvo u boksu / Beograd 2021 / od 24.10 - 06.11.2021." *Youtube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7x94JtT65M0> [Accédé: 12 Septembre 2022].
- Euroleague Basketball. 2018. "Belgrade: Cradle of Basketball" *Youtube* [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7yB12hcPn0> [Accédé: 12 Septembre 2022].
- Euroleague Basketball. 2022. "Land of MVPs - EuroLeague Basketball Documentary". *Youtube* [video]. Available at : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMDJsLc01Lg&t=9s> [Accédé: 12 Septembre 2022].

- FIBA – The Basketball Channel. 2019. “Her World Her Rules – Welcome to My Playground!”. *Youtube* [video]. Available at : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWnejHUUzv4> [Accédé: 12 Septembre 2022].
- Grix, Johnatan & Lee, Donna. 2013. “Soft Power, Sports Mega-Events and Emerging States: The Lure of the Politics of Attraction”, *Global Society* 27(4): 521–36.
- Lane, Philip. 2013. *French Scientifique and Cultural Diplomacy*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Lane, Philip. 2016. *Présence française dans le monde l’action culturelle et scientifique*, La Documentation Française.
- James, Thomas Bonnie. 2021. “Soft Power and the 2022 World Coup in Qatar”, *Tajseer Journal*, Vol. 3 / Issue 2. Qatar Université Pressa, 194 – 208.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 1990. “Soft Power”, *Foreign Policy* 80: 151–171.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 2004. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 2011. *The Future of Power*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Nye, Joseph S., Jr. 2019. “Soft Power and Public Diplomacy Revisited”, *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 7–20.

PROMOTIVNE KAMPANJE I MEDIJSKI TRETMAN VELIKIH SPORTSKIH TAKMIČENJA – ALATI MEKE MOĆI

Apstrakt

U današnje vreme, okarakterisano digitalnom umreženošću, sportske manifestacije svojim univerzalnim karakterom i potencijalom angažovanja globalnog auditorijuma predstavljaju jedan od ključnih prostora stvaranja imidža i brendiranja nacije, te promocije „poželjnih vrednosti“. U poslednjoj deceniji, u Republici Srbiji organizovano je više značajnih sportskih takmičenja koja su imala promotivne kampanje i medijsko prisustvo strateški okrenute kontinuiranom predstavljanju države i nacije na međunarodnoj sceni. Ovaj trend u mnogome prati sve izraženiju praksu korišćenja različitih nivoa sportske diplomatije i strategije meke moći kod zemalja u razvoju, bez obzira na njihovu veličinu i privredni potencijal. Istraživanje upotrebe audio-vizuelnog i kreativnog sektora koji „brendiranjem takmičenja“, kao i osmišljavanjem i produkcijom medijskih promotivnih sadržaja govori o proširenoj ulozi sporta kao dela uspešne kulturne diplomatije.

Ključne reči: meka moć, medijski sadržaj, sportska manifestacija, kreiranje imidža, promotivna kampanja

Jana DUDKOVÁ¹
Institute for Theatre and Film Research,
CRA, Slovak Academy of Sciences

ADAPTATIONS BY GORAN MAROJEVIĆ: BALKANISM REVISITED IN THE CONTEXT OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN TELEVISION²

Abstract

During the early nineties, most of the production of TV fiction in Slovakia was based on the works of “Western” or Russian/Soviet provenance. Screen adaptations of works from Central and South-Eastern Europe were not common practice at the time. Precisely in such circumstances two adaptations by an ex-Yugoslav director Goran Marojević appeared. The first among them was based on a play by Slavomir Mrožek *The Contract* (1986), while the other was based on a play *The Professional* (1990) by Dušan Kovačević. In this paper, I analyse transformations of Balkanism in the above mentioned adaptations, particularly focusing on the first among them, in which the original mocking of Balkanism and Orientalism is completely dispensed with and transformed into a thematization of Central Europe and its significance in a new world order. As the result, we have multiple shifts regarding the meaning and recognition of various geopolitical concepts that contribute not only to the questioning of the directors’ “Balkan” cultural-political origin, but also the original understanding of Central Europe through the optic of an exile who found himself in a similar position as the central-European exile Mrožek.

Keywords: Slavomir Mrožek, film adaptation, TV film, Balkanism, Central Europe

In this paper, I would like to focus on a specific television adaptation made in the early 1990s, i.e. the adaptation of a less known Sławomir Mrožek’s play *The Contract* made for the Slovak Television in 1992. My aim is to point out the transformation of characteristic Orientalist or even Balkanist discourse of Mrožek’s play into a distinctive set of references to the new Central European

1 janadudkova@gmail.com

2 This work was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency under the contract No. APVV-19-0522.

identity, and to show a double silencing of geopolitical origin of both authors, i.e. Mrožek, and television adaptation's director, ex-Yugoslav immigrant Goran Marojević.

In the context of Slovak television – live-action – production and adaptations have always been a specific dominant part. One the one side, they helped overcome the lack of original stories, while on the other facilitated flexibility in following changing ideological needs and, often, even served to integrate more controversial messages into stories from different times and geopolitical contexts.

At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, it was, for example, relatively popular to make adaptations of contemporary works from behind the Iron Curtain. These adaptations had the aura of an exotic world often emphasized by foreign phrases and greetings interrupting the flow of dialogues translated into Slovak. Despite that, they were still able to match the topics typical for the Czechoslovak media discourse of the late 1980s: crisis of morals of the intelligentsia and/or elites, corruption, yearning for prosperity, and the devaluation of truth. It is perhaps not a big surprise that many of these adaptations were made before November 1989. They could be interpreted as news from the decadent West as needed but, at the same time, these adaptations could have introduced a new point of view to domestic social debates and thus, carefully reflected the period of the Soviet *Glasnost* (1986–1991). Examples of this tendency are *The Benefactor* (*Dobrodinec*, Ján Zeman, 1990) based on *Bread Upon the Waters* by Irwin Shaw; *The Effects of Gilding* (*Následky pozlátenia*, Vladimír Strnisko, 1990), an adaptation of a play by the British Brian Clark; or *The Black Prince* (*Čierny princ*, Pavol Haspra, 1989), an adaptation of a novel by Iris Murdoch.

Parallel to this, works from the Russian or Soviet settings were quite often made into adaptations. The most appreciated ones were those dealing with the topic of authoritarian regimes or those that spoke about the conflict of exceptional individuals and small-mindedness of the provincial people (e.g. TV adaptations of Griboyedov's *Woe from Wit* / *Útrapy z rozumu*, Miloš Pietor, 1990 / or Chekhov's *Ward No. 6* / *Pavilón č. 6*, Ernest Stredňanský, 1992). Several of the early post-socialist adaptations also challenged the notion of revolution: *The Meeting with Bonaparte* (*Výstrel na Bonaparta*, Ján Zeman, 1992), based on Bulat Okudzhava's short story, introduces a tragic fate of a Russian noble man who deserts from mobilization in order to – unsuccessfully – kill Napoleon Bonaparte; or *The Duelist* (*Zurvalec*, Vladimír Strnisko, 1993) based

on Turgenev's short story taking place shortly after the Dekabrist revolution recounts the clash between a creative, noble and tolerant worldview and predator's need for violence. The themes of *perestroika* and *glasnost* resonate in adaptations of late socialist works such as the cult play *Dear Yelena Sergejevna* by Lyudmila Razumovskaya (*Drahá pani profesorka*, Katarína Krivánková, 1990); a satire about the hierarchy in socialist writers' communities *Domestic Cat of Average Downiness* by Grigori Gorin and Vladimir Voinovich (*Mačka domáca*, Milan Lasica, 1992); an absurd drama about totalitarian control *The Man with the Green Rucksack* by an Estonian author Arvo Valton (*Muž so zeleným batohom*, Juraj Takáč, 1990); or a tragic story about the betrayal of Jesus Christ by his own family, the samizdat play by Aleksandr Volodin *The Mother of Jesus* (*Ježišova matka*, Jozef Bednárík, 1991).

As for the Central European works, besides the domestic ones, only the works of Austrian authors were adapted relatively regularly (such as those of Arthur Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig, but also Ingeborg Bachmann like *Barking* (Štekot, Igor Ciel, 1991), the adaptation of her short story *Das Gebell*). This repertoire pursued similar goals as the repertoire of classical works of European provenance such as Alfred de Musset's *Lorenzaccio* (Miloslav Luther, 1991); Simon Vestdijk's *The Fifth Seal* (*Piata pečať*, Martin Kákoš, 1990); or Lope de Vega's *Fuenteovejuna* (Franeek Chmiel, 1990): these were socially engaged titles on totalitarianism, hopes and scepticism of betrayed revolutions, intrigues, and loss of interpersonal trust.

During the early 1990s, though, few works of Central European authors from the Soviet bloc were made into adaptations, and probably there were no adaptations of this kind in the first years after the revolution. It was not until 1992 and 1993 when two television "adaptations" of the plays *The Contract* and *The Last Cocktail* by a Polish exile author Sławomir Mrożek (1930–2013) were made. In 1993, two adaptations of original works by Hungarian authors and one adaptation of a work by a Romanian writer were also produced: *An Innocent* (*Neviniatka*, Igor Ciel) based on a play by Imre Bencsik, *The Interrogation* (*Výsluch*, Stanislav Párnický) based on a play by István Eörsi and *Ciuleandra* based on a psychological thriller by Liviu Rebreanu (*Tanec lásky a smrti*, Martin Kákoš). However, the above-mentioned adaptations are but an exception in the television production of the early 1990s. This is in line with the hypothesis that works from Soviet Bloc countries might have been considered as a high risk for TV adaptations shortly before November 1989,

when it was not clear how the respective countries would adopt Soviet perestroika. Given that only few projects from those planned after 1989 (while most of them were designed before the so-called Velvet revolution) were realized, it is not a big surprise that there was almost no interest in Central European authors in the following years.

The Contract with Central Europe

The two aforementioned adaptations of Mrožek's plays appeared in television production during the second wave of interest in this playwright in Slovakia dating from the beginning of 1989 to the first years of the new decade (Godovič 2017: 128).³ *The Last Cocktail*, the adaptation of the play *Ambassador* directed by Miloslav Luther, followed the production of *The Ambassador* at the Bratislava's Korzo Theater '90 (1991). The play was translated into Slovak and directed by a famous actor, dramaturg and stand-up comic Milan Lasica, who was then cast in the main role for the television adaptation. The adaptation of *The Contract* is rather unique in the Slovak environment: this play was not performed at all in professional theatres in Slovakia (Godovič 2017: 221). Although this play is not one of Mrožek's best or best-known works, its television adaptation seems to be more timeless and coherent than Luther's attempt to make an adaptation of a more famous play.

Mrožek wrote a play about a contract between a hotel guest and an immigrant who worked at a hotel during the mid-1980s. The subject of the contract is murder: the guest fears that he will no longer be able to afford living in the hotel; he does not want to live elsewhere and so he persuades a stranger to kill him in a week's time.

The allegorical plot deals, among other things, with the fate of colonial discourse at the end of the Cold War. The play makes us believe that the roots of this discourse are in favour of Eurocentrism where imaginary Europe becomes the last refuge of a hotel guest (Mrožek 1988: 31) who may not be European at all (there are several indications that he might be an American) and who subconsciously denies a hotel employee Moris his Europeanism as well. However, while in Mrožek's work, there are two foreigners meeting in a Swiss hotel, in the Slovak television adaptation (directed by Goran Marojević in 1992), the immigrant comes from Czechoslovakia and the origin of the guest is not specified in any way. The characters

3 The first wave of interest was between 1962 and the end of 1969, almost 30 years earlier.

of the play are much more clearly related to Europe and the same applies to the fact that it is the hotel that has changed its name on this occasion. Its name is no longer *Residence* but expressly *L'Europe*.

In addition, the name of the country the foreigner comes from is never mentioned in the original play: the location of the country is deliberately obscured by an ironic play on words whereby both characters confirm the origin of their discourse in the language of colonialism. Moris first claims that he comes from the fictional "overseas" land of Polititiki, later he confesses to lying and gives local Polish-sounding toponyms of his birthplace (Mrožek 1988: 33–34), but the guest cannot pronounce them. Moris therefore locks himself away and avoids mentioning the name of his homeland. When Magnus fails at guessing (Finland and Czechoslovakia are his guesses), they both start mentioning the country only in the context of Balkanist and Orientalist ideas.

In other words, at the beginning of Mrožek's play, Moris pretends to be of the Pacific origin hoping that this will arouse guilt in the guest (Mrožek 1988: 37) but later he enjoys the position of a possible culprit, or "vampire" who would bleed him dry: "Dracula came from my region", he claims (Mrožek 1988: 79). In any case, the couple can hardly speak differently than in the language of colonialism which they both use for irony and even parody, in moments of anger. For example, they do not hesitate to occasionally move Moris' birthplace across different historical and geographical contexts:

Magnus: But this is oriental malice!

Moris: Byzantine heritage.

Magnus: Mongolian psychology! [...] (Mrožek 1988: 91).

On the other hand, in the television version, the name of the foreigner's country is revealed immediately upon their acquaintance and the hotel resident will sincerely enjoy the information as a former diplomat with a good knowledge of both languages of the country, Czech and Slovak. The play on elusiveness of Eastern Europe is thus reduced right from the beginning. The foreigner comes from Czechoslovakia, the hotel guest has worked in Czechoslovakia – in both Bratislava and Prague. It is not, anymore, a vague and changing idea of Eastern Europe with a number of blank spaces on the map that Western European Enlightenment travellers once had, as Larry Wolff explains (Wolff 1994). It is, now, a specific

country at a specific historical moment. According to Mrožek's instructions, the story takes place at present time, thus in 1985. Television adaptation takes place at present time as well, but this presence has moved forward already: thus the adaptation refers to an unspecified moment after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The only two characters in the play can therefore also discuss why a foreigner (called Martin in the television adaptation) will not return to his homeland when he is free to do so and suggest that the motivation for his departure is rather economical, than political. Thanks to the initial unambiguity of the foreigner's origin and motivations, the television adaptation can place the emphasis on colonialism and shift it to the relationship between Europe and its paradoxical Centre.

By combining the stereotypes used about the Pacific, the Balkans, or even the Socialist Bloc, the play written in the author's "Western" exile refers to the opposition between the East and the West from the mentioned perspective of colonialism and its discursive parallels such as Orientalism and Balkanism. While the West is usually a single entity in this discourse, the East is presented as a fluid element, so notions of Moris's birthplace can combine stereotypes associated with all four notions of "East" worlds: the Far East, the Middle East, the Near East and, last but not least, "Eastern Europe". It is not for nothing that Magnus asks after an unsuccessful attempt to pronounce the name of his companion's birthplace: "And that ... is it in Europe?" (Mrožek 1988: 35).

However, in the television adaptation, there is no word about exotic Oceania or the Balkans. At the time of filming, the opposition of Eastern and Western Europe had already lost its validity. In particular, the war conflicts in the territories of the former Soviet Republics or Yugoslavia led to a more intense awareness of the differences between the various parts of what was perceived as a single entity during the Cold War. In 1980s, the emancipation of the idea of Central Europe had already led to a more confident definition of Central European cultural elites vis-à-vis the Soviet Union or the Balkans. Maria Todorova, therefore, argues that after 1989 not only science but also media and diplomatic discourses adopted the idea advocated by, for example, historian Jenő Szücs in 1983, saying that there was: the need for a finer differentiation of Eastern Europe into Southeastern and Central Eastern Europe (Todorova 1999: 243–245). The fall of the Iron Curtain was accompanied by acceptance and respect for the concept of Central

Europe promoted by intellectuals such as Czesław Miłosz (1911–2004) and Milan Kundera. However, a by-product of this division, according to Maria Todorova, is the resurrection of the imaginary Balkans that remained invisible and divided between the East and the West (Todorova 1999: 244).

Mrožek's work *The Contract* confirms that from the point of view of Central European elites it could have been the other way around: in the play, Moris tries to indicate the specificity of the Central European region, although he constantly returns with Magnus to parody the language of colonialism in which not only Russia but also the Balkans (with all the dark memories of Dracula or Sarajevo) are increasingly more visible than the Centre of Europe. Therefore, despite the removal of parodic allusions to Balkanism, the television adaptation of *The Contract* is not in conflict with the original play. Instead of emphasizing the East – West opposition, it rather puts an emphasis on the opposition of “old”, decadent, and vanishing Europe and its paradoxically marginalized Centre. However, it is the Centre that also disintegrates in its essence: at the time of filming the play, the newly acquired independence and unity of “old” Czechoslovakia was threatened by political struggles and nationalist conflicts which resulted in the split of the country in January 1992. Even these circumstances can be the background to the melancholic tone used in the situation when the foreigner Martin pronounces the name of his homeland, Czechoslovakia, for the first time.

Television adaptation is, thus, the bearer of another paradoxical analogy. In the original play, the concept of Central Europe is silenced and lost in the extreme fluidity of the idea of “East” from the time of the Cold War when Balkanist and Orientalist stereotypes prevailed. The author's homeland is not even once directly named. To the contrary! Something else disappears from the television adaptation: The “Balkan” origin of its director, an ex-Yugoslav Goran Marojević. Balkan stereotypes such as references to Dracula and Sarajevo are therefore removed, and the importance of Central Europe is strengthened so that once again the author's origin could be concealed. Similar to this is Marojević's previous adaptation of his compatriot Dušan Kovačević's play *The Professional (Profesionál, 1991)* that was adapted to the Czechoslovak context even without major textual modifications. The adaptation only slightly changes the names of the characters in order to better resemble Slovak ones (Teo instead of Teja, Lukáš instead of Luka), while the reference

to the first Czechoslovak post-socialist president Václav Havel is already used in the original play.

Despite the silence, the fresh exile from former Yugoslavia, whose homeland faced a civil war and ceased to exist at the time of filming, works very gently with semantic nuances and combines the Czechoslovak context with inconspicuous references to his own experience. Thanks to them, it is possible to perceive immigration, at least for a while, even in the fashion of exile that is so close to Mrožek's works.

Literature

- Godovič, Marek. 2017. *Dramatik Sławomir Mrožek na Slovensku*. Dissertation. Bratislava: Vysoká škola múzických umení.
- Mrožek, Sławomir. [1986] 1988. *Smlouva*. Transl. Helena Stachová. Praha: DILIA.
- Szücs, Jenő. 1983. "The Three Historic Regions of Europe: An outline", *Acta Historica Scientiarum Hungaricae* 2 – 4: 131–183.
- Todorova, Marija. [1997] 1999. *Imaginarni Balkan*. Transl. Marija Starčević – Aleksandra Bajazetov-Vučen. Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek.
- Wolff, Larry. 1994. *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Jana DUDKOVÁ
Institute for Theatre and Film Research
CRA, Slovak Academy of Sciences

**ADAPTACIJE GORANA MAROJEVIĆA:
PREISPITIVANJE BALKANA U KONTEKSTU
SREDNJOEVROPSKE TELEVIZIJE**

Apstrakt

Tokom ranih devedesetih godina 20. veka, najveći deo televizijske igrane produkcije u Slovačkoj bio je baziran na delima „zapadne” ili pak ruske/sovjetske provenijencije. Insceniranje dela Srednje i Jugoistočne Evrope još nije bilo uobičajeno. Upravo u ovoj situaciji pojavljuju se dve adaptacije eksjugoslovenskog reditelja Gorana Marojevića, prva od njih bazirana na drami Slavomira Mrožeka *Ugovor* (1986), a druga na drami Dušana Kovačevića *Profesionalac* (1990). U ovom radu analiziram transformacije balkanizma u pomenutim adaptacijama, sa naročitim fokusom na prvu od njih, u kojoj je izvorno ismejavanje balkanizma i orijentalizma u potpunosti izostavljeno i pretočeno u tematizaciju Srednje Evrope i njenog značaja u novom svetskom poretku. Rezultat su višestruki pomaci u značenju i prepoznatljivosti različitih geopolitičkih koncepata koji doprinose ne samo preispitivanju rediteljevog balkanskog kulturno-političkog porekla već i originalnom viđenju Srednje Evrope optikom egzilanta koji se obreo u sličnoj poziciji kao srednjoevropski egzilant Mrožek.

Ključne reči: Slavomir Mrožek, filmska adaptacija, televizijski film, balkanizam, Srednja Evropa

III

CINEMA SCREENS

FILMSKI EKRANI

Angela BRINTLINGER
Elizabeth McBEAN¹
Department of Slavic and East European
Languages and Cultures
The Ohio State University

CONSTRUCTION OF WAR AND MEMORY IN THE FILMS OF SERGEI LOZNITSA²

Abstract

One of the most significant artistic voices in the contemporary post-Soviet world belongs to Ukrainian filmmaker Sergei Loznitsa. His films engage with the troubled Soviet past and its long-lasting aftermath and bring forth important questions of national identity, moral failure, and unhealed trauma. In the wake of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, these questions seem poignantly prescient and, unresolved, continue to wreak havoc. Through his films Loznitsa questions the state-sponsored and propaganda-enforced narratives consumed by the masses and reveals the manipulated perspectives film can perpetuate. This article looks specifically at Loznitsa's most recent documentary and pseudo-documentary films on contemporary Ukraine, *Maidan* (2014) and *Donbass* (2018), as well as his two feature films, *My Joy* (2010) and the *In the Fog* (2012). In these films, visual techniques bring the image and dynamics of a crowd to the foreground to reassert the complexity of individual responsibility, the necessity of depicting war honestly, and the lasting and sometimes damaging effects of memory. In the article we explore how Loznitsa's filmic representations of war and trauma muddy the tides of memory and push viewers to come to terms with individual accountability, their own and that of their nation(s).

Keywords: Loznitsa, war, memory, individual accountability, crowds, anti-crowd film, Ukraine

1 brintlinger.3@osu.edu; mcbean.4@osu.edu;

2 My thanks to Marzena Sokołowska-Paryż, for whom I first wrote about Sergei Loznitsa and film (AKB). Our gratitude also to Scott Sprague at Ohio State University, who helped with the technical aspects of pulling stills and creating film clips for the talk on which this article is based.

As a tool of both art and politics, the genre of film acts on audiences, manipulating viewers and often reframing contemporary and historical experiences to give them (new) meaning. The constructed memory of World War II in Russia, the “Great Patriotic War” in Soviet parlance, has similarly reframed past traumas, in turn shaping interpretations of the past and their subsequent contemporary ramifications. Post-Soviet understandings of the state as actor continue to shift responsibility for action away from the individual, thus complicating how people see their roles within a broader society, be that Russia, Ukraine, or another post-Soviet country.

Ukrainian film director Sergei Loznitsa, in his persistent obsession with the themes of war, memory, the individual, and the collective, has produced a barrage of films that confront state power and engage propaganda, in effect baring the unprocessed trauma of post-Soviet citizens and nations. Both his documentary and feature films explore harrowing moments in history including World War II and the Holocaust, but they also sometimes veer into current events as did his films on contemporary Ukraine, *Maidan* (2014) and *Donbass* (2018). With signature practices including piecing together archival footage, tracing a crowd’s formation with the camera, deliberately abstaining from narration, or interweaving scenes from different time periods, Loznitsa questions the past and its long-lasting aftermath. Visual techniques bring the image and dynamics of a crowd to the foreground of both documentary and feature films to reassert the complexity of individual responsibility, the necessity of depicting war honestly, and the lasting and sometimes damaging effects of memory. This article aims to examine Loznitsa’s filmic representations of war and trauma, which muddy the tides of memory and persistently force viewers to come to terms with individual accountability, their own and that of their nation(s).

Sergei Loznitsa as Documentarian

In the words of Russian film critic Anton Dolin, Sergei Loznitsa is a twenty-first century director for whom the twentieth century remains formative (Loznitsa 2022b). Indeed, we might argue that for many countries around the world it is primarily the memory of twentieth century events that shapes national identity. This is true in Russia. It is also true in the United States, where Black Lives Matter activists have been working to bring the Civil Rights

movement to its logical conclusion, and in Serbia, where the 1999 NATO bombings have strongly affected Serbs' reaction to the war in Ukraine in 2022.

Loznitsa considers himself to be Ukrainian. Until recently he has continued to work in Russia and Belarus as well as in Ukraine. When the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine was launched in February, Loznitsa—born in Belarus, trained in Moscow, and holding a Ukrainian passport – resigned from the European Film Academy in protest over their wan reaction and was soon expelled from the Ukrainian Film Academy for his continued work with Russian filmmakers. In their statement, the Ukrainian Film Academy accused Loznitsa of not adopting the “key rhetoric” of national identity (Cunningham 2022). But although Loznitsa has been censured for the decision not to abandon his Russian camera people and other colleagues, his words and actions are deliberate. In a post-Soviet world, he is rejecting blind patriotism and is instead choosing to adhere to fundamental human values. Loznitsa's poignant and condemnatory response to the Ukrainian Film Academy highlights the themes his films repeatedly attempt to show:

So, it is not the civil and political standpoint of every citizen of the country that matters; it is not the aspiration to unite all the freedom loving and free-thinking people of the world against the Russian aggression; it is not the creation of an international effort of all democratic countries in the world to win this war; it is the “national identity” that matters most. Unfortunately, this is Nazism. A gift to Kremlin propagandists from the Ukrainian film academy. (Loznitsa 2022a)

Underscoring Loznitsa's films are the very issues of unity and personal responsibility and autonomy that he discusses in this open letter.

Loznitsa's documentary and pseudo-documentary films about 21st century Ukraine – in particular *Maidan* (2014) and *Donbass* (2018) – rival in power his films about the Soviet Union, including *The Trial* (2018) and *State Funeral* (2019), and his most recent three films about World War II and the Holocaust: *Austerlitz* (2016), *Baby Yar: Context* (2021) and *Natural History of Destruction* (2022). These films tell important stories of the birth of the new Ukraine during the 2014 Revolution of Dignity on Maidan Square, about conflicting loyalties in Ukrainian geographic space, about crowd dynamics and transformations, about tourism to historical sites, and about the tradition of filmic manipulation of Soviet historical

moments. Loznitsa's scope is broad, but his concerns circle around specific problems, in particular those related to war, memory, national identity, and individual responsibility.

In fact, wielding film footage – whether carefully sourced archival material or film shot on location – Loznitsa has repeatedly questioned the relationship between national identity and war in Soviet, Belarusian, Ukrainian, and Russian contexts. He eschews voiceovers, thus creating a space where viewers must react on their own, without guidance. Unwilling to mold their conclusions, the filmmaker forces his viewers to actively participate and think for themselves. In his work he questions the state-sponsored and propaganda-enforced narratives consumed by the masses, thereby attempting to reveal the manipulated perspectives film can perpetuate. In this sense we might approach his films with a tool defined by scholar Lesley Brill, “anti-crowd” theory, which argues that films can “aspire to free an imperceptive mob of consumers from the hegemony of a smaller group of oppressors and to restore their autonomy as individuals” (Brill 2006: 3–4). Such a critical eye dismantles a film's construction and gives power back to the individual – whether the individual wants that power or not. In *Maidan* and *Donbass*, with a focus on crowds, on masses without a hero, Loznitsa traces the moment a crowd transforms or is unable to form and confronts viewers with a reflection of themselves. Loznitsa leverages the cinema to accost crowds – the ones portrayed in his films and the ones sitting in the audience – in order to remind them of their individual autonomy.

“Fake news” has been the cry heard across the world in recent years, but the Soviet propaganda machine was honing its production of “fake news” before former U.S. President Donald Trump began to complain about his media coverage, and long before Russian President Vladimir Putin declared its spread to be a violation of Russian Federation law. But even in so-called non-fictional film, viewers must evaluate the filmmaker, the camera people, the participants or actors. As in the consumption of all media, individual viewers must take responsibility for their own interpretations of a film, for what they see and take away. The camera can show us the truth, and it can also construct the truth, as Loznitsa reveals in the archival footage he brings to the screen for the first time in *The Trial*, showing us the cameras, the participants, the audience. In *Donbass*, a film one critic asserts “perfectly captures the propagandistic surrealism of 21st century warfare”, Loznitsa himself constructs

the scenes, but then vividly demonstrates to us that today there are cameras all around, recording events “live” in footage that is just as vulnerable to misuse and manipulation as state-owned celluloid (Sims 2022). A crowd of observers is in fact a crowd of active participants partaking in the capturing and dissemination of news—and sometimes that news too can be “fake”. As *Donbass* reveals, the abstract state propaganda machine can actually manipulate individuals, causing them to perpetuate skewed and partial narratives through their acts of citizen journalism. As in Brill’s “anti-crowd” theory, Loznitsa reveals the constructed reality of narrative in order to dismantle the ideological structures the masses consume and produce, both knowingly and unknowingly.

These films and Loznitsa’s other documentaries are generally of two types: representations of past historical events constructed from footage he finds in archives, or representations of contemporary life and history using film shot by him and his camera people. Loznitsa often presents difficult material, but he trusts and requires his audiences to think and interpret for themselves. At a 2019 screening of *The Trial* at the Warsaw film festival, audience members wanted to know why Loznitsa had not offered explanatory material, either as voiceover or at least captions to clarify what was going on. His response was simple: *The Trial* was about experiencing the same confusion, boredom, and ineffable terror that the courtroom participants felt in 1930 at that first filmed show trial from which he drew his footage.³ Explanations and captions frame the experience presented and permit observers to categorize it; their lack forces the audience to participate in the events of the film.

As Masha Gessen emphasized in their review of *The Trial*, the film highlights the “show” aspect of this first Stalinist show trial: Loznitsa, they write, “depicts it as a spectacle, complete with audience reactions”, “the spectacle of the transformation of people into totalitarian subjects” (Gessen 2019). In the face of power, as Brill has argued, the impulse driving crowd formation is the desire to survive and escape death. The crowd spontaneously forms, thus creating a feeling of safety and equality in unity. Yet, those seeking power invert this and attempt to isolate individuals so as to identify and potentially punish them, in turn securing their own position of power. Loznitsa’s filmic representation of crowds encapsulates these crowd dynamics as it tries to understand the why and the

3 Personal experience (AKB).

how. In an interview, Loznitsa explains his work on *Babyi Yar*: “I wanted to make this film in the same way I made the documentary [*Maidan*]: without any hero, with a mass of people, and just following the situation in a documentary way. To see how, slowly and gradually, people plunge into hell.” (Rapold 2014).

In *Maidan*, Loznitsa documents the transformation of people, this time into democratic subjects. Here Loznitsa does utilize title screens to capture four stages of the protest: Prologue, Triumph, Armed Conflict, Postscript. Strikingly reminiscent of Sergei Eisenstein’s *Potemkin* (1925), *Maidan* also captures a crowd forming and transforming in united opposition to unjust domination. Both films trace the movement from peaceful protest to armed conflict to mourning. Without a protagonist or antagonist, the audience feels connected to and empowered by the depicted crowd’s unity. This phenomenon accords with Brill’s theory that the “full realization of a crowd occurs when its members feel complete identification with one another, when they experience transcendence of an isolated self, and when in their equality with the other crowd members they feel safe” (Brill 2006: 6). Loznitsa extends this feeling of unity to the viewer through the camera’s gaze. Static and at eye-level, the wide-angle camera witnesses everything. At times passersby make eye contact with the viewer – with the camera – and at other times they walk by anonymously. As Christian Metz has argued, the audience identifies with the camera’s gaze and sees itself as in a mirror (Metz 1982: 42–52). As the viewer’s gaze merges with the camera’s, the distance between the viewer and the subjects is bridged. The camera is static, and thus the viewer remains an observer. However, when directly assaulted by riot police, the stationary camera in *Maidan* finally moves, transforming into a hand-held camera shakily evading further attack. Thus, Loznitsa depicts and shapes audience experience using camera techniques; in this moment, the viewer and camera for the first time shed their role of observer and become participants joining the crowd.

For those who watched *Maidan* and saw the Ukrainian people become one before their eyes,⁴ the pseudo-documentary *Donbass* feels like a protracted insult, as it parades before the film audience various atrocities, from staged conflicts to outright banditry to vulgar and cruel bullying. Natalia Shpylova-Saeed has commented that the “combination of various narratives” in the film “lays the foundation for manipulating how the military conflict is presented

⁴ Ben Rifkin, Hofstra University online screening of *Maidan*, 11 April 2022.

and understood” (Shpylova-Saeed 2019). Forged from citizen cellphone footage, this “anti-crowd” film repeatedly reveals its construction and shows how live footage is just as vulnerable to manipulation as archival frames or directed shots. In stark contrast to the coming together of the Ukrainian people in *Maidan*, *Donbass* isolates, separates, and prevents a crowd from forming. As a result of such isolation, there is a breakdown of human connection and empathy, and transformation is impossible.⁵ In *Donbass*, groups of people repeatedly emerge, yet the individuals remain incapable of joining together: employees of a maternity ward stare meekly at a corrupt party member during his visit; detained bus riders gaze submissively at the ground while a female separatist berates them; and the most jarring visual is the pack of ethnic Russians that gather to beat an older Ukrainian man whom they have targeted, a scene immediately followed by a vulgar wedding celebration. In this film, groups are meek victims or hostile attackers, while individuals shirk responsibility, ape propaganda narratives, or avoid engaging with the violence around them.

In *Donbass*, Loznitsa sharply depicts not only the trauma of war, but also the way in which state efforts shape experiences of war through war propaganda. Rendering amorphous crowds, Loznitsa tries to understand the complex moment of their transformation. If *Maidan* depicts the formation of the Ukrainian nation in the crucible of the capital city, then *Donbass* chronicles the complexity and multiplicity of experiences for individual Ukrainian citizens across the entire country, whose isolation prevents them from transforming and uniting, from forging human connections. Significantly, neither *Donbass* nor *Maidan* features a protagonist.

Sergei Loznitsa as Feature Film Director

In Loznitsa’s feature films, the 2010 *My Joy* (*Schast’e moe*) and the 2012 *In the Fog* (*V tumane*), the individual takes a much more prominent place. In both films the director highlights a central hero, a male protagonist, whose journey takes him through Russian and/or Soviet geographical space to an utterly lonely place of isolation and lack of connection. Set in the nominal present, *My Joy* interweaves important flashbacks to scenes from World War II. Through these juxtapositions Loznitsa is able to confront the propaganda narrative and reveal the falsity and lies permeating post-war society. *My Joy*

5 See Brill for further discussion on the interconnectedness of crowds, power, and transformation: “Whereas crowds are characterized by density and equality, power seeks isolation and a sense of inequality so radical that it finally denies human status to its adversaries” (Brill 2006: 5).

was Loznitsa's feature film debut and it strongly implied that social problems in Russia in the 2010s were firmly rooted in World War II. In contrast, *In the Fog*, based on a 1988 story by the Belarusian novelist Vasil' Bykau (1924–2003), remains entirely in the 1940s and takes us into the Belarusian countryside, where villagers and partisans struggled to survive under Nazi occupation. Time is erratically woven together in both films, complicating chronology and reinforcing the fact that the traumas of the past continue to affect the present.

Disenfranchised and separated from their communities, betrayed by structures of power, the protagonists of both films suffer from Soviet narratives of war and memory, thus themselves becoming symbols of the isolation and terror of the post-Soviet era. The films resolve very differently, but each highlights the disconnect between individuals and the crowds they cannot join. Watching these films today, a decade after they were made, while the Russian government declares a need to “denazify” Ukraine and continue the work of the soldiers who perished in the second world war, reminds us that the so-called “Great Patriotic War” is far from over. Indeed, its lingering legacy poisons everyday culture in the Russian Federation and arguably fuels the war in Ukraine. With these films Loznitsa takes apart the myth of that “Great Patriotic War” and reveals the far-reaching and long-lasting repercussions of both the lived traumas and the state's oppressive narrative that has obscured post-Soviet citizens' sense of personal accountability.

Memory is fragile and quite vulnerable in its malleability. It can only really belong to the people who experience something, and even they forget, reimagine, or in other ways alter the stories they have lived. To help understand how history and memory function in the context of a larger community, Maurice Halbwachs came up with the term *collective memory* to define the way in which we see and remember the past through our concerns in the present, altering the narratives of our experiences and the experiences of our nation to serve our current purpose. In his words, collective memory “simplifies; sees events from a single, committed perspective; is impatient with ambiguities of any kind, [and] reduces events to mythic archetypes” (Novick 1999: 2–3). When that collective memory is state sponsored, the details of individual experiences can be wiped out entirely and replaced with a tidy reimaging of the past. Loznitsa unravels this state-sponsored myth that has been consumed by the masses and reveals instead the individual autonomy that became distorted in impossible situations. In the film

In the Fog, for example, Loznitsa confronts the Soviet myth of the monolithic Belarussian partisan forces by isolating each individual and clouding any idea of who the enemy actually is. Like Bykau, who in his fiction consistently examined the lived experience that is displaced by official myth, Loznitsa focuses in on the subsequent unhealed trauma and its lasting repercussions as well.

From the 1920s through the 1940s, at the juncture of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine, the Soviet government and the Nazi army came through in successive waves of violence, and the state's narrative later celebrated the "heroic" nature of the people's response. That narrative has yet to be truly interrogated by the people who live in these spaces. Before his death Bykau wrote about the end of the twentieth century: "we have become impoverished even as regards the most necessary things: food, housing, ethics, morality, spirituality. Everything has become bankrupt" (Bykau and Tychina 2010: 17). Loznitsa's two feature films bring this very moral bankruptcy to the forefront, and through them he asserts the steep price of freedom and human dignity: one must ultimately be willing to give up one's life. The protagonists of the two films, Georgii and Sushchenia, are repeatedly ostracized and persecuted, yet at each moment of moral crisis, they gently and quietly do not waver. Loznitsa empathically understands the complexities and fears guiding the decisions of his characters, yet he sets a high expectation that human beings must be prepared to die for the larger moral and humane good.⁶

In a vivid extended metaphor, Loznitsa shows in his epigraph to *My Joy* the tragedy of post-Soviet societies that failed to come to terms with the human losses from World War II. Instead of confronting the realities of these tragic and complex periods, Russian society has buried them. *My Joy* opens with a seemingly random scene: viewers witness a body being dumped into a pit and cement poured over it.⁷ The unknown corpse becomes a recurring image that haunts each character throughout the film: the war veteran who murders a soldier when the latter pilfered his belongings; the serviceman who hallucinates a man hanging in the forest; the orphan boy whose father, a teacher and pacifist, is killed before his eyes by two Soviet soldiers. That orphan is irreparably traumatized, losing his voice and as an adult becoming part of the brutal gang who attack

6 In the 2014 interview with Nicholas Rapold, Loznitsa explains, "There's an ancient saying, perhaps it's Seneca: a person who lives his life without finding anything worth dying for has lived his life for nothing. My personal opinion is one should live one's life in such a way as to be prepared to die every single day. Morally prepared, so to speak".

7 Peter Hames contends that the body in Loznitsa's epigraph scene is related to the "burial of history, collective memories, personal trauma - [all] the realities that lie beneath the present" (Hames 2010: 2).

Georgii. The image of the lifeless body of his father dragged by the two soldiers through the yard eerily recalls the image of the limp corpse dragged to its silent grave in the epigraph scene. No frame is extraneous in Loznitsa's masterfully constructed narrative.

Loznitsa fills his film with disparate threads of peoples' stories that link symmetrically and circularly: the old man receives the coffin of the unknown soldier and rescues the amnesiac Georgii, who has been betrayed, violated, and abandoned once again; the traumatized orphan boy becomes a violent aggressor; and the space in which the initial trauma occurred, the teacher's hut, becomes a space of future trauma where the now mute Georgii is sexually assaulted. What happens when the complicated past is buried and manipulated to fit the constructed myth of heroism and triumph? Loznitsa shows us the body that haunts each character and transforms them, bringing that buried "body" back into the narrative to force individuals to confront their traumas, an act that he seems to hope will also have a positive effect on their collective futures or at least on the audiences viewing the film.

In the first half of *My Joy*, Georgii, the main character, tries to interact with those he meets, offering assistance and money, demonstrating a gentle trust in the form of non-resistance to evil. In one of the most powerful scenes of the film, the still very functional Georgii stands in a village marketplace and the camera slowly pans across the faces surrounding him, lingering on each and documenting the fear, the anger, the exhaustion and hopelessness of people of all generations. The undiagnosed and untreated post-traumatic stress disorder of these Russian citizens manifests in two ways: the frozen-in-stone expressions of people in the market scene and the vicious and often unmotivated violent attacks that occur throughout the film. Once again, a crowd is prominently displayed. Unlike the static camera whose gaze we identified with in *Maidan*, here the camera isolates Georgii from the crowd, deepening the distance between him and them, and highlighting the inability of all to connect and forge human relationships (Figure 1). Like Dostoevsky's character Prince Myshkin travelling across the hinterlands, Georgii is markedly different than those who surround him. In his naivety, he can neither connect with nor understand the disparate individuals who are each siloed in their own misery and grief. *The Idiot* (1869) is a novel that at its core questions trauma and whether it is possible to heal after surviving trauma, indeed whether resurrection is possible, in a religious or a more profane

sense for characters whose lives have been marred. Myshkin is the glass mirror that forces others to see in him their reflections. And just as the decaying body featured in Hans Holbein's painting *The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb* (1521) underlies Dostoevsky's novel *The Idiot*, so too the unknown corpse from the epigraph thematically and structurally underlies *My Joy*.⁸



Georgii in the village marketplace. *My Joy*, Sergei Loznitsa, 2010 (39'36'')

Much like Myshkin who ultimately returns to a state of idiocy, in the second half of the film Georgii is mute, passive, left for dead on the side of the road not once, but twice. When he finally begins to move, almost zombie-like, he asks nothing of anyone. If in his pre-concussion state Georgii tried to engage his own random passengers, he now rides with a garrulous driver and seems to absorb that man's maxim: "don't interfere", take what you need and don't get involved in anything that happens around you. But from non-resistance to evil Georgii turns to violence, and Loznitsa offers the viewer a vicious retribution, a scene of total death and destruction in a world without hope. There is no evidence in this film of the healing that must take place in the wake of trauma-inducing events in order for Russians to rejoin humanity. Instead, the film mimics the arguably hopeless ending of *The Idiot*, where Myshkin predicted an apocalyptic fate for Russia. The film's title, *My Joy*, implies that the protagonist will get some pleasure from his interactions with the world around him, but from the moment we meet Georgii we see that no one offers him any comfort in turn. Instead of a road trip through the Russian countryside with

8 Sarah Young argues that the Holbein painting is the connective tissue structuring *The Idiot* (Young 2007). Loznitsa may indeed have Dostoevsky in mind in creating his mute and zombie-like characters; his 2017 film revisited another of Dostoevsky's works, *A Gentle Creature* (1876).

interesting adventures and remarkable encounters, the film turns out to be a post-Soviet horror film.⁹ Alienated and violated by both crowds and individuals, Georgii becomes a killing machine despite living in a time of nominal peace.

In his second feature film *Loznitsa* also explored humanity, deliberately “placing morality on the forefront and questioning what exactly true heroism is” (Wijermars 2014: 29). Thus, the historical film *In the Fog* expands its World War II theme to be applicable to today’s world in Russia, Ukraine, and beyond. Here too the title is misleading: *In the Fog* lowers a curtain of ambiguity over the entire production. The film’s plot is nevertheless relatively straightforward: a Belarusian lineman named Sushchenia tries to navigate life under the German occupying forces in order to prevent or at least delay the massacre of his fellow villagers. Working on the rail line with some comrades, Sushchenia resists a plot to commit sabotage, knowing that if they act, the Belarusian villagers will suffer. His fellow workers derail a train anyway, and they are all arrested by the Germans, who play a neat trick on the conspirators. Punishing most, they release Sushchenia, and as a result everyone, including his beloved wife, assumes he is a German collaborator. The film’s plot highlights the ambiguity of this historical moment when questions of “us and them” were particularly problematic. Identifying the enemy was no easy task; he might be from afar, or he might be from within your village, or even your own family.

Loznitsa roots the resonance of Bykau’s story for him in his own childhood experience, when he came to understand that: “You can’t do anything to restore fairness. That’s what the film is about. About the border between each of us and the surrounding world, which you cannot cross; you cannot penetrate the thoughts and feelings of others” (Maliukova 2012). Ostensibly about the complications of life in an occupied zone, the film demonstrates that trust in another human being is impossible, and that once a man’s honor has been impugned, he can never restore it. Sushchenia is kidnapped by partisans, who have an order to execute him as a traitor, but they are trapped in the woods with occupying German troops all around. One after another Burov and Voitik are picked off, and Sushchenia recognizes that once again he will be unable to prove his innocence. With crisp, vivid cinematography and an often eerily silent soundtrack, the film ends with a dense fog rolling in and the sound of a single gunshot – the viewer assumes that Sushchenia

9 Dolin commented that the title hides a narrative in which “the personality is dissolved, crushed to a powder, and both the human being and the humanity in him is destroyed” (Dolin 2010: 54).

has taken his own life. No background music swells to remind us that this is cinema; instead, the audience hears heavy breathing, boots slipping on wet leaves, the crack of Sushchenia's suicide shot, creaking trees reminiscent of the creaking noose. The ethical fog the protagonist tried to disperse instead overwhelms him, leaving no survivors.

War is complicated, and not only by wartime events: by everyday life, by petty jealousies, by the past that precedes and shapes the present. Loznitsa presents a World War II-era Belarus that does not distance the viewer in any way from the painful depiction of village tragedy. In the opening scene, the viewer is immediately thrust into the village square. The camera's gaze is truncated and obscured by the shoulders of the three saboteurs, creating the sensation that the camera, or rather the audience, is the fourth, walking in line with the others to his death (Figure 2). The camera pans across women and children, returned partisan soldiers with missing limbs, and Nazi soldiers who populate the crowded square.



Nazi soldiers lead three saboteurs to the gallows.
In the Fog, Sergei Loznitsa, 2012 (01'50")

Sometime later the shot is reversed; Sushchenia is released by the Nazi soldiers, and he turns his bloodied and beaten face to stare tearfully into the camera behind him. In switching from the gaze of one of the men condemned to die to the gaze of the villagers watching Sushchenia's expulsion from their collective, the camera forces the audience to once again identify with its gaze and join the crowd in its rejection of Sushchenia. If there is some semblance of safety in numbers in the village, even under Nazi occupation, the person who challenges their silent acquiescence and provokes the

painful question of personal responsibility and accountability will be pushed out and ostracized.

In true “anti-crowd” fashion, *In the Fog* complicates the tidy image of the ‘enemy’ that the dominant state narrative has constructed for mass consumption and empathetically depicts the nearly impossible situations into which war and the desire to survive thrust people. There is no heroic Soviet army or Belarusian partisan force in *In the Fog*; Voitik is quick to betray his fellow partisans when confronted by two Nazi soldiers; Burov attempts to kill the innocent Sushchenia. Thinking Burov will carry out the capital punishment, Sushchenia meekly digs his own grave, requesting only that Burov lie to his wife: “Please don’t tell Anelya. Tell her the Germans killed me.”. But when he is the only one left, Sushchenia has to admit that no one will tell Anelya how he died. His attempts to take the moral high ground seem futile. Throughout the film, the audience has to consider: what might I have done? The situations are nearly impossible, yet as Loznitsa shows, neither taking the easy way, such as Voitik repeatedly did, nor resisting evil as Sushchenia does ultimately results in salvation. Yet, the individual actors and the omniscient viewer know the compromises each made. For Voitik, this was his humanity, for Sushchenia, this was his life. Although the right choice can lead to death and an untold story, each individual is accountable for every choice and action. In time the untold stories that have been obscured may be uncovered, as Loznitsa illustrates over and over in his many films, both in the way he reassembles archival footage and in his dedication to the never-ending project of revealing the complex layers of the past.

Conclusion

Sergei Loznitsa’s film version of Bykau’s World War II story came out in 2012 and thus predated Russia’s 2014 invasion of Ukraine and takeover of Crimea, but the questions raised in the film are similar to those with which Russians and Ukrainians struggle today. Who is the enemy in post-Soviet space? Who is to be trusted, and who is ready to betray his nation, his family, his detachment to save his own skin? The most fascinating development of Russian political attitudes toward the “near abroad” is just how quickly the mudslinging and name-calling begin to evoke World War II terminology as the conflict of societies heated up on the Russian-Ukrainian border. Nazis, Banderovites, Hitlerites. New vocabulary also emerged in 2015: Crimea or *Krym* gave birth to *Krymnashisty*

to signify “Crimea is Ours” supporters of the takeover. The rhyme with *fashisty* [fascists] was not a coincidence, just as today’s new terminology lumping together Russians who do not openly resist the war as *Rashisty* evokes both historical German fascists as well as the Putin propaganda team’s use of the word to label Ukrainian nationalists. Loznitsa has gone on record to say that “the war unleashed by Russia against Ukraine is a suicidal and insane act that will inevitably lead to the collapse of the criminal Russian regime” (Loznitsa 2022a). But his feature films of a decade ago predicted and depicted this degradation of Russian society and post-Soviet society more generally. In not properly processing historical traumas, in covering up the need to come to terms with moral failures and individual as well as collective responsibility, Russia has gone on the offensive, starting with the bombing of Ukrainian cities regardless of who might get hurt.

At the Cannes film festival in May 2022 Loznitsa premiered his newest documentary film, *The Natural History of Destruction*, which is about the wartime bombing of civilian targets, again based on a literary work, this time by German-born writer W.G. Sebald (1944–2001). In an interview Loznitsa defined a word he has used to talk about the *Babyi Yar* film as well as *Natural History*, a word he finds highly relevant to the post-Soviet situation:

Chronocide is basically the absence of historical memory. And the condition in a society when the tragedies that occurred, the traumas that afflicted the society, are forgotten or not talked about. What happens is, sooner or later, these traumas resurface and come back to haunt the society that is trying to forget about them (Roxborough 2022).

The phrase “fog of war” originated in the nineteenth century with the German expression *Nebel des Krieges* and designates the inability of combatants to make good decisions in conditions of war. *Chronocide* though is about post-war situations when thinking should be able to be much clearer. Here again is the buried body from the epigraph to *My Joy*. Only societies that have confronted their historical tragedies can avoid causing new ones.

Loznitsa highlights the need for sanity, for clarity, and for serious psychological work on a grand scale. There cannot be any “joy” in countries where the fog of war continues to penetrate human consciousness. In the propaganda war at home since 2014 or even earlier, the Putin government has been manufacturing that fog, flooding the country and its media with waves of

misinformation like billowing clouds from a dry-ice machine. If it is indeed necessary to mourn loss in order to move forward, post-Soviet states still have significant work to do (La Capra 1999: 697). Actual World War II veterans now number only a handful, and very few living participants can complicate the picture of wartime experiences generated by state propaganda and mythmaking.¹⁰ Loznitsa—occupying that borderland where Russia, Ukraine and Belarus meet—has been a voice for truth and reconciliation. His most recent films align him more clearly with the emerging Ukraine against what he has called “the criminal Russian regime,” but his is a lone voice crying for a serious reconsideration of post-Soviet post-traumatic stress disorder. The fact that at the height of emotions Ukraine turned its back on the filmmaker, ejecting him from the Ukrainian Academy of Film and censoring his actions, mimics the way in which Belarusian villagers in Bykau’s story and Loznitsa’s film turn on each other, unable in the fog of war to understand that humanity and complexity are possible and indeed are vital even in a time of violence and retribution.

Literature and Sources

- Brill, Lesley. 2006. *Crowds, Power, and Transformation in Cinema*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.
- Brintlinger, Angela. 2018. “‘A Murky Business’: The Post-Soviet Enemy” in M. Löschnigg and M. Sokołowska-Paryż (eds.) *The Enemy in Contemporary Film*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 35–52.
- Brintlinger, Angela. 2021. “Veterans Remember the War in Soviet and Post-Soviet Fiction.” in D. L. Hoffmann (ed.) *The Memory of the Second World War in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, London: Routledge Press, 133–54.
- Bykau, Vasil’ and Tychina, Mikhas (Introduction). 2010. *The Dead Feel No Pain: A Belarusian Novel of the Second World War by Vasil Bykau*. New York: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Cunningham, Nick. 2022. “Sergei Loznitsa Excluded from Ukrainian Film Academy; Loznitsa Posts Response.” *Business Doc Europe*, March 20.
- Dolin, Anton. 2010. “Fools and Bad Roads”, *Film Comment* 46(5): 54–58.
- Gessen, Masha. 2019. “An Extraordinary New Film Captures the Spectacle of Soviet Show Trials”, *The New Yorker*, January 15, 2019. Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/>

¹⁰ On post-Soviet writer-veterans who tried see Brintlinger 2021.

- an-extraordinary-new-film-captures-the-spectacle-of-soviet-show-trials [Accessed: August 21, 2022].
- Hames, Peter. 2010. "Review of My Joy (Schast'e Moe) Directed by Sergei Loznitsa." *Kinokultura*.
- LaCapra, Dominick. 1999. "Trauma, Absence, Loss", *Critical Inquiry* 25(4):696–727.
- Loznitsa, Sergei. 2022a. "An Open Letter from Sergei Loznitsa on His Expulsion from the Ukrainian Film Academy", *e-flux*, March 20, 2022. Available at: <https://www.e-flux.com/notes/456681/an-open-letter-from-sergei-loznitsa-on-his-expulsion-from-the-ukrainian-film-academy> [Last accessed: August 21, 2022].
- Loznitsa, Sergei. 2022b. "Rossiiskaia Federatsiia—preemnitsa bespraviiia." Maliukova, Larisa. 2012. "Sergei Loznitsa: Okkupatsiia – Eto Prikhod Vlasti, Diktuiushchei Narodu Svoiu Voliu." *Novaia Gazeta*.
- Metz, Christian. 1982. *The Imaginary Signifier*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Novick, Peter. 1999. *The Holocaust in American Life*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Rapold, Nicolas. 2014. "Interview: Sergei Loznitsa (2014)", *Film Comment*, December 9.
- Roxborough, Scott. 2022. "Ukrainian Director Sergei Loznitsa on History's Lessons Left Unlearned", *The Hollywood Reporter*. May 21, 2022. Available at: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-news/ukrainian-director-sergei-loznitsa-history-destruction-cannes-2022-1235151641/> [Last accessed: August 21, 2022].
- Shpylova-Saeed, Nataliya. 2019. "Sergei Loznitsa's Donbass: A Chimera of War", *A Place for Film*. Retrieved from: <https://loznitsa.com/pdf/donbass/IndianaUniversityCinema.pdf>.
- Sims, David. 2022. "Every War Leads to Dehumanization", *The Atlantic*, April 6.
- Wijermars, Mariëlle. 2014. "Review of In the Fog [V Tumane] Directed by Sergei Loznitsa", *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 44(1): 27–29.
- Young, Sarah. 2007. "Holbein's Christ in the Tomb in the Structure of The Idiot", *Russian Studies in Literature* 44(1): 90–102.

Angela BRINTLINGER
Elizabeth McBEAN
Department of Slavic and East European
Languages and Cultures
The Ohio State University

KONSTRUKCIJA RATA I SEĆANJA U FILMOVIMA SERGEJA LOZNICE

Apstrakt

Jedan od najznačajnijih umetničkih izraza savremenog postsovjetskog sveta jeste onaj ukrajinskog reditelja Sergeja Loznice. Njegovi filmovi bave se problematičnom sovjetskom prošlošću i njenim dugotrajnim posledicama, otvarajući pitanja nacionalnog identiteta, moralnog sunovrata i neizlečene traume. U osvit ruske invazije na Ukrajinu, 2022. godine, ova pitanja deluju kao potresna predviđanja, koja, budući nerešena, i dalje izazivaju pustoš i razaranja. Svojim filmovima, Loznica preispituje masovno korišćene, propagandno nametnute narative, podržane od strane države, otkrivajući manipulirane perspektive koje film može da perpetuirati. U ovom članku ćemo se fokusirati na recentne Loznicine dokumentarne i pseudodokumentarne filmove o savremenoj Ukrajini *Majdan* (2014) i *Donbas* (2018), kao i igrane filmove *Moja radost* (2010) i *U magli* (2012). Vizuelna tehnika u ovim filmovima podrazumeva stavljanje u prvi plan slika i dinamika mase u cilju afirmisanja kompleksnosti individualne odgovornosti, nužnosti poštenog prikaza rata, kao i dugotrajnog, ponekad i oštećujućeg efekta sećanja. U radu istražujemo na koji način Loznicine filmske reprezentacije rata i traume zamućuju plime i oseke sećanja i podstiču gledaoce da se suoče sa sopstvenom, kako individualnom tako i nacionalnom, odgovornošću.

Ključne reči: Loznica, rat, sećanje, individualna odgovornost, masa, *anti-crowd* film, Ukrajina

L'ART DU CINÉMA – L'AGENT DIPLOMATIQUE (DES BALKANS)

Abstrait

Dès l'origine, tant par son histoire que par les aspects qu'il représente, le cinéma en tant qu'art, mais aussi en tant que produit, possède "l'habileté à séduire et à attirer" (Nye 1990), présentant ainsi le concept du *soft power* dans les relations internationales. A travers la notion de *soft power*, dans un cadre culturel peu conventionnel, notamment à travers l'art cinématographique, on reçoit de différents messages concernant des défis, des questions ouvertes ou des problèmes des sociétés d'aujourd'hui, qui communiquent avec succès avec le public (européen). On va donc essayer de décoder quelques films nominés par le prix de l'Académie européenne du cinéma (European Film Academy – EFA): *Points de suture* (Šavovi, 2019), réalisé par Miroslav Terzić et *Le Père* (Otac, 2020) réalisé par Srđan Golubović, les films serbes, et le film bosniaque *Quo vadis Aida?* (2020) de Jasmila Žbanić, qui a été primé en 2021, remplissent tous le rôle de véhiculer les messages actuels importants de la société qu'ils représentent. Quel est le profil des films des Balkans, nominés ou récompensés par l'EFA ou soutenus par le Fond européen Eurimages (CoE)? Sont-ils que des messages locaux, régionaux, européens ou globaux qui séduisent et attirent le public? Quel est le *soft power* de l'EFA, l'Eurimages ou des festivals de film?

Mots clés: le cinéma, le *soft power*, la diplomatie public/culturelle, l'EFA/l'Eurimages, les Balkans

On dit que les films façonnent le temps historique mais aussi l'histoire nationale, ils sont donc à la fois l'expression et le témoignage du temps mais aussi de la société où ils ont vu le jour. Pour cette raison, le film en tant que média porte en lui un cachet collectif et contribue au développement de l'esprit collectif, mais en même temps, il a une influence subjective, puisqu'il est en soi un miroir, étant donné que notre propre identité se lit à travers les films

1 ada_stam@outlook.com; jagoda.stamenkovic@kultura.gov.rs

(Hall 2001: 218).² L'une des qualités du film en tant qu'art mais aussi en tant que produit réside dans le fait qu'il soit "capable de séduire et d'attirer", comme le dit Joseph Nye (1990) en introduisant à une époque la notion de *soft power* sur la scène en général et qui se rapporte à la capacité (de convaincre) d'un état, de déjà posséder ou d'avoir de l'influence grâce à l'attrait de sa culture, son système de valeurs, ses idéaux politiques et son action politique que ce média possède à coup sûr. Ce concept, c'est-à-dire cette théorie se base sur l'affirmation selon laquelle la diplomatie (publique) devrait d'abord reposer sur les rapports basés sur le dialogue et le fait de convaincre et non sur l'asymétrie de l'offre, sous la menace du pouvoir militaire ou économique (de l'autre partie). Nye l'oppose ainsi au concept dénommé *hard power* qui oblige les états à céder, voire à être conquis, en raison de l'emploi de la force militaire ou de mesures économiques (sanctions par ex.). En développant cette théorie, Nye expose trois sources – piliers essentiels du *soft power*, c'est-à-dire trois dimensions de la diplomatie publique: les valeurs politiques, la culture et la politique extérieure, et dans le cadre de ces trois catégories, il est possible d'identifier d'autres sources du *soft power*. Cependant, Nye est conscient des limites du *soft power* en précisant qu'il a tendance à créer des effets diffus sur le monde extérieur et qu'il ne permet pas de parvenir facilement à certains résultats (Nye 2004).

A ce propos se pose la question de la place du film et quel *soft power* possède-t-il? Le film qui de par sa nature est un média complexe et qui repose sur la diffusion représente en fait l'endroit où on s'adresse à une élite et à un public capillaire mais aussi à un particulier, c'est donc un puissant canal de communication qui transmet toutes sortes de données, comme par exemple sur une période historique, l'ambiance sociale et souvent des messages subversifs. C'est dans ce sens, le film est le média qui a en premier lieu, le pouvoir de transmettre des messages et non seulement des informations. Non seulement les auteurs mais aussi les maisons de production sont conscientes de cet état de choses et s'en servent pour que le film soit attrayant. C'est ainsi que le film européen communique avec succès depuis des décennies, en transmettant divers messages nationaux mais aussi universels, à l'aide d'éléments du *soft power* pour parvenir à une "certaine attraction"

2 Bien qu'il apparait qu'ils tirent leur origine de leur passé historique auquel ils sont encore liés, la vraie nature de leurs véritables identités se trouve dans les questions liées à l'utilisation des ressources de l'histoire, de la langue et de la culture au cours de leur existence plutôt "qui sommes-nous" ou bien "d'où venons-nous" mais que pouvons-nous devenir, comment sommes-nous représentés et comment cela influe sur notre représentation de nous-mêmes (Hall 2001: 218).

pour le pays d'origine, une question sociale précise, un problème ou un thème et parvenir ainsi au résultat souhaité –le plus souvent, l'acceptation grâce à l'influence sur une large opinion publique. Nous renforcerons cette constatation avec l'exemple de trois réalisations récentes provenant des Balkans et qui ont été soutenues par le Fonds européen du film du Conseil de l'Europe – *Eurimages* et qui ont été ensuite nommées pour le prix de l'Académie européenne du cinéma (European Film Academy).

La notion de *soft power* montre en effet que dans un cadre culturel moins conventionnel, à travers l'art cinématographique et ses productions, il nous est possible de recevoir et décoder divers messages relatifs à divers défis personnels et collectifs, questions ouvertes ou bien certains problèmes rencontrés dans les sociétés d'aujourd'hui, plus spécialement quand on parle dans le contexte du cinéma européen (et plus largement) mais aussi régional. Pour cette raison, dans ce texte nous avons particulièrement accordé de l'importance aux indicateurs du *soft power* qui figurent dans les films provenant des Balkans: le genre, le thème et la marque de fabrique par l'intermédiaire du film. Trois films qui évoquent le passé traumatique des héros de ces régions, ont été choisis à titre d'exemple: *Points de suture* (2019) mis en scène par Miroslav Terzić et *Le père* (2020) de Srđan Golubović – des films serbes (coproduction majoritaire) et qui ont été nominés à l'EFA ainsi que le film bosnien *Quo vadis Aida?* (2020) réalisé par Jasmila Žbanić. Rappelons que Goran Bogdan (Croatie) a été nominé pour le meilleur rôle masculin dans le film *Le père* 2019 par l'EFA de même qu'en 2021 Jasna Đuričić (Serbie) a été proclamée meilleure actrice européenne pour son rôle dans le film *Quo vadis Aida?* et Jasmila Žbanić (Bosnie-Herzégovine) meilleure réalisatrice européenne pour le même film dans la catégorie des films de l'EFA, ce qui est un grand succès pour les Balkans, étant donné que les films provenant de ces régions ont été rarement nominés et encore moins récompensés par l'Académie européenne du film.

En effet, l'Académie européenne du cinéma décerne des prix annuels (European Film Awards – EFAs) pour les meilleures réalisations européennes dans 26 catégories, les plus attractives se rapportant au meilleur film, réalisateur et meilleurs acteurs. L'origine du film et des réalisateurs et acteurs est mentionnée dans le contexte de la coopération des pays de l'ex-Yougoslavie, en l'occurrence des professionnels dans le domaine du film originaire des Balkans, soit dans le contexte de la production, c'est-à-dire que la présentation collective des états des Balkans en tant que "film des

Balkans” peut aux yeux de l’Europe être interprétée comme *le soft power* des Balkans.

Les trois films ont d’abord reçu le soutien du fonds le plus important du Cinéma européen du Conseil de l’Europe – *Eurimages*, comme soutien aux projets de films et qui sont traités comme coproduction majoritaire ou minoritaire. Ce soutien signifie que ces réalisations représentent un ensemble de valeurs pour lesquelles l’Europe s’engage, même si les liens des cinématographies nationales qui forment le cinéma européen ne sont ni une langue commune, ni l’esthétique, ni un développement commun, bien que ce soit le cas ici car tous appartiennent à la cinématographie post-yougoslave.

Ici, il faut dire que le rôle du Conseil de l’Europe et du Fonds *Eurimages* consiste à “canaliser la polyphonie des voix, à favoriser le dialogue et l’échange interculturel, dans le but de conceptualiser et promouvoir le cinéma (pan)européen” comme le dit Daković (2008a: 39). En effet, la politique du Fonds *Eurimages* détermine le caractère du concept de projet européen et la valeur de ce futur projet est anticipée et définie à l’avance, sur la base de catégories explicites et mesurables qui représentent les valeurs européennes communes mais aussi sur la base de positions et points de vue subjectifs qui restent cependant dans le domaine de l’implicite, surtout en raison des perceptions et angles d’observation des pays membres. Bien que dans ce cas, il soit question des projets de coproduction, il est important d’avoir à l’esprit que selon la *Convention européenne sur la coproduction cinématographique* (Strasbourg, 1992, Annexe II, 2,4), chaque pays qui participe à une coproduction, bien que ce soit le résultat d’un travail commun, cette réalisation cinématographique est considérée comme un projet national.

Ainsi, le film en tant que produit reste le représentant de l’identité nationale (culturelle) et un élément important tant pour l’identité des pays participants que pour la (re)définition de l’identité culturelle européenne et de cette région des Balkans. Les Balkans en tant que genre cinématographique portent en soi un traumatisme, le déterminisme, le vide existentialiste, la marginalisation, le refus et l’annulation, c’est-à-dire de retrait de la limite, en stéréotypant et en voulant être exotique, de façon binaire par rapport au riche mode de vie occidental. Et quand on évoque les trois films mentionnés, nos héros marginalisés, identités des Balkans, sont dans une lutte permanente pour leur survie et le niveau de celui qui dans cette lutte a le rôle d’un petit maillon dans la chaîne infinie du destin, atteint le niveau de l’universel.

Les Balkans, c'est-à-dire dans ce cas précis les ex-pays yougoslaves, ont leur place dans la cinématographie européenne, en tant que région d'auteurs talentueux mais de films pas souvent récompensés. Des auteurs tels que Emir Kusturica (Serbie), Danis Tanović (BH) ou bien Milčo Mančevski (Macédoine du Nord) ont marqué de leur empreinte cette région et il existe encore quelques auteurs qui peu à peu entrent dans ce cercle comme par exemple Srdan Golubović (Serbie), Jasmila Žbanić (BH), Dalibor Matanić, Vinko Brešan (Croatie) et encore quelques-uns. En dépit de la dislocation d'un grand pays, qui produira d'autres auteurs, les Balkans demeurent un point essentiel, une force centripète qui (encore aujourd'hui) conserve des éléments et traces des valeurs communes de la cinématographie des ex-peuples yougoslaves. Est-ce qu'en tant que tel, le film des Balkans a une influence dans le contexte du *soft power*, parvient-il à faire passer de façon adéquate des messages importants permettant de donner une autre image de cette société et de cette région aux yeux des autres, cela reste à savoir.

Quel est le profil des films des Balkans, nominés et récompensés par l'Académie du cinéma européen ou des films soutenus par le Fonds européen Eurimages (CoE)? Même s'il est impossible d'en tirer une conclusion unique, à savoir que pour des réalisations cinématographiques différentes du point de vue du style, du thème et du genre on emploie le même ton, le soutien européen caractérise avant tout un degré élevé de correspondance avec les critères du Fonds *Eurimages*, c'est-à-dire une représentation adéquate des éléments de l'europeen dans le texte du film et dans les aspects de la production.³

Les trois films cités sont ceux qui remplissent le plus les critères (européens) et jouent le rôle de transmission des messages actuels importants des sociétés qu'ils représentent mais aussi de la région étant donné sa spécificité. Dans ce contexte, il faut mentionner *Imaginaire des Balkans* (1997) et Marija Todorova qui dit des Balkans que dans le monde occidental, ils sont est souvent perçus comme une espèce *d'étranger intérieur* de l'Europe et que les Balkans, par rapport à l'Orient et l'Occident, sont souvent vécus comme un "alter ego", la face intérieure sombre de l'Europe,

3 La colonne vertébrale du récit des coproductions serbes qui ont reçu le soutien du Fonds *Eurimages* (depuis 2005 à nos jours, soit environ 30 réalisations), sont les thèmes idéologiques, politiques ou bien les différences de naissance, la fuite, le politiquement correct, la tendance à l'exotisme, le populisme, l'examen du soi et de l'histoire, la question ethnique, les questions éthiques et morales... Les coproductions de Serbie dans le cadre des réalisations soutenues se trouvent le plus souvent, parmi les pays de l'Ex-Yougoslavie; les producteurs hollandais, allemands et plus récemment de plus en plus français, participent moins souvent dans ces projets.

dépourvus de qualités pour se faire pardonner (Todorova1997: 188). On a donc l'impression que les messages en provenance de cette région ont d'autant plus de poids.

Pour cette raison, nous nous appuyerons sur le texte des films mentionnés, à savoir l'influence qu'ils peuvent avoir dans le contexte européen et plus largement. Communiquer du narratif convaincant, convaincre, encourager, faire de la réclame et autres méthodes font partie de l'arsenal du phénomène du *soft power*, c'est-à-dire la diplomatie publique qui rend un pays attractif ou persuasif lors du placement d'un thème important. L'attraction ne fait pas toujours partie de l'esthétique du beau. Le choix du thème est le plus important ainsi que la façon dont il est abordé et sa représentation.

Quand on parle de diplomatie classique, c'est en effet une manière spécifique de communiquer "avec de belles manières" tandis que le *soft power*, son allié, selon la définition unanimement acceptée, représente l'art de représenter les intérêts d'un état ou d'un groupe social à l'étranger ainsi que d'intervenir dans les rapports internationaux et sur le plan international, dans la résolution de certaines questions. Quand on parle de *soft power* dans le contexte de représentation nationale, il est important d'avoir à l'esprit de quel état le film/le metteur en scène/les acteurs/l'équipe sont originaires, bien que dans ce cas on les regarde à travers le prisme de la région, c'est-à-dire ici les Balkans.

Ce genre balkanique apparaît comme "unificateur, à partir de la relation d'interprétation avec un large contexte social et historique" (Daković 2008) tandis que le concept balkanique signifie en fait "un large ensemble de formes spécifiques de la culture et identité balkanique dans une réflexion et ré-articulation permanente" (Morli & Robinson comme cité dans Daković 2008: 23).

Ce genre pourrait être comparé avec le concept de "cinéma accentué" de Hamid Naficy (Naficy 2001) que les auteurs ont créé en exil ou diaspora exprimant ainsi des altérités spécifiques. Il y est question d'identités accentuées, dans ce cas-ci, marginalisées, rendues exotiques, stéréotypées comme le sont le plus souvent, diverses minorités, les enfants, le 3^{ème} âge, etc... et qui rendent une réalisation cinématographique accentuée. Ici, il faut préciser que d'après Naficy, tout film qui exprime des expériences d'altérité est *accentué* mais chaque film accentué n'est pas obligatoirement un film d'exil ou résultant d'une expérience de diaspora (*ibid.*: 23).

Dans la région des Balkans, et l'exil et les migrations et la diaspora sont réels et souvent utilisés, l'altérité c'est-à-dire le côté accentué des films de cette région multiculturelle est donc le plus souvent présente.

En effet, le syntagme de cinéma accentué se rattache aux termes film interculturel, film transnational, identité soulignée du film, "rencontres intimes cross-culturelles aux marges de la nation" (Berghahn & Sternberg 2010: 114), ce qui souligne la cohabitation des différences. Le cinéma accentué représente un terrain propice à la création d'un espace multiculturel qui unit les représentations de cultures diverses et d'expressions culturelles, il est multiculturel et transnational, qu'il soit question d'un texte du film ou d'une (co)production. Selon Naficy, l'altérité interne est représentée par toutes les subjectivités et expériences des auteurs déterritorialisés qui se produisent dans une nouvelle patrie et un nouvel entourage et insèrent dans leurs réalisations les influences de leur culture primaire et qui sont surtout des caractéristiques et réalisations de cet espace. Le cinéma accentué mêle ainsi les esthétiques et tire ses impulsions de style des traditions cinématographiques de son pays natal et de son pays d'adoption (Naficy 2001: 11), ce qui pose la question du pays d'origine de la réalisation... Dans ce cas, on peut en conclure que les cinématographies des pays de la région prennent spontanément une orientation géographique plus large – dans la cinématographie des Balkans.

Le genre (film) balkanique se révèle pour cette raison être une expression régionale, multiculturelle et identitaire qui résulte d'une succession de processus historiques, socioculturels et aussi idéologiques. Le terme balkanique à lui seul représente une altérité importante au cœur de l'Europe et porte le poids des nombreux stéréotypes et préjugés que Maria Todorova indique, parmi d'autres. La notion de région des Balkans, donc le terme *balkanisation* (mot dérivé) en tant que concept global de *déchirement de mémoire historique collective*, est utilisée dans un sens particulièrement négatif et représente un stéréotype souvent utilisé. Todorova considère que les Balkans ont toujours représenté un entrepôt de qualités négatives face auxquels s'est formée une représentation positive et d'autosatisfaction de ce qui est *européen et occidental*. Todorova mentionne que *les Balkans sont l'Europe, une partie de l'Europe, bien que selon l'opinion générale acceptée, ils sont au cours de quelques siècles passés devenus sa province, sa périphérie* (Todorova 1997: 38). Pour cette raison, il est important de rappeler

que les cinématographies des Balkans présentent multiples facettes, telles que nationales, post-nationales, balkaniques mais aussi européennes-UE et qu'elles portent en elles toutes ces identités en tant qu'altérités intérieures de la région elle-même, ce qui contribue à enrichir les films.

Les trois films mentionnés qui proviennent de l'ex-espace yougoslave ont été nominés ou récompensés par l'EFA et bien qu'ils soient différents, leur genre les classe dans la catégorie de drame familial et ce qui les rapproche, c'est que chaque film, à sa manière, traite du thème des enfants, du déterminisme imposé par la société ou les circonstances historiques et aussi des préjugés qui en découlent, ce qui représente une matérialisation des tensions des Balkans eux-mêmes. La représentation de la tragédie humaine vue à travers le rapport à la différence avec l'Autre et à tout ce qui est différent – l'exotisme ou ladite "malédiction de cette région", les Balkans, s'affirme en tant que berceau du traumatisme individuel et collectif. Dans ces trois films émergent les images de héros dont les choix sont fictifs ou limités, prédéterminés par le destin balkanique.

Les thèmes de société laissés de côté comme la disparition d'un bébé dans le film *Points de suture*, les enfants en tant qu'objet d'une société bureaucratisée dans *Le père* ou bien les enfants, victimes innocentes de l'absurdité de la guerre dans *Quo vadis Aida?*, en dehors du fait que tous les trois ont une forte connotation émotive, s'inscrivent comme thèmes importants dans un contexte local et régional, européen ainsi que global. La question et la présentation de problèmes, en l'occurrence de messages que ces trois réalisations transmettent, sont traités au niveau individuel et il ne faut pas perdre de vue que tous ces messages sont universels, éternels et pan-spatiaux (les héros marginalisés et les enfants en tant que victimes se retrouvent dans toutes les sociétés, sur tous les continents). Le succès de ces trois films est révélateur de l'influence certaine transmise à travers les images provenant de ces lieux.

Le film *Le père* de Srđan Golubović est basé sur l'histoire tragique et réelle de Đorđe Joksimović (joué par Goran Bogdan) auquel les deux enfants ont été retirés par les Services sociaux en raison de sa pauvreté et de leur mère irresponsable de ses actes. Le père parcourt 140 km, décidé à atteindre le plus haut échelon du pouvoir, afin de prouver qu'il est prêt à tout faire pour ses enfants et qu'il en est digne, en dépit de sa pauvreté. Le film représente une société bureaucratisée et corrompue dans laquelle le destin de l'individu et de toute une famille peut dépendre de la décision d'une

seule personne, en l'occurrence le directeur du centre ou un homme du pouvoir local. Le père tente à partir de la vérité et d'un sacrifice sincère, de récupérer ses enfants et dépose environ 130 demandes pour que ses enfants lui soient rendus. Le déplacement n'est pas un effort pour l'homme qui poursuit un but noble, c'est sa seule arme pour atteindre son but – obtenir justice et ramener ses enfants à la maison. Đorđe vit la déterritorialisation selon Deleuze et pourtant, son nomadisme est contraint, la fin du film anticipe son retour au point de départ de sa route. Son voyage et sa déterritorialisation se déroulent depuis un passé traumatique vers un avenir constructif – vers une re-territorialisation. Le message transmis dans ce film est de ne jamais renoncer, voire s'entêter, une des qualités que ces cieux ont fait naître.

La réalisation *Points de suture* de Miroslav Terzić suit une mère résignée Ana (jouée par Snežana Bogdanović) dans ses efforts pour retrouver son fils qui a été déclaré mort-né, en dépit des incohérences de la documentation qui incite à penser à un enlèvement d'enfant. Ce drame familial et social montre la mère qui en dépit de tous les obstacles, ne renonce pas bien que dans sa quête, elle n'ait ni la compréhension ni le soutien de sa famille. Le but ultime de son chemin à travers les méandres de la bureaucratie est de prouver que son fils est vivant et de le retrouver. Le drame de cette mère qui porte en elle une infinie tristesse et une détermination farouche rayonne grâce à la force avec laquelle elle parvient à démolir le mur de la bureaucratie/corruption qui la prive de la vérité et de son fils. Cette histoire s'est inspirée du témoignage d'une mère qui pense que son fils lui a été enlevé il y a une vingtaine d'années. Le point commun entre ce film et le précédent sont les barrières administratives où tout déplacement équivaut à un pas en arrière, telle une règle non édictée des Balkans. Le récit fondé sur des événements véridiques dépasse le destin et le drame d'un chacun car il s'agit d'une tragédie et d'un effondrement de la société et de la morale, l'enlèvement d'environ cinq cents nouveau-nés dans les maternités serbes dans les années 90 du XXème siècle quand dans ces régions la guerre civile faisait rage, et ce film est une forme d'appel et donc de mise en garde à toute la société que de telles situations ne doivent se répéter et qu'il faut encore moins les taire.

Le film bosnien qui laisse une trace émotionnelle profonde sur le spectateur *Quo vadis Aida?* a suscité de nombreuses polémiques dans la région et plus loin encore. L'action du film se déroule en Bosnie le 11 juillet 1995 et représente l'horreur du massacre de

Srebrenica, vu à travers le regard d'une mère impuissante, Aida Selmanagić (jouée par Jasmina Đuričić). Aida est interprète pour les Nations Unies (l'ONU) à Srebrenica et quand la ville tombe aux mains de l'armée serbe, sa famille fait partie des milliers de citoyens qui cherchent à se réfugier dans le camp des Nations Unies. En tant que membre de l'équipe de l'ONU, Aida dispose de certaines informations et selon son estimation de l'évolution de la situation, dépendent les vies des membres de sa famille et d'autres personnes innocentes restées sur la ligne ténue entre le salut et la mort. Face à cette question de destin, que faire, Aida en dépit de sa lutte et du caractère inéluctable des événements, se retrouve sans fils et sans époux. Sa lutte est épique, sa lutte intérieure et celle avec l'extérieur, tragique et universelle – telle une tragédie grecque. La narrativisation du passé dans le cas de ce film, est d'une certaine façon, au service de l'observation et de l'affirmation du temps présent. Aida symbolise ceux qui n'oublient pas et ne se réconcilient pas avec les événements tragiques du passé récent de ces sombres Balkans mais portent leur douleur avec dignité.

Ces trois films ont été tournés d'après des récits véridiques, ce qui en fait des témoignages, à un degré plus ou moins important. En prenant le thème sensible des enfants en tant que victimes innocentes, ils mettent l'accent sur les questions éthiques et sur la mémoire individuelle/collective (en particulier dans le film *Quo vadis Aida?*) fait fonction de témoignage. Dans *Quo vadis Aida?*, en plus de la polarisation d'un milieu multiculturel (pour parler entre deux parties), on suit le rapport Est-Ouest (conflit Ouest/interprète) à travers la stéréotypisation, la position des Balkans devient encore plus "normative" et décourageante.

Ces réalisations ont pour thème la liberté de décision, bien qu'il n'y ait pas de vrai choix et on devine la fin. Dans *Points de suture*, la mère fait le choix de l'opiniâtreté comme dans *Le père* où la marche pendant des kilomètres jusqu'à Belgrade est un signe de liberté de choix qu'il perçoit comme seule possibilité de récupérer ses enfants. Bien que dans *Quo vadis Aida?* il y a une apparence de possibles solutions, la décision est déjà prise par quelqu'un d'autre, comme dans *Points de suture*, elles ne se terminent pas par *Happy End*; dans le film *Le père*, l'issue est positive (elle se produira dans la réalité).

Ces trois films sont caractérisés par des thèmes qui nous apportent des histoires hors du temps et qui peuvent être lues en dehors du contexte historique actuel. Les luttes intérieures et les

chocs dus au départ des enfants, la lutte avec l'ennemi plus fort sous la forme de l'appareil bureaucratique, sacrificatrice, la douleur et l'impuissance des parents à prouver qu'on leur a volé leur enfant, leur conscience de savoir qu'ils voient leur enfant pour la dernière fois sont des thèmes éthiques, archétypes qui de façon réelle et symbolique peuvent se situer dans une autre période historique, dans le passé ou dans la société de demain.

Dans le contexte de schémas personnels mais aussi de modèles sociaux plus larges, ces trois réalisations parviennent sans trop de pathos, à représenter le sujet le plus douloureux pour les parents, la perte d'un enfant/d'enfants et à provoquer de la compassion et un changement positif de perception des spectateurs et des publics professionnels, que ce soit pour l'auteur du film ou pour le pays d'où vient la réalisation, ce qui est une preuve que l'utilisation d'éléments du *soft power*, exerce une certaine influence.

Dans ces films, la réalité est filtrée par une esthétique et mise-en-scène simple, minimaliste, en tant que "mesure réaliste de la réalité balkanique". Le traumatisme (et la guerre dans *Aida*) figure comme une partie de l'architecture-scénographie de l'espace public où chacun se meut. De façon qui n'est pas prétentieuse, ces films comblent le vide dans la mémoire historique individuelle et collective, faisant entrer le public dans leur monde. Le mot-clé ici serait neutralisation – comme un essai de retour au point de départ mais qui a été effacée entretemps, ce qui correspond à l'état actuel qui perpétue l'expression Balkans.

Johan Vincent Galtung insiste sur l'importance de la culture et de l'art dans la résolution des conflits, dans le but de faire la paix, il fait la différence entre la paix "négative" et "positive". Pour lui, la "paix négative" est l'absence de violence, de conflits, "la paix positive" est une paix durable dont l'élément le plus important est "l'intégration de la société humaine" (Galtung 1985). Pour cette raison, le film en tant que produit et en tant qu'art qui possède des possibilités d'intégration comme celles pour le dialogue interculturel, représente une base solide pour la construction d'une "paix positive" dans tous les Balkans. Le défi particulier est qu'il s'agit de films venant des Balkans qui, comme le dit M. Todorova, ont une connotation négative, le rôle des artistes, à travers leur poétique, est d'essayer de montrer au public européen leur *credo* dans le combat pour la vérité, en les attirant dans le tourbillon de la reconnaissance des valeurs communes, comme chemin vers l'acceptation des films, des auteurs et des pays de (co)production.

Dans ce contexte, on peut parler de l'image de marque du pays à travers les films – dans ce cas, avant tout BH (et la Serbie), comme on peut le lire dans les articles des critiques de films étrangers et les articles sur la société et la politique, ce que la plateforme Netflix a favorisé: le film *Quo vadis Aida?* s'y trouve depuis 2021 (New on Netflix *n.d.*).

La parole des critiques et du public ainsi que les prix et la vie dans les festivals des trois films parlent de ces valeurs universellement reconnues et acceptées (IMDB). Le film *Points de suture* a reçu 13 prix et 6 nominations – aux festivals de Pékin, Berlin, Belgrade (Fest), Las Palmas, Ljubljana, Motovun, Sofia, Zurich; le film *Le père* a été présenté à la 70ème Biennale de Berlin, dans le cadre du programme Panorama et il a ouvert le 48ème Fest 2020 à Belgrade, il a reçu 15 prix et 13 nominations aux festivals de Berlin (prix du public et du jury œcuménique), Calgary, Chicago, Cleveland, Dublin, Glasgow, Hainan, Jérusalem, Minsk, Sofia, Thessalonique, Trieste, Zagreb tandis que le film *Quo vadis Aida?*, représentant la BH pour l'Oscar du meilleur film étranger de l'Académie américaine du cinéma, a reçu 33 prix et 46 nominations (dont l'Oscar et BAFTA), dans différentes catégories aux festivals de Bruxelles, Antalia, Pologne, Fribourg, Göteborg, Luxembourg, Los Angeles, Miami, Oslo, Rome, Rotterdam, San Sébastian, Sofia, Sydney, Vilnius (*ibid.*).

Les experts du Fonds *Eurimages* ont reconnu la signification de ces films dans un contexte beaucoup plus large qu'un contexte local ou national, en particulier européen et leur a apporté un soutien important tandis que l'Académie européenne du cinéma a grâce à ses nominations et ses prix, reconnu le regard des auteurs sur d'importantes questions de société et des stimulations pour une action exprimée dans les films. Les prix de l'Académie européenne du cinéma ne sont pas seulement stimulants sur le plan artistique mais importants pour la société. Le soutien d'*Eurimages* et les nominations et prix de l'EFA prouvent la reconnaissance et une certaine influence des films des Balkans, dans le contexte du film européen, ce qui confirme la thèse selon laquelle le *soft power* (diplomatie publique) des films de cette région ouvre des perspectives positives de coopération et de meilleures positions pour la réputation des Balkans, dans un contexte européen et global. A partir de tout cela, on peut considérer que le concept de film balkanique est un processus en cours qui étant donné la proximité géographique, sous-entend le croisement intensif sur le plan transnational et transculturel des différences qui aspirent

à former un ensemble harmonique intégré appelé “cinéma des Balkans” et qui peut influencer sur le changement de perception de cette région en Europe et plus largement.

Littérature

- Berghahn, Daniela & Sternberg, Claudia (eds.). 2010. *European Cinema in Motion: Migrant and diasporic film in Contemporary Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Daković, Nevena. 2008. *Balkan kao (filmski) žanr: slika, tekst, nacija*. Beograd: Fakultet dramskih umetnosti, Institut za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju.
- Daković, Nevena. 2008a. “Kreolizacija srpske kinematografije: srpski film i EU integracija”. Beograd: Fakultet dramskih umetnosti, Institut za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju, 35–45.
- Finn, Helena. 2003. “The Case for Cultural Diplomacy: Engaging Foreign Audiences”, *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 82/6, 15–20.
- Galtung, Johan. 1985. “Twenty-five years of Peace Research: Ten Challenges and Some Responses”, *Journal of Peace Research*, Volume 22/2: 141–158.
- Gleason, Phillip. 1992. *Speaking of Diversity. Language and Ethnicity in Twentieth-Century America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hall, Stuart. 1996. “Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation” in A. B. Houston, M. Diawara, Jr. & R. H. Lindeborg (eds.) *Black British Cultural Studies. A Reader*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 210–227.
- Hall, Stuart. 2001. “Kometreba ‘identitet?’”, *Reč: Časopis za književnost i kulturu, i društvena pitanja* no. 64/10: 215 – 234.
- Kuljić, Todor. 2006. *Kultura sećanja*. Beograd: Čigoja štampa.
- Naj, Džozef S. 2006. *Kako razumevati međunarodne odnose*. Beograd: Stubovi kulture.
- Naficy, Hamid. 2001. *An Accented Cinema. Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- New on Netflix. n.d. “Everything you need to know about ‘Quo vadis, Aida?’ on Netflix”, available at : <https://www.newonnetflix.info/info/81435776> [Accédé: 06 Septembre 2022].
- Nye, Joseph. 2004. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

Stamenković, Jagoda. 2021. *Evropski kulturni identitet kao identitet drugosti (Evropski film: 1989-2014)*. Doktorska teza. Beograd: Fakultet dramskih umetnosti.

Stamenković, Jagoda. 2019. „Evropski film i identitet”, u N. Daković (ed.) *Studije filma /ekranskih/medija – Srbija 3.0*. Beograd: Filmski centar Srbije.

Todorova, Maria. 1997. *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Liens

Base de données internationale de films, <https://www.imdb.com> [Accédé: 06 Septembre 2022].

Convention européenne sur la coproduction cinématographique (Strasbourg, 1992) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treatynum=147> [Accédé: 06 Septembre 2022].

Convention européenne révisée sur la coproduction cinématographique (Rotterdam, 2017) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treatynum=220> [Accédé: 06 Septembre 2022].

EFA – Académie européenne du cinéma, <https://www.europeanfilmacademy.org> [Accédé: 06 Septembre 2022].

EFAs – Prix de l'Académie européenne du cinéma, http://www.europeanfilmawards.eu/en_EN/home

Fonds européen du Conseil de l'Europe – *Eurimages*, <http://www.coe.int/eurimages> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/eurimages> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/eurimages/co-production-funding-history>

Filmographie

(Le Prix du cinéma européen – EFAs /*Eurimages*)

Le père (Father), (Srdan Golubović, 2017)(Serbie)

Coproduction: Serbie, Allemagne, Croatie, Sloveenie

Acteur principal: Goran Bogdan (Croatie) – nomination EFA – meilleur acteur 2019

Point de suture (Stitches), (Miroslav Terzić, 2017)(Serbie)

Coproduction: Serbie, Sloveenie

Scénario: Elma Tataragić (BH) – nomination EFA – meilleur film européen 2019

Quo vadis, Aida? (Jasmila Žbanić, 2018)(Bosnie et Herzégovine)

Coproduction: BH, Roumanie, Autriche, Turquie, France, Pays Bas

Actrice principale: Jasna Đuričić (Serbie) – prix EFAs – meilleure actrice européenne 2021

Jagoda STAMENKOVIĆ
Ministarstvo kulture Republike Srbije

FILMSKA UMETNOST – DIPLOMATSKI AGENT (BALKANA)

Apstrakt

Još od svojih početaka, kako svojom istorijom tako i različitim aspektima onog što predstavlja, film jednako kao umetnost, ali i kao (industrijski) proizvod poseduje „sposobnost da privuče i ubedi” (Nye 1990), što ga čini i jednim od instrumenata *meke moći* (*soft power*) u međunarodnim odnosima. Zahvaljujući učinku meke moći, u jednom manje konvencionalnom okviru, putem kulture, tačnije filmske umetnosti, primaju se različite poruke koje se odnose na izazove, otvorena pitanja ili probleme savremenog društva, a koje uspešno komuniciraju sa (evropskom) publikom. Na tragu pomenutog određenja meke moći, u ovom radu pokušaćemo da „dekodiramo” nekoliko filmova nominovanih za nagradu Evropske filmske akademije. Reč je o naslovima srpske produkcije *Šavovi* (2019) u režiji Miroslava Terzića i *Otac* (2020) Srdana Golubovića, kao i bosanskohercegovačkom filmu Jasmile Žbanić *Quo vadis Aida?* (2020), dobitniku glavne nagrade EFAs 2021. godine – koji gledaocima prenose aktuelne i važne poruke društava o kojima govore.

Ključne reči: film, meka moć, javna/kulturna diplomatija, EFA/Eurimaž, Balkan

UDK 791.4(498)
327:316.7(498)

Marian ȚUȚUI¹
George Oprescu Institute of Art History, Romania

SOFT POWER OF EXOTIC ROMANIA

Abstract

Although it is generally presumed that silent film is most often a transnational phenomenon, while national film was practically born with sound, in the case of Balkan cinemas things are more complicated. The aim of this paper is to explore Romanian early feature cinema as the exponent of soft power i.e. envisioning and image making of Romania for the international audience, mostly if not exclusively relying upon exotic, patriotic and self-colonising optics. The first Romanian long feature film, *The Independence of Romania* (Aristide Demetriade, Grigore Brezeanu, 1912) was a patriotic epic that enjoyed success even abroad. Its producer, Leon Popescu made King Carol I a character in the film in order to get funds from the sovereign. Moreover, he changed the title to *The Balkan War* in order for the film to be shown in Transylvania and Bukovina, which were then a parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The first two Romanian talkies *Echo of a Dream* (*Verklungene Träume / Ciuleandra*, Martin Berger, 1930) and *Tanase's Dream* (Bernd Aldor, 1932) had German directors. The first is an embarrassing melodrama, a bad adaptation of the novel by Liviu Rebreanu, a great writer who supported the beginnings of cinema but who was forced to give up this film. The second film is a comedy dedicated to the greatest Romanian comedian of the 30's and 40's narrating about an invitation to Berlin to make a film that in the end turns to be a mere dream.

Keywords: Balkan cinema, soft power of the images, self-colonizing, patriotic epic, exoticism

Stephanie Dennison² noticed that although culture has been “regularly identified as a potential source of soft power, there has been relatively little meaningful discussion of the role that audio-visual culture, and film specifically, might have in its generation” (Dennison & Dwyer 2021: 1). On the other hand, the first attempt to

1 mariantutui@gmail.com

2 A number of authors in the volume *Cinema and Soft Power Configuring the National and Transnational in Geo-politics* edited by Dennison and Dwyer contributed to a special issue of *New Cinemas* film journal entitled “Soft Power, Film Culture and the BRICS”.

apply the notion of soft power to cinema was made with a current phenomenon, namely the BRICS countries.³

Although the notion of soft power was introduced to the political sciences by Joseph Nye only in 1990, Nicolae Iorga, a world-class historian and prime-minister between 1931–1932 noticed the following in a conference held in 1924:

I know countries where a certain propaganda could be of help, but I know countries that have not benefited from it. There are very nice countries that, through the propaganda that they do, through the rush of their propaganda, have ended up losing the sympathy that they inspired. (Iorga [1924] 2001).

After using positive and negative examples of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, he concludes:

Let us send the best of ourselves and those who are the best of us. Let's impose ourselves not only by what we write, but also by the way we live. [...] It was not Paderewsky's words or music that created a love for Poland, but a worldwide awareness of Poland. [...] Let us have a healthy literature, a science well-known all over the world, and have a production far superior to that of today that our land can provide. Let us have people worthy of their past and of the means they possess today. Let us invite foreigners who slander us to come and see the country. (*ibid.*)

Without using current phrases, Nicolae Iorga noticed that nations that emerged after 1918 such as Czechoslovakia and Poland, alongside with Greater Romania, successfully resorted to soft power.

Although it is quite questionable whether to call it by such a modern term, it seems that some Romanian ministers and intellectuals had in mind a “nation-branding agenda” as early as the end of the 19th century. In 1924, in the *History of Modern Romanian Civilization*, the literary critic and sociologist Eugen Lovinescu elaborated a theory of synchronism, in which, using the theory of imitation from the French philosopher Gabriel Tarde (1843–1904), he postulated the need to synchronize Romania with the West. A year later, the economist Stefan Zelletin reaches the same conclusions in his book *The Romanian Bourgeoisie, Its Origin and Its Historical Role* (1925). More than that, from the middle of the 19th century until the beginning of the 20th century, Romanians were

3 BRICS is the acronym coined to associate five major emerging economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

determined to make their country a “Belgium of the Orient”. Several Romanian intellectuals studied in Belgium in the 19th century.⁴ It is no coincidence that between 1903 and 1907 there was even a literary magazine called *Belgia Orientului* (*Belgium of the Orient*), in which important writers collaborated.



Russian troops showing respect to Peneș, a decorated and wounded Romanian sergeant. *The Independence of Romania*, Aristide Demetriade & Grigore Brezeanu, 1912.

The first Romanian long feature preserved until today, *The Independence of Romania* (*Independența României*, Grigore Brezeanu, Aristide Demetriade, 1912) is a patriotic reconstruction of Romanian participation in the Russian-Turkish War of 1877–1878 which legitimated Romania’s freedom. It was made 35 years after the event and just before Romania’s military intervention in the Second Balkan War. It was an admirable production comparable with Giovanni Pastrone’s (1883–1959) contemporary ones which enjoyed success both at home and abroad as the director used prestigious actors of the National Theatre and several thousands of extras. It is interesting that King Carol I was both a co-producer and a character in the film, so that he could watch actor Aristide Demetriade featuring him as a young man on the front. The film represents visually several poems by Vasile Alecsandri from the volume *Our Soldiers* (*Ostașii noștri*) (1877/78) and also includes

⁴ For instance, philosopher Vasile Conta (1845–1882) and minister Alexandru Lepadat. Upon his return, poet Alexandru Macedonski (1854–1920) published some of his poems in Belgium and maintained relations with local writers.

the character of Rodica (featured by Jeni Metaxa-Doro) as a symbol of rural beauty from a poem of the same title. Thus, *Peneș Curcanul* (featured by Aurel Athanasescu) is one of the “nine or ten, including the sergeant” who goes to war from the poem *Peneș Curcanul*. After being injured at his foot and decorated, Peneș returns home and on the way back he meets Russian soldiers and gives them his weapon. The episode is taken from the poem *The Sergeant*, while the poem *Cobuz' Death (Moartea lui Cobuz)* is the basis for the gunman's death at Calafat. We can also notice the use of parallel editing in the opening scenes when Peneș dances with Rodica, while the Crown Council decides the mobilization of the army, and Peneș will have to say good bye to his beloved. Such composition is impressive and suggests the idea of unity of opinion from ministers to simple peasants on going to war, although the dance scene is downright idyllic.

The producer and distributors were smart enough to change the title of the film to a benign one in the Austro-Hungarian territories inhabited by Romanians such as Transylvania. Thus, a poster from Transylvania, preserved until today, reminds of the movie *The Balkan War (Războiul balcanic)*. But after a few years the studio and its business ran into problems, producer Leon Popescu died bankrupt during WWI, and director Grigore Brezeanu (1892–1919) died ignored a year later. The great theatre actor Aristide Demetriade (1872–1930) lived longer and enjoyed a well-deserved fame until his death.

Although in many instances the first talkies were unanimously considered to mark the beginning of a genuine national cinema, in the case of the Balkans, early sound films can be considered “national” in terms of plot and scenery. Yet in most cases they were co-productions with countries that had more developed cinema industries, allowing access to technical equipment and necessary expertise.

First sound films in Romania mostly consisted of co-productions with Germany, using the Tobis-Klang system or a locally developed system of sound-on-film. Only a fragment of 400 meters without sound is preserved from the first Romanian talkie *Ciuleandra/ Verklungene Träume (Echo of a Dream, Martin Berger, Germany/Romania, 1930)* (Rîpeanu 2004: 47). The film claimed to have adapted a novel of the same title (1927) by Liviu Rebreanu about the tragic fate of a beautiful girl from the countryside with whom a landlord tries to restore the health of his lineage. However, it caused

a scandal and even Rebreanu, an enthusiast of cinema, had to reject the movie, which differed from the novel for material reasons, but also due to its tendency to treat the subject as a sensational melodrama (Niculescu 1930; Cantacuzino & Rîpeanu 1998: 174). Martin Berger (1871–c.1930)⁵ directed another screen adaptation of a famous Romanian novel (1924) by Mihail Sadoveanu, *Love Storm (Venea o moară pe Siret / Sturmflut der Liebe, 1929)*, which was also an unsatisfactory achievement. The Romanian press was unforgiving as both films had failed to reflect Romanian culture effectively, despite having benefited from subventions from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, respectively.

The next two sound films, both preserved, were comedies: *Visul lui Tănase (Tănase's Dream)* Bernd Aldor, Romania/Germany, 1932), and *Bing-Bang* (Nicolae Stroe, Vasile Vasilache, 1934). They brought to screen some of the most important comedy actors of the Romanian scene: Constantin Tănase, Nicolae Stroe and Vasile Vasilache. *Tănase's Dream* is largely preserved. At first sight, the film seems like a pretext for the great Romanian actor Constantin Tănase (1880–1945) to showcase his comical talent, as he is shown singing several revue numbers with a particularly nasal voice. The intrigue begins with Tănase receiving a telegram, asking him to play in a film in Berlin for a large fee. He embarks on the adventure catching the train at the last moment. The film was directed by Constantin Tănase himself and the German actor Bernd Aldor (1881–1950), their only collaboration of this kind. The screenplay was co-written by Tănase, Hans Fritz Köllner (1896–1976) and the Romanian publicist Nicolae Kirițescu (1891–1953), both experienced in the field⁶. Directors of photography were Vasile Gociu (1891–1950) responsible during the filming of exterior scenes in Bucharest, and who was very active in the field of documentary and newsreels between 1921–1949, and George Stiliniadis handled the shooting in Berlin, of whose other film work nothing is known. There is no data about Samson and Vermont who created the music for the film.

Bing-Bang was the first all-talking film and the first musical in Romania. The most well-known interwar Romanian comedy actors were Nicolae Stroe (Stroe Nacht, 1906–1990) and Vasile Vasilache (1907–1944). Five decades later Stroe recalls how they made the film:

5 See Deutsches Filminstitut. *n.d.*

6 Nicolae Kirițescu also wrote the screenplay for the Romanian/Italian co-productions *Odessa in Flames (Cătușe roșii / Odessa in fiamme, 1942)* and *The White Squadron (Escadrila alba / Squadriglia bianca, 1943)*.

We had big dreams and, in order not to forget them, we wrote them on a wall in our booth. Under the first point, I wrote that we want to make a film like in Hollywood or something close. We began to write this script, because movie theatres in Bucharest were only showing films with princes and princesses, or counts and countesses, as well as other trifles. We chose a simple, human, close to reality story, about two unemployed men named Bing and Bang. When the script was ready and those who read it were delighted, the first thing we did was to find a sponsor. We needed at least 350,000 lei, a small fortune at the time. With the help of my brother Isaiia⁷ I got the money from the director of the State Lottery, Mr. Râmniceanu, but he imposed the following ending: the unemployed must buy a lottery ticket in the end, which turns out to be the Jackpot, and they become millionaires. The lottery got its advertising, and we made our film. (Stroe 1983: 78).

Although in the beginning some movie theatres refused to screen the film, the premiere at Arpa Cinema on February 7, 1935, was received with incredible success, and the film ran the entire month with the house closed (Timuș 1935), only to resume screenings from March to August in other movie theatres.⁸ Eventually, the film came out fourth in terms of ticket sales for 1935. It was a real success given that in 1933 there were about 50 cinemas in Bucharest giving 7 screenings each day (Cozma 2014). The film was labelled as a “Musical Humoresque”, which seems fitting since it is a mixture of comical and musical scenes. In their humorous adventures, the two friends try to quell their hunger, find a job and finally get rich by means of a lottery ticket. The musical moments are generally motivated by the action of the film. If in some cases the motivation is very simple, for instance when a public water splash in Cișmigiu Park becomes a pretext for two songs about unemployment and poverty, in other cases the motivation is quite elaborate. The protagonists Bing and Bang see that a gentleman sitting on one of the benches is rewarding the two fiddlers playing and performing a popular song with money. Inspired by this opportunity to earn money, the two protagonists start to mumble the lyrics (not remembering the words) and imitate the instrumental music from the waltz *Valurile Dunării*

7 Stroe's brother Isaiia Răcăciuni (1900–1976) was a Romanian writer of Jewish origin.

8 *Bing-Bang* was released again in December 1944 as part of a gala performance in Vasilache's memory who had died after a bombardment during WWII. It continued to run successfully until the fall of 1945. See Gonțea *n.d.*

(*Waves of the Danube*) by Ion Ivanovici,⁹ then sing *A tango called desire* by Nicu Doftoreanu and another popular song they heard earlier, *Foaie verde spic de grâu* (*Green leaf of wheat spike*) sung by the famous Zavaidoc¹⁰ in 1935¹¹. This is followed by a comic scene, since the gentleman was immersed in the reading of his newspaper, when the two rattled him until he stood up and chased them away with the newspaper. This funny episode echoes the type of slapstick comedy used by Charlie Chaplin in *Modern Times* (1936). Interestingly, the tramp's voice was heard one year after *Bing Bang* when he sang in "bogus" language. The scene in which Bing and Bang try to earn money singing, includes diegetic music as a part of the film's fictional setting. Other musical episodes in the film also make recourse to diegetic music, contradicting Kurt London's 1936 expert claim on the development of motion-picture music, which rested primarily on a technical issue¹². One of the protagonists and directors, Nicolae Stroe was also a good composer of canzonettas, tangoes and songs in folk style. Other songs included in the film are his own creations, many preserved on gramophone records, and some have even remained on the repertoires of noted Romanian singers today.¹³

In the late 1930s tourist and information offices realised that the addition of music and folk songs to documentaries and reportages they commissioned, would further help create an idealised national image, and attract foreign visitors to the country. These were only the beginnings of what would later become a state-controlled cinema industry, governing production, distribution and exhibition of national films from the end of WWII.

In Romania, in 1936, the National Office of Tourism (ONT) established a film office while in 1938 this film studio became the National Office of Cinema (ONC), under the patronage of the Ministry of National Propaganda. Moreover, according to the Draft

9 Ion Ivanovici (1845–1902) was a Romanian military band leader and composer of Serbian origin.

10 Zavaidoc is the pseudonym of Marin Theodorescu (1896–1945), Romania's best known folk singer during the interwar period.

11 Columbia and His Master's Voice – Catalog general, 48.

12 "It [motion-picture music] started not as a result of any artistic urgency, but from the dire need of something that would drown out the noise made by the projector. For in those times there were as yet no sound-absorbing walls between the projection machine and the auditorium. This painful noise disturbed visual enjoyment to no small extent. Instinctively cinema owners had recourse to music, and it was the right way, using an agreeable sound to neutralize a less agreeable one." (London 1936: 28).

13 The film was truly a result of a collaborative effort of several Romanian creative personalities. Musical arrangement was signed by composers Mihail Constantinescu and Max Halm (1906-?). The director of photography was Iosif Bertok (1891–1972), mainly known for his work on documentary films and newsreels, also working on other eight fiction films. Iulian Gartenberg-Argani was the producer, sound engineer, and co-writer. Two actors who debuted in the film, Nicolae Gărdescu (1903–1982) and Grigore Vasiliu-Birlic (1905–1970) would become two of the most important Romanian comedians after WWII.

Law no. 3047/1938, ONC became the only producer of newsreels, partly by nationalizing the facilities of previous newsreels producers. The institution operated until 1948 at which point the communist government nationalized all means of production. ONC proved its capacity and usefulness in producing no less than three documentary films awarded in Venice, and established a fruitful collaboration with similar institutions in Italy, Germany and Austria. Moreover, ONC built a modern multi-functional studio for the production of talkies on its premises situated in the centre of Bucharest.



The Country of Motzi, Paul Călinescu, 1939.

The first real achievement of ONC was the documentary *The Country of Motzi* (*Țara Moșilor*, 1939) directed and scripted by Paul Călinescu (1902–2000), and photographed by Călinescu and a Frenchman Amédée Morrin. The great novelist Mihail Sadoveanu also made a significant contribution, writing the voice-over commentary which was delivered by producer Mihail V. Pușcariu. Both the audience and the jury who awarded it¹⁴ were mesmerized by this twenty-minute film about a secluded mountain region where people lived without electricity as in ancient times, and excavated gold with ingenious wooden machinery. This time the filmmakers were successful in assimilating an undeniable exotic and self-colonizing optics.

Quite surprisingly, although naïve, the first Romanian long feature *The Independence of Romania* also ran in France and Germany and enjoyed favourable reviews, the comments being a little condescending and still accompanied by the statement that it is a film from the other side of Europe.

Sound films, although they were co-productions, enjoyed only

14 However, the awards in Venice at that time did not have the prestige of today because the participants were mostly from Axis countries and the jury consisted of representatives of the participating cinemas, who in many cases tried to reconcile as many participants as possible.

a local distribution and did not enjoy domestic success, and even triggered contradictory, if not negative, reactions. Only *Bing-Bang* had an unexpected success, perhaps precisely because of the focus on typical Romanian elements. The documentary *The Country of Motzi* became, over time, a model for Romanian documentary filmmakers, a model that was able to survive even during the first years of communism.

Constantin Kiritescu, the head of Romanian censorship in the 30s, made an early prediction in 1934:

The talkie, although expanding the field of cinema into the acoustic world, has the effect of restricting the universal character which the silent film enjoyed when it alone mastered the visual world. Only countries with big film industries can enjoy the full benefits of sound. (Kiriteşcu 1934: 29)

Constantin Kiritescu's observation can be a major conclusion that emerges from Romania's film experience as well as of other small South-Eastern European cinemas. Over time, it could be observed that only a few big cinemas were able to influence international public opinion in a more effective and subtle way than official propaganda, and to promote their own values. Small cinemas succeeded at this only partially, and that rather through a self-colonizing vision. In fact, filmmakers and stars originating from these countries contributed to that even more than local filmmakers and films. It was due to the benefits of being already famous, using a language of universal circulation, and of a strong film distribution system.

In the case of Romania, we should consider American director of Romanian origin Jean Negulesco (1900–1993) with his film *Mask of Dimitrios* (1944) and screenwriter I. A. L. Diamond,¹⁵ who together with director Billy Wilder in *Irma la douce* (1963), created memorable Balkan swindlers. On her turn, French comedy actress of Romanian origin Elvire Popesco (1894–1993), enjoyed huge success featuring women of East-European origin in French comedies and even in a film with a plot connected with Romania. Other filmmakers and contributed to certain picturesque and shallow stereotypes.

We can also be sceptical about soft power in general, like the historian Niall Ferguson. He states that “The trouble with soft power is that it's, well, soft” and then easily manages to relativize the

15 I.A.L. Diamond (1920–1988) is a pseudonym of Iteck Domnici. He was born in Ungheni in 1920, at that time in Romania.

validity of soft power through two eloquent examples. Paradoxically, in the past “the most Anglicized”, “the United States resisted these most virulent strains of British soft power” (Ferguson 2003). On the other hand, will Islamic “kids who enjoy [...] bottles of Coke, Big Macs, CDs by Britney Spears, and DVDs starring Tom Cruise [...] love America more? Strangely not” (*ibid.*). Expanding the discussion to the present moment and the films of the New Romanian Wave, we find that their extraordinary success, at least partially, confirm Niall Ferguson's assertion. Romania has not become a holiday destination thanks to these films, which do not suggest a very alluring image of the country, not even a more respected one and only a slightly better known nation. However, the popularity of some Romanian filmmakers increased and Romanian films earned a place for themselves on the international market.

Literature and Sources

- Cantacuzino, Ion I. & Rîpeanu, B.T. (eds.). 1998. *Producția cinematografică din România, 1897–1970: filmografie adnotată*. Bucharest: Alo, București!
- Cozma, Dumitru. 2014. „Eșecul Mossad, Rugul Vanității și Bing Bang cu Stroe și Vasilache”, *România Liberă*, February 7. Available at: <https://romanalibera.ro/aldine/history/esecul-mossad--rugul-vanitatii-si-bing-bang-cu-stroe-si-vasilache-325345> . [Accessed: May 10, 2022].
- Dennison, Stephanie & Dwyer, Rachel (eds.). 2021. *Cinema and Soft Power Configuring the National and Transnational in Geo-politics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Deutsches Filminstitut. *n.d.* “Martin Berger Biographie”. Available at: <http://www.difarchiv.deutsches-filminstitut.de/dt2tp0125.htm> [Accessed: June 2018].
- Ferguson, Niall. 2003. “What Is Power?”, *Hoover Press*, April 30, Available at: <https://www.hoover.org/research/what-power>. [Accessed May 2022].
- Gonțea, Ioana. *n.d.* „Scurtă istorisire despre primul film românesc cu sonor”, *Historia*. Accesible at: <https://historia.ro/sectiune/general/scurta-istorisire-despre-primul-film-romanesc-cu-578428.html> [Accessed: October 12, 2022].
- Iacob, Gheorghe & Iacob, Luminița (eds.). 1995. *Modernizare- europenism*. Iași: Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”.

- Iorga, Nicolae. [1924] 2001. „Propaganda în străinătate”, [Propaganda Abroad], *Pro Ro*, 2/ 2001, available at: <https://ro.scribd.com/doc/73910205/Propaganda-Romana-in-Viziunea-Lui-N-Iorga> [Accessed: October 12, 2022].
- Kirițescu, Constantin. 1934. *Cinematograful în educație și învățământ. Cenzura filmelor cinematografice. Cinematograful în școală. Congresul cinematografic de educație și învățământ*, Bucharest: Cartea Românească.
- London, Kurt. 1936. *Film Music: A Summary of the Characteristic Features of Its History, Aesthetics, Technique; and Possible Developments*. London: Faber & Faber Limited.
- Lupaș, Ion. 2018. *Istoria unirii românilor*. Bucharest: Paul Editions.
- Niculescu, Vasile. 1930. „De vorbă cu dl. Liviu Rebreanu, autorul romanului, care ne explică de ce a ieșit filmul prost și cât a cheltuit statul cu acest film (interviu),” *Omul liber*, November 6 1930.
- Rîpeanu, Bujor T. 2004. *Filmat în România. Repertoriul filmelor de ficțiune 1911 – 2004, vol. I: 1911– 1969*. Bucharest: Fundației Rao.
- Stroe, Nicolae. 1983. *77 de ani în 200 de pagini*. Tel Aviv: Typo-studio.
- Timuș, V. 1935. „Filmul d-lor Stroe și Vasilache”, *Rampa*, March 8.

MEKA MOĆ EGZOTIČNE RUMUNIJE

Apstrakt

Iako je uvreženo mišljenje da nemi film predstavlja transnacionalni fenomen, a da je nacionalni film praktično rođen sa pojavom zvuka, kad je reč o balkanskim kinematografijama, stvari su malo komplikovanije. Cilj ovog rada je da istraži rane igrane, dugometražne rumunske filmove kao eksponente meke moći, odnosno, zamišljanja i brendiranja Rumunije za međunarodnu publiku, koja se pretežno, ako ne i isključivo, oslanja na patriotsku i samokolonizujuću optiku. Prvi rumunski dugometražni film, *Nezavisnost Rumunije* (Aristide Demetriade i Grigore Brezanu, 1912), predstavlja patriotski ep koji je postigao uspeh i u inostranstvu. Njegov producent, Leon Popesku, iskoristio je u filmu lik kralja Kerola I kako bi dobio sredstva od vladara. Uz to, takođe je promenio naslov u *Balknski rat* kako bi omogućio da film bude prikazan u Transilvaniji i Bukovini, koje su u ono vreme bile deo Austrougarskog carstva. Prva dva rumunska zvučna filma, *Eho jednog sna* (*Verklungene Träume/ Ciuleandra*, Martin Berger, 1930) i *Tanaseov san* (Bernard Aldor, 1932) radovi su nemačkih reditelja. Prvi predstavlja razočaravajuću melodramu, lošu adaptaciju romana Livija Rebrana, velikog pisca koji je podržao početke filmske umetnosti, ali je bio prinuđen da se odrekne ovog filma. Drugi film je komedija posvećena najznačajnijim rumunskim komičarima tridesetih i četrdesetih godina koja pripoveda o putovanju u Berlin radi snimanja filma koji se na kraju ispostavlja kao puki san.

Ključne reči: balkanska kinematografija, meka moć slika, samokolonizacija, patriotska epika, egzoticizam

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Deniz BAYRAKDAR, PhD, is film studies professor at Kadir Has University. She is the Chair of the Communication Committee at Turkish National Commission for UNESCO. She initiated and organised conference series *New Directions in Turkish Film Studies* (www.tfayy.org, 1999–2019). Among her many publications are *Migrant Women in Turkish German and New Turkish Cinema*, *The International Encyclopedia of Gender, Media, and Communication* (2020), *Migrants and Refugees in Contemporary Film, Art and Media* (Amsterdam University Press, 2020, with Robert Burgoyne).

Angela BRINTLINGER, PhD, is full professor and Chair of the Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures at Ohio State University. She is also director of the Center for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies; Professor and Affiliate of *Mershon Center for International Security Studies* and a member of *Guarini Institute of Public Affairs Advisory Council*.

Nevena DAKOVIĆ, PhD, is full professor of Film and Media Studies at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Belgrade; the Chair of Interdisciplinary PhD Art and Media Studies at UoA, and Director of the Institute for Theatre, Film, Radio and Television, FDA. Nevena Daković has written (most recent *Images without Memory: trauma, film, transmission / Slike bez sećanja: trauma, film, transmisija*, 2020), and edited a number of books (*Film and Screen Media Studies: Serbia 3.0 / Studije filma i ekranskih medija: Srbija 3.0*, 2019 etc.) and chapters (in *Migrants and Refugees in Contemporary Film, Art and Media*, 2022); and published more than 120 texts in national and international journals. She is often invited as a guest lecturer at European and American Universities. She is a member of *Academia Europaea* and associate editor of *European Review*.

Gergana DONCHEVA, PhD, associate professor, works at the Institute of Balkan Studies & Centre of Thracology within the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. In 2010, she obtained her PhD from the Institute of Balkan Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and a year later she published the monograph *The Image of the Balkans in Balkan and Western films: Strategies of Representation*, based on her doctoral thesis. In 2021 Gergana Doncheva wrote a second book entitled *Thessaloniki Film Festival: History, Challenges and Transformations*. Her main interests are in the field of Balkan film and culture, memory of socialism constructed in movies, e/immigrations and identities in cinema.

Jana DUDKOVÁ, PhD, is a senior researcher at the Institute for Theatre and Film Research, CRA, Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava. Her main research interests include postcolonial and multicultural studies, Balkanism and transcultural influences in Slovak and Balkan cinemas. She is the author of numerous papers published in various languages

and of four monographs in Slovak: *The Change Without a Change: Slovak Television Production 1990–1993*, 2021; *Slovak Cinema in the Era of Transculturality*, 2011; *The Balkans or a Metaphor: Balkanism and Serbian cinema of the 1990s*, 2008; and *Lines, Circles and Worlds of Emir Kusturica*, 2001. She has worked as an Associate Professor at Charles University in Prague (2013) and as an Assistant Professor at the Film and Television Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava (2001–2011).

Milena KVAPIL is Belgrade-based film and TV director and creative advertising professional. She holds a MA degree in Film and TV Directing, FAMU Prague. Currently, she is a PhD candidate at FDU Belgrade, at the department Theory of dramatic arts, media and culture. With over 20 years of experience in film, TV, media and communications, she is particularly interested in researching the connections and correlations between pop-culture (especially film and TV series) and current socio-political affairs through the phenomenon of “soft power”. Apart from professional work in advertising, she actively writes about film, TV series and other aspects of popular culture.

Iva LEKOVIĆ is a PhD candidate in the Department for Theory at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. She graduated Art History at Belgrade University and completed her MA studies at the UNESCO department for Cultural Policy and Management. She is the author of several exhibitions, catalogues, reviews and essays dealing with film and visual arts. She has participated at international conferences and has published articles in country and abroad.

Elizabeth McBEAN is a PhD candidate in the Department of Slavic and Eastern European Languages and Culture at the Ohio State University. Her current research focuses on depictions of lived spaces and the built environment in literature and film of the late Soviet era, and examines questions of power, privilege, coercion, complicity, and accountability, which are woven into these texts of the Soviet home.

Fatma MEMİCİ is a MA student in the Communication Sciences Program at Kadir Has University, Türkiye. She has a B.A. degree from the New Media Department with a double major in the Psychology. She works on TV series, soft power, and VoD platforms.

Aleksandra MILOVANOVIĆ, PhD, is associate professor of Film and Media Studies at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Belgrade. She is the author of the book *Towards New Media: Transmedia Narratives Between Film and Television / Ka novim medijima: transmedijalni narativi između filma i televizije* (2019). Her recent theoretical papers include: “Remediating Yugoslav Television Heritage” (2021), “Serbia: Reco(r)ding the Cinematic Turn” (2020), and “Navigating Through Layers of Digital Platforms: Immersive Balkan Experience” (2019). She edited documentary films

Journal About Želimir Žilnik / Žurnal o Želimiru Žilniku (Janko Baljak, 2021), *The Other Side of Everything / Druga strana svega* (Mila Turajlić, 2017), *Cinema Komunisto* (Mila Turajlić, 2011). Her research focus is on television series, transmedia storytelling, digital archives and media, memory and identity.

Sunnie RUCKER-CHANG is an incoming associate professor at the Ohio State University in the departments of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures and African and African American Studies. Her work addresses how various forms of media contribute to racial and cultural formations in Southeast Europe. She is the co-editor and contributor to *Cultures of Mobility and Alterity Crossing the Balkans and Beyond* (Liverpool UP, 2022) and *Chinese Migrants in Russia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe* (Routledge, 2011). She is the co-author of *Roma Rights and Civil Rights: A Transatlantic Comparison* (Cambridge, 2020). She is currently finishing a monograph focusing on the politics of racial discourse in former Yugoslav countries, with an emphasis on the meanings and uses of Blackness. She is Affiliate faculty at the Centre of Film & Media Studies, Women's Gender & Sexuality Studies, and *Nathaniel R. Jones* Centre for Race, Gender, and Social Justice; Program Director, UC STARTALK Workforce Media Development and Year-Long Russian Immersion Programs; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Lead, Institute for Research in Sensing (IRiS) and Co-Director, Howard University Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Undergraduate Think Tank.

Levent SOYSAL, PhD, completed his PhD at the Department of Anthropology, Harvard University (1999). Before joining Kadir Has University, he held positions as Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies, Free University – Berlin (2001–2003). Between 1998 and 2001, he was an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the *John W. Draper* Interdisciplinary Master's Program in Humanities and Social Thought, New York University, where he taught graduate courses on the city and urbanity. Currently, he is the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Communication. Soysal's topics of research and teaching interest include city and globalisation; transnationalism, youth and migration; spectacle, heritage and performance; and (theories of) Culture.

Jagoda STAMENKOVIĆ obtained her PhD from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade with the thesis on identity and European cinema, and a MA degree at the UNESCO Department for Cultural policy and management. She works at the Serbian Ministry of Culture and Media since 2001, and currently is the head of the Department for international relations and European integration in the domain of culture. She has participated at international conferences and has published several scientific articles. Her domains of research are: identity, cinema, European studies, international relations etc.

Vanja ŠIBALIĆ is associate professor of Film and TV Production, graduated in 1993 from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (FDA/FDU) in Belgrade, the department for Film and TV production. She specializes in the field of Advertising and Media Studies. She is the winner of the second award at the global *Climate Change Campaign* competition, held in 2009. She has participated in the production of numerous national and regional PSA campaigns (MTV Adria *Anti trafficking, Against violence in sport, Clean up Serbia – Recycle, Blue circle – fight against diabetes, Belhospice, White Cane, Handicap, Campaign for the transfusion of blood*).

Marian ȚUȚUI, PhD, is a film researcher in the field of history of early Romanian and Balkan cinema. He was a curator of the Romanian Film Archive between 1996 and 2014; professor of film studies at Hyperion University since 2008 and a researcher at the *George Oprescu* Institute of Art History at the Romanian Academy since 2014. He is the author of four books on cinema: *Manakia Brothers or the Image of the Balkans* (2005), *A Short History of Romanian Cinema* (2005), and *Orient Express: Romanian and Balkan Cinema* (2008), *Studies on Romanian and Balkan Cinema* (2021). He has edited several books on cinema and contributed to edited volumes in the USA, the UK, Germany, Italy, Turkey, North Macedonia, Georgia, and Australia.

BELEŠKE O AUTORIMA

Dr Deniz BAJRAKDAR je profesorka Studija filma na Univerzitetu Kadir Has i predsednica Komiteta za komunikacije Turske nacionalne komisije pri UNESCO-u. Pokrenula je i organizovala konferenciju *Novi pravci u turskim studijama filma* (www.tfayy.org, 1999–2019). Među brojnim publikacijama koje potpisuje kao urednik i autor, izdvajaju se „Migrant Women in Turkish-German and New Turkish Cinema” u *The International Encyclopedia of Gender, Media, and Communication* (2020), *Migrants and Refugees in Contemporary Film, Art and Media* (Amsterdam University Press, 2020, koju je uredila zajedno sa Robertom Burgojnom).

Dr Endžela BRINTLINGER je redovna profesorka i šef Katedre za slovenske i istočnoevropske jezike i kulturu na Državnom univerzitetu u Ohaju. Direktorka je Centra za slavistiku, istočnoevropske i evroazijske studije; saradnica *Mershon* centra za međunarodne studije bezbednosti i članica Savetodavnog odbora *Guarini* instituta za javne delatnosti.

Dr Nevena DAKOVIĆ je redovna profesorka Studija filma i ekranskih medija na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti u Beogradu, direktorka Instituta za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju FDU i rukovodilac Interdisciplinarnih naučnih doktorskih studija Univerziteta umetnosti. Autorka je (*Slike bez sećanja: trauma, film, transmisija*, 2020; *Studije filma i ekranskih medija: Srbija 3.0*, 2019; itd.) i urednica brojnih publikacija, poglavlja (*Migrants and Refugees in Contemporary Film, Art and Media*, 2022) i preko 120 članaka objavljenih u zemlji i inostranstvu. Gostujući je predavač na evropskim i američkim univerzitetima, članica *Academia Europaea* i urednica časopisa *European Review*.

Dr Gergana DONČEVA je vanredna profesorka i saradnica na Balkanološkom institutu, Centru za trakologiju Bugarske akademije nauka. Doktorirala je 2010. godine, a godinu dana kasnije objavila je monografiju *The Image of the Balkans in Balkan and Western films: Strategies of Representation*, zasnovanu na doktorskoj disertaciji. Rad je nominovan od strane Bugarske filmske akademije (2010) u kategoriji za najbolju knjigu. Nedavno je objavila i svoju drugu knjigu pod naslovom *Thessaloniki Film Festival: History, Challenges and Transformations*. Njena istraživanja su u domenima balkanskog filma i kulture, sećanja na socijalizam konstruisanog u filmovima, e/igracije i identiteta na filmu.

Dr Jana DUDKOVA je savetnica na Institutu za pozorište i film (CRA) Slovačke akademije nauka u Bratislavi. Njeno glavno polje interesovanja su postkolonijalne studije i multikulturalnost, balkanizam i transkulturni uticaji u slovačkom i balkanskom filmu. Radila je kao vanredna profesorka na Karlovom univerzitetu u Pragu (2013) i kao docent na Fakultetu za film i televiziju Akademije scenskih umetnosti u Bratislavi (2001–2011). Autorka je brojnih radova objavljenih na različitim jezicima i četiri

monografije na slovačkom: *The Change Without a Change: Slovak Television Production 1990–1993*, 2021; *Slovak Cinema in the Era of Transculturality*, 2011; *The Balkans or a Metaphor: Balkanism and Serbian Cinema of the 1990s*, 2008; and *Lines, Circles and Worlds of Emir Kusturica*, 2001.

Milena KVAPIL je filmska i TV rediteljka iz Beograda, sa više od dvadeset godina iskustva i rada u kreativnom advertajzingu. Magistrirala je filmsku i TV režiju na FAMU u Pragu, a sada je doktorand na studijskom programu Teorije dramskih umetnosti, medija i kulture na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti u Beogradu. U svojim istraživanjima posebno se bavi međudnosom pop-kulture (pre svega filma i TV serija) i aktuelnih društveno-političkih dešavanja kroz fenomen „meke moći”. Pored profesionalnog rada u oglašavanju, aktivno piše o filmu, TV serijama i drugim aspektima popularne kulture.

Iva LEKOVIĆ je doktorand na studijskom programu Teorije dramskih umetnosti, medija i kulture na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti u Beogradu. Diplomirala je istoriju umetnosti na Univerzitetu u Beogradu, a master studije je završila na UNESCO katedri za kulturnu politiku i menadžment. Autorka je nekoliko izložbenih postavki, kataloških izdanja i brojnih eseja na teme iz oblasti filma i vizuelnih umetnosti. Učesnica je više međunarodnih konferencija i objavljuje tekstove u zemlji i inostranstvu.

Elizabet MAKBIN je doktorand na Katedri za slovenske i istočnoevropske jezike i kulturu na Državnom univerzitetu u Ohaju. U istraživačkom radu bavi se reprezentacijom životnih i konstruisanih prostora u književnosti i filmu poznog sovjetskog perioda, sa fokusom na preispitivanju pitanja moći, privilegija, prinude, saučesništva i odgovornosti.

Fatma MEMIDŽI je studentkinja master studija na studijskom programu Komunikacionih nauka na Univerzitetu Kadir Has u Turskoj. Diplomirala je na Odseku za nove medije na Univerzitetu Kadir Has, a specijalizirala na odseku za psihologiju. Radi na istraživanju TV serija, meke moći i VoD platformi.

Dr Aleksandra MILOVANOVIĆ je vanredna profesorka Studija filma i medija na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti u Beogradu. Autorka je knjige *Ka novim medijima: transmedijalni narativi između filma i televizije* (2019). Njeni nedavni teorijski radovi uključuju: „Remediating Yugoslav Television Heritage” (2021), „Serbia: Reco(r)ding the Cinematic Turn” (2020), i „Navigating Through Layers of Digital Platforms: Immersive Balkan Experience” (2019). Kao montažer, potpisuje dokumentarne filmove *Žurnal o Želimiru Žilniku* (Janko Baljak, 2021), *Druga strana svega* (Mila Turajlić, 2017), *Cinema Komunisto* (Mila Turajlić, 2011). Njene glavne istraživačke oblasti su televizijske serije, transmedijalno pripovedanje, digitalne archive i digitalni mediji, sećanje i identitet.

Dr Suni RUKER-ČENG je vanredna profesorka na Državnom univerzitetu u Ohaju na Katedri za slovenske i istočnoevropske jezike i kulture i afričke i afroameričke studije. U svom radu preispituje načine medijske tvorbe rasnih i kulturnih grupa u jugoistočnoj Evropi. Autorka je, koautorka, urednica i korednica brojnih izdanja među kojim su: *Cultures of Mobility and Alterity Crossing the Balkans and Beyond* (Liverpool UP, 2022), *Migrants in Russia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe* (Routledge, 2011), *Roma Rights and Civil Rights: A Transatlantic Comparison* (Cambridge, 2020). Trenutno završava monografiju o politici rasnog diskursa u zemljama bivše Jugoslavije, sa naglaskom na značenju i upotrebama kulturnih konstrukata o crnoj rasi (*blackness*). Saradnica je Centra za studije filma i medija, ženskih studija roda i seksualnosti i *Nathaniel R. Jones* centra za rasu, rod i socijalnu pravdu. Direktorka je programa *UC STARTALK* razvoja medija i jedna je od direktora programa osnovnih studija Hauard Univerziteta posvećenog ruskim, istočnoevropskim i evroazijskim studijama.

Dr Levent SOJSAL je doktorirao na Odseku za antropologiju na Harvardu (novembar 1999), a postdoktorske studije pohađao je na *Freie Universität* u Berlinu (2001–2003). U periodu 1998–2001. godine bio je docent antropologije na Interdisciplinarnom *John W. Draper* master programu Univerziteta u Njujorku, gde je predavao postdiplomske kurseve na temu grada. Trenutno je prodekan Fakulteta za komunikacije. Teme njegovog istraživačkog i predavačkog rada obuhvataju grad i globalizaciju, transnacionalizam, mlade i migracije, spektakl, nasleđe, performans i (teorije) kulture.

Dr Jagoda STAMENKOVIĆ je masterirala je na UNESCO Katedri za kulturnu politiku i menadžment i doktorirala na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti u Beogradu, odbranivši disertaciju *Evropski kulturni identitet kao identitet drugosti (evropski film: 1989–2014)*. Od 2001. godine radi u Ministarstvu kulture Republike Srbije, gde je trenutno šef Odseka za međunarodne odnose i evropske integracije u oblasti kulture. Učestvovala je na međunarodnim konferencijama i objavila više naučnih članaka. Njena istraživanja obuhvataju: identitet, film, evropske studije, međunarodne odnose itd.

Vanja ŠIBALIĆ je vanredna profesorka na Katedri za filmsku i TV produkciju na Fakultetu dramskih umetnosti, gde je i diplomirala 1993. godine. Specijalizirala je u oblasti studija medija i advertajzinga. Dobitnica je druge nagrade na svetskom takmičenju *Climate Change Campaign*, 2009. godine. Učestvovala je u produkciji brojnih nacionalnih i regionalnih PSA kampanja (MTV Adria *Anti trafficking*, *Protiv nasilja u sportu*, *Očistimo Srbiju – recikliraj*, *Plavi krug – borba protiv dijabetesa*, *Belhospice*, *Beli štap*, *Hendikep*, *Kampanja za transfuziju krvi*).

Dr Marian TUTUI je istraživač u oblasti filma i istorije rane rumunske i balkanske kinematografije. U periodu od 1996. do 2014. godine bio je kustos Rumunske filmske arhive; profesor studija filma na Univerzitetu Hiperion (2008), a od 2014. godine je istraživač Instituta za istoriju umetnosti *George Oprescu* rumunske Akademije nauka i umetnosti. Autor je četiri knjige (*Manakia Brothers or the Image of the Balkans* (2005), *A Short History of Romanian Cinema* (2005), *Orient Express: Romanian and Balkan Cinema* (2008) i *Studies on Romanian and Balkan Cinema* (2021)), a u svojstvu urednika ili saradnika potpisuje nekoliko publikacija o filmu, objavljenih u SAD, Velikoj Britaniji, Nemačkoj, Italiji, Turskoj, Severnoj Makedoniji, Gruziji i Australiji.

**INDEX OF TV SERIES AND FILMS
INDEKS TV SERIJA I FILMOVA**

12 words (12 reči, Jelena Stolica, 2020) 64, 67

A

A French Village (Un Village Français, Frédéric Krivine, Philippe Triboit & Emmanuel Daucé, 2009–2017) 8, 16

An Innocent (Neviniatka, Igor Ciel, 1993) 111

At Every Kilometer (Na vseki kilometar, Nedelcho Chernev and Lyubomir Sharlandzhiev, 1969) 73

Austerlitz (Sergei Loznitsa, 2016) 123

B

Babyi Yar: Context (Sergei Loznitsa, 2021) 123, 126, 135

Bad blood (Nečista krv, Vojislav Nanović, Milutin Petrović, 2021) 63, 64, 65

Barking (Štekot, Igor Ciel, 1991) 111

Battle of Kosovo (Boj na Kosovu, Zdravko Šotra, 1989) 35

Battle of Neretva (Bitka na Neretvi, Veljko Bulajić, 1969) 9,17

Belgrade: Cradle of Basketball (Diego Dorado, 2018) 104

Besa (Toni Džordan, 2018) 11, 18, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33,34, 35,36, 39,63, 64, 66, 67, 68

Bing-Bang (Nicolae Stroe, Vasile Vasilache, 1934) 159, 160, 163

Bitter Lands (Bir Zamanlar Çukurova, Murat Saraçoğlu et al., 2018–2022) 11, 19, 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 57

Black & White World (Crno-bijeli svijet, Goran Kulenović, 2015–2021) 63,

Black Sun / Shadows Over Balkan (Senke nad Balkanom, Dragan Bjelogrić, 2017) 11, 18, 25, 26, 27, 28,29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68,

Black wedding (Crna svadba, Nemanja Cipranić, Strahinja Madžarević, 2021) 64, 66,67,

Block 27 (Blok 27, Ivan Knežević, 2022) 64, 66, 67, 68,

Boardwalk Empire (Martin Scorsese, 2010 –2014) 35

Borgen (Adam Price, 2010) 61

C

Captain Petko Voyvoda (Kapitan Petko voivoda, Nedelcho Chernev 1981) 73,

Ciuleandra (Tanec lásky a smrti, Martin Kákoš, 1993) 111, 155

Civil Servant (Državni službenik, Predrag Antonijević, 2019) 11, 18, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35,36, 39, 61,63, 64, 65, 66,67, 68,

Clinic on the Third Floor (Klinika na tretia etazh, Nikolay Akimov, 1999) 76

*Condominium (Etazhna sobstvenost, Julian Minkov&Todor Nikolov, 2011–2013)*77

D

Danube Bridge (Dunav most, Ivan Andonov, 1999) 74

Dara of Jasenovac (Dara iz Jasenovca, Predrag Antonijević, 2021) 9, 17

Dear Legatees (Skupi naslednitsi, Todor Chapkanov et al., 2018) 78

Dear Yelena Sergeyevna (Drahá pani profesorka, Katarína Krivánková, 1990) 111

Domestic Cat of Average Downiness (Mačka domáca, Milan Lasica, 1992) 111

Donbass (Sergei Loznitsa, 2018) 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 138

Downton Abbey (UK, 2010–2015) 8, 16

E

Echo of a Dream (Ciuleandra / Verklungene Träume, Martin Berger, 1930) 155, 158, 166

F

Father (Otac, Srđan Golubović 2020) 13, 20, 139, 141, 146, 147, 148, 150, 152, 153

Forbidden Love (Забранена любов, Reg Watson, 2008 – 2011) 74, 75

Fuenteovejuna (Franek Chmiel, 1990) 111

G

Game of Thrones (David Benioff & D. B. Weiss, 2011–2019) 28, 30,31

Gangs of New York (Martin Scorsese, 2002) 35

Glass Home (Stuklen dom, Zopran Petrovski, Dimitar Gochev,2010–2012) 75, 77

H

Homeland (Alex Gansa, Howard Gordon, 2011) 62, 66

Hotel Bulgaria (Stanislav Semerdjiev, 2004) 74,

I

I Even Met Happy Gypsies (Skupljači perja, Aleksandar Saša Petrović, 1967) 9, 17

In the Fog (V tumane, Sergei Loznitsa, 2012) 121, 127, 128, 129, 132, 133, 134, 138

In Therapy (B'Tipul, Hagai Levi, 2005) 62

Irma la douce (Billy Wilder, 1963) 163

K

King Peter the First (Kralj Petar I, Milovan Vitezović, Petar Ristovski, Vladimir Ćosić, 2019) 9,17,64,65,

Kljun (Jelena Gavrilović, Uroš Tomić, 2021) 64, 65,66, 67, 68,

L

Land of MVP (Diego Dorado & Xuban Intxausti, 2022) 103

Law of the Lawless (Бригада, Aleksey Sidorov, 2002) 77

M

Maidan (Sergei Loznitsa, 2014) 121, 122,123, 124, 126, 127, 130, 138

Mask of Dimitrios (Jean Negulesco, 1944) 163

Modern Times (Charlie Chaplin, 1936) 161

Morning changes everything (Jutro će promeniti sve, Goran Stanković, Vladimir Tagić, 2018), 64, 67

My Father's Murderers (Ubice moga oca, Predrag Antonijević, 2016) 64,66, 68,

My Joy (Schast'e moe, Sergei Loznitsa, 2010) 121, 127,129,130,131, 135,138

N

Natural History of Destruction (Sergei Loznitsa, 2022) 123, 135

Nemanjić Dynasty: The birth of the kingdom (Nemanjići: rađanje kraljevine, Marko Marinković, 2018) 11,18,25,26, 27,28,29,30,31,32,33,34,35,36,39

No trespassing (Kalkanski krugovi, Đorđe Milosavljević, 2021) 64, 66

O

Odessa in Flames (Cătușe roșii / Odessa in fiamme, Carmine Gallone, 1942) 159

One Thousand and One Nights (Binbir Gece, Kudret Sabancı, 2006–2009) 49, 72

P

Patriarchat (Patriarhat, Docho Bodzhakov, 2005) 74

Peaky Blinders (Steven Knight, 2013) 35

Persona (Şahsiyet, Onur Saylak, 2018) 11, 19, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 57

Pretty Village, Pretty Flame (Lepa sela lepo gore, Srđan Dragojević, 1996) 66

Prisoners of war (Hatufim, Gideon Raff, 2009) 62

Q

Quo vadis Aida? (Jasmila Žbanić, 2020) 13,20,139,141,146,147,148,149,150,153

R

Relationships (*Vruzki*, Victor Bojinov, 2015) 78

S

Scars (*Belezi*, Petar Krumov et al., 2021) 78

Seven Hours Difference (*Sedem chasa razlika*, Goran Popovic, 2011) 77

She and He (*Tya i toi*, Stanislav Todorov Rogi, 2002–2008) 74

Sons and Daughters (Reg Watson, 1982–1987) 74

Sophians in Excess (*Stolichani v poveche*, Alexander Kossev & Stanislav Todorov Rogi, 2011–2019) 76

South Wind (*Južni vetar*, Miloš Avramović, 2020) 64, 67

State Funeral (Sergei Loznitsa, 2019) 123

Step By Step (William Bickley & Michael Warren, 1991) 78

Stitches (**Šavovi**, Miroslav Terzić, 2019) 13, 20,139, 141,146,147,148,150,153

Stolen Life (*Otkradnat zivot*, Pavel G. Vesnakov et al., 2016–2021) 76

T

Tanase's Dream (*Visul lui Tănase*, Bernd Aldor, 1932) 155,159, 166

The Benefactor (*Dobrodinec*, Ján Zeman, 1990) 110

The Black Prince (*Čierny princ*, Pavol Haspra, 1989) 110

The Bridge (*Bron/Broen*, Camilla Ahlgren, 2011) 62, 67

The Children of my Sister (*Kardes Çocukları*, Faruk Teber & Çagatay Tosun, 2019) 78

The Choice (*Babil*, Uluç Bayraktar, 2020) 11, 19, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 57

The Contract (Goran Marojević, 1992) 12, 20, 109,111, 112, 115,117

The Country of Motzi (*Țara Moților*, Paul Călinescu, 1939) 162,163,

The Crown (Peter Morgan, 2016) 60

The Devil's Throat (*Diavolskoto gurlo*, Dimitar Dimitrov & Pavel G. Vesnakov, 2019) 79

The Duelist (*Zurvalec*, Vladimír Strnisko, 1993) 110

The Effects of Gilding (*Následky pozlátenia*, Vladimír Strnisko, 1990) 110

The Enemy (*Neprijatelj*, Dejan Zečević, 2011) 66

The English neighbour (Английският съсед, Maria Dimitrov, 2011) 77

The Family (*Porodica*, Bojan Vuletić, 2021) 60, 64, 65

The Family Serrano (*Los Serrano*, Álex Pina & Daniel Écija, 2003) 78

The Family Sinđelić (*Sinđelići*, Milan Todorović et al., 2013) 78

The Fifth Seal (*Piata pečat*, Martin Kákoš, 1990) 111

The Gilded Age (Julian Fellowes, 2022) 8, 16

The Great Seljuks: Guardians of Justice (*Uyanış: Büyük Selçuklu*, Sedat İnci, 2020–2021) 11, 19, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 57

The Group (*Grupa*, Dragan Đurković, Uroš Tomić, 2019) 64, 67

The Independence of Romania (*Independența României*, Aristide Demetriade, Grigore Brezeanu, 1912) 155,157,162, 166

The Interrogation (*Výslech*, Stanislav Párnický, 1993) 111

The Kalinkov Family (Семейство Калинкови, Dimitar Zahariev, 1966) 73

The Killing (*Forbrydelsen*, Soren Siestrup, 2007) 62

The Last Cocktail (Miloslav Luther, 1989) 111, 112

The Magnificent Century (*Muhteşem Yüzyil*, 2011–2014) 78

- The Man with the Green Rucksack* (*Muž so zeleným batohom*, Juraj Takáč, 1990) 111
The Meeting with Bonaparte (*Výstrel na Bonaparta*, Ján Zeman, 1992) 110
The Mother of Jesus (*Ježišova matka*, Jozef Bednárík, 1991) 111
The Ninth Circle (*Deveti krug*, France Štiglic, 1960) 9,17
The Only Way Out (*Jedini izlaz*, Marko Popović, Darko Nikolić, 2021) 64
The Paper (*Novine*, Ivica Đikić, Dalibor Matanić, 2016) 64
The Professional (*Profesional*, Goran Marojević 1991) 109, 115, 117
The Road a Year Long (*Cesta duga godinu dana*, 1958) 9, 17
The Sparrows in October (*Vrabtsite prez oktombri*, 2006) 74
The Storks Will Return (*Vratiće se rode*, Goran Gajić, 2007–2008) 35
The Tree of Life (*Дървото на живота*, Sophia Zornitsa et al., 2013) 79
The Trial (Sergei Loznitsa, 2018) 123, 124, 125
The White Squadron (*Escadrila alba / Squadriglia bianca*, Ion Sava, 1943) 159
Three (*Tri*, Aleksandar Saša Petrović, 1965) 9, 17
Tycoon (*Tajkun*, Đorđe Milosavljević, 2020) 64, 67

U

- Underground* (*Podzemlje*, Emir Kusturica, 1995) 8, 16
Underneath (*Močvara*, Milena Marković, Oleg Novković, 2020) 64, 66, 67,
Unexpected Turn (*Neochakvan obrat*, Stanislav Donchev, 2006) 74

V

- Vuk Karadžić* (Đorđe Kadijević, 1987–1988) 35

W

- Ward No. 6* (*Pavilón č. 6*, Ernest Stredňanský, 1992) 110
We, Our Relatives and Your Relatives (*Nie, nashite i vashite*, Borimir Ilkov 2017) 78
What Is Fatmagul's Fault? (*Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne?*, Hilal Saral, 2010–2012) 78
When Father Was Away on Business (*Otac na službenom putu*, Emir Kusturica, 1985) 9,17
Where Is Magi? (*Kude e Magi?*, Sophia Zornitsa et al., 2012–2013) 78
Whichever Way the Ball Bounces (*Kud puklo da puklo*, Vlado Bulić et al., 2016) 78
Woe from Wit (*Útrapy z rozumu*, Miloš Pietor, 1990) 110

**SOFT POWER OF THE BALKAN SCREENS
MEKA MOĆ EKRANA BALKANA**

Editors / Urednice

Nevena Daković, PhD
Aleksandra Milovanović, PhD

Contributing Editor / Saradnica

Iva Leković

Publisher / Izdavač

Fakultet dramskih umetnosti u Beogradu
Institut za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju

For the Publisher / Za izdavača

Prof. Miloš Pavlović

Proofreading / Lektura

Maja Marsenić (for English)
Biljana Mitrović, PhD (for Serbian)
Jasna Vidić (for French)

Visual identity / Vizuelni identitet

Jelena Sanader

ISBN

978-86-82101-99-4

Print / Štampa

Šprint, Beograd

Tiraž / Circulation

300

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

327:316.7(497)(082)
654.197:004]:316.774(082)

SOFT power of the Balkan screens = Meka moć ekrana Balkana / editors, urednice Nevena Daković, Aleksandra Milovanović. - Belgrade : Faculty of Dramatic Arts : Institut for theatre, film, radio and television = Beograd : Fakultet dramskih umetnosti : Institut za pozorište, film, radio i televiziju, 2022 (Beograd : Šprint). - 178 str. : ilustr. ; 23 cm

Deo teksta uporedo na engl. i srp jeziku. - Radovi na engl., srp. i franc. jeziku. - Tiraž 300. - Str. 7-13: Foreword / Nevena Daković, Aleksandra Milovanović, Iva Leković. - Notes on contributors: str. 167-170. - Napomene i bibliografske reference uz tekst. - Bibliografija uz svaki rad. - Registar.

ISBN 978-86-82101-99-4 (FDU)

a) Културна дипломатија - Балканске државе -
Зборници b) Дигитални медији - Зборници

COBISS.SR-ID 81993481

ISBN



9 788682 101994