



OLD STORIES, YOUNG DREAMS

Narrating Self, Nation and Europeanness
in Novi Sad, Serbia

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Multiculturalism in Comparative Perspective

Cultural Anthropology

Utrecht University

Cover photo: view on Novi Sad from the Petrovaradin fortress, beginning of the 19th century

Source: *Monografija, 3. dopunjeno izdanje (Monographs, 3rd edition)* Matica Srpska, Novi Sad 1987

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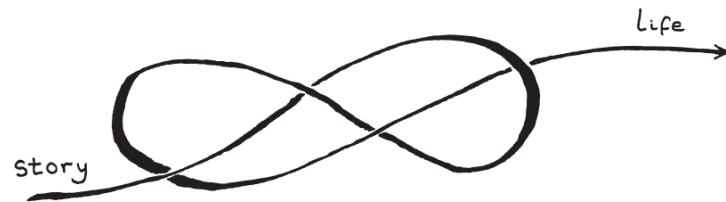
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Multiculturalism in Comparative Perspective
Cultural Anthropology, Utrecht University

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Utrecht, August 2013



'In storytelling, past occurrences are drawn into present experience.
The lived present, however, is not set off from the past of the story. Rather, past and present are continuous.'
Tim Ingold in *Being Alive* (2011: 161)

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Preface

'We should not be misled by a curious, but understandable, paradox: modern nations and all their impedimenta generally claim to be the opposite of novel, namely rooted in the remotest antiquity, and the opposite of constructed, namely human communities so "natural" as to require no definition other than self-assertion.'

Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in *The Invention of Tradition* (2006: 14)

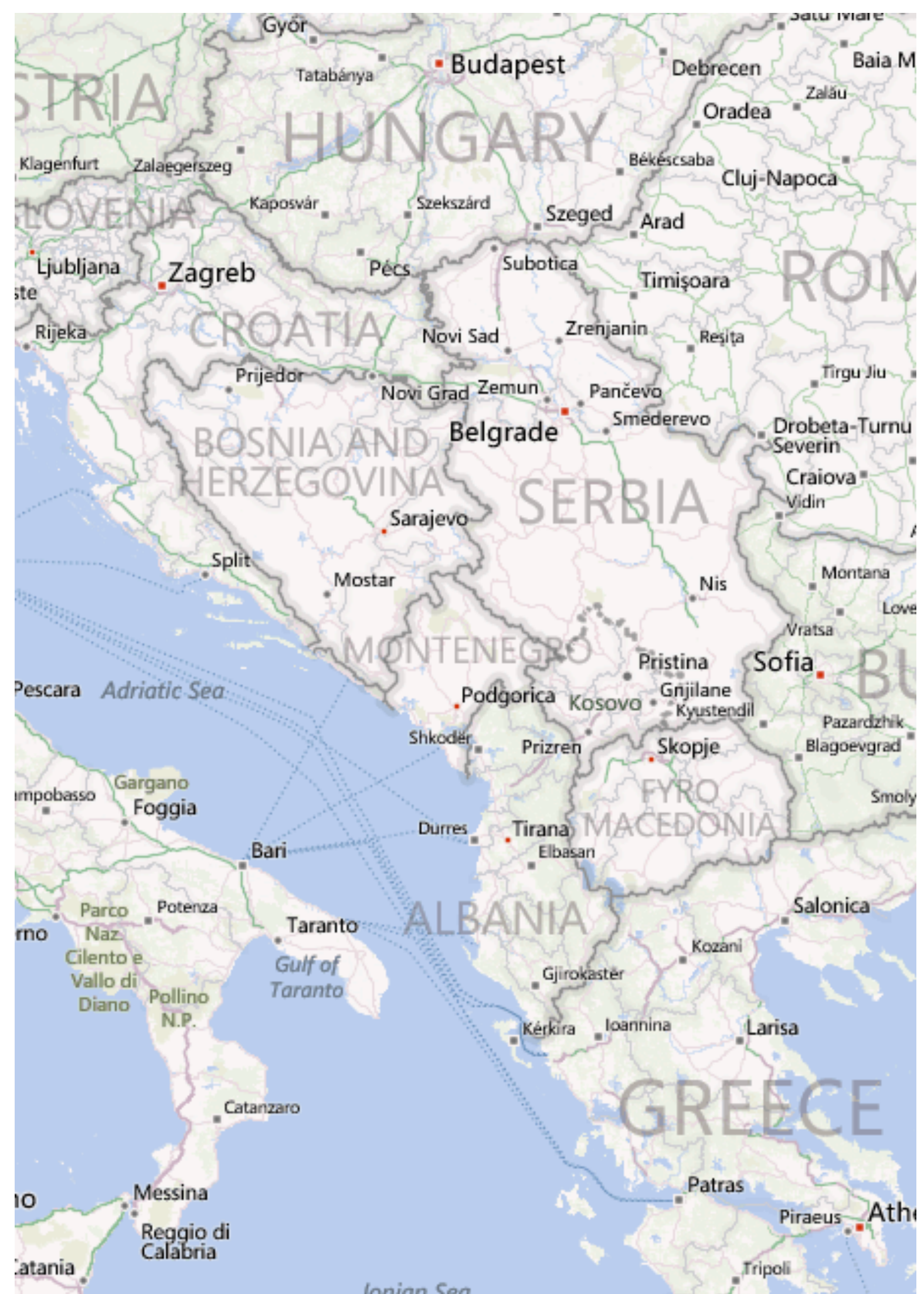
This thesis is intended to present, in the form of a narrative ethnography made up of young people's stories and conversations, a different way of writing ethnography. Like the paradox of modern nation-states (cf. Wimmer 2002; Hobsbawm & Ranger 2006), I see a paradox in modern ethnography too: important classical concepts do not correspond to people's meaning-making processes, but are nevertheless used by anthropologists. Research participants do not get enough authority. Although anthropologists rarely now try to write general ethnographies of whole communities and more often elaborate multisited ethnographies (cf. Tsing 2005), in line with Abu-Lughod (2008) I turn myself against the still customary conceptualizations of 'culture' and the politics of representation. I do not 'write against culture', since the culture-concept does not belong to anthropology alone and cannot be abstracted from its particular uses. However, writing ethnography is inevitably a language of power (cf. Crapanzano 1986; Abu-Lughod 2008), and by producing homogeneity, coherence and timelessness, ethnographers flatten out differences (cf. Wolf 1982; Saïd 1987; Rosaldo 1989). My focus is on storytelling precisely because a story is always situated: it has both a narrator and an audience, its perspective is partial – in both senses of the word – and its telling is motivated. Novi Sad's young urban intellectuals' narratives are no exception.

The starting point for this thesis was exactly this: like Baumann (1999) exposes multiculturalism as a riddle, so is the debate about *Europeanness*.¹ While nobody is clear what being European exactly means, it is obvious that some people are and others are not (Van de Port 1994; Shore 2000; Bellier & Wilson 2000; Armbruster et al. 2003; Balibar 2004; Todorova 2009; Greenberg 2011). To solve this riddle, we need to rethink what is at the basis of a 'common culture' (Turner 1993). To turn from dreaming to meaning,² I propose to give voice to young urban intellectuals by narrating their meaningful valuations. Basing myself on Ingold (2011), this thesis is an attempt to redefine the relation between story and life.

Utrecht, August 2013

¹ As will be shown, these two are furthermore also inherently connected.

² Gerd Baumann (1999) uses these words to formulate his answer to the 'multicultural riddle'. I follow the meaning that he gives to these words by claiming that we, as anthropologists, should stop "dreaming" about our constructionist approach, but finally put it into meaning by giving more voice to our research participants – which I did by focussing on storytelling.



Prologue: the end of an epoch³

The late American writer Vonnegut (1922-2007) wrote: 'We all see our lives as stories. (...) If a person survives an ordinary span of sixty years or more, there is every chance that his or her life as a shapely story has ended, and all that remains to be experienced is an epilogue. Life is not over, but the story is.'⁴ I consider this true for nations as well. Would this be what the Serbian historian and former liberal politician Latinka Perović meant when she claimed that '*the Serbian nation is threatened by extinction*,' only one month before my arrival in Novi Sad? Inspired by Benedict Anderson (2006: 204-206), this thesis is based on the notion that nations can also see their lives as stories, as biographies. At one point or another these stories end, but life goes on.

According to nationalist politicians and their political electorate, in the last twenty years the Serbian story is more alive than ever. According to many others it is dead: 'Basic plots we've told ourselves as a nation for 25 years are unravelled. The fundamental processes are over, the basic topics used. (...) We may disappear as a nation. Not physically, of course, but the story we've told ourselves as a nation has ended, and all we are left with is an epilogue' (Popović 2012). This is the message that Novi Sad's young urban intellectuals shared with me and wanted me to share with others: old actors try to spur this 'already dead story' into action, only to remain on the scene longer, to have power as long as possible.⁵ They furthermore convinced me that the entire scenery, together with the props and the wasted actors, must be removed from the scene if a new play is to begin.

But how can a nation's biography end? Young people I met all underwent the end of Socialism, the breakup of Yugoslavia, wars for new borders and nations, plunder of public property, isolation and embargoes, the 5th October coup,⁶ the assassination of their first democratically elected Prime Minister,⁷ trials before the ICTY,⁸ and the loss of Kosovo; the heart of Serbia and the historical motherland of the Serbian nation. While the latter is still being negotiated, fact is that all processes are *irreversibly* finalized.⁹ This was symbolically demonstrated in the last elections: most young people refused to vote or gave a white vote, revealing how wide mistrust in the political process is.

The Serbian nation is deeply divided. One division is *Prva Srbija* (First Serbia) versus *Druga Srbija* (Other Serbia) that originated in the spring of 1992, when intellectuals openly protested

³ Not to be confused with Fukuyama's (1992) *The End of History*. As this thesis will prove, I am referring to the process of ending the national story or biography that people nevertheless (convulsively) try to keep alive, simply because they believed in it for a long time.

⁴ From his book *Slaughterhouse-Five, or The Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death* (1969). See also: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/biographyandmemoirreviews/9197260/Kurt-Vonnegut-Best-quotes.html>

⁵ This is in accordance with Benedict Anderson's (2006) conceptualization of official nationalisms of former kings and dynastic states, as a reaction to popular nationalism. This, however, will be extensively dealt with later on.

⁶ A series of events resulting from the presidential elections in 2000 led to the downfall of Milošević's government on the 5th of October, when people from all over the country came together in Belgrade, including farmers on their tractors.

⁷ Zoran Đinđić, killed on the 12th of March 2003 when leaving the Government building in central Belgrade.

⁸ The International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, more commonly referred to as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

⁹ No process is really irreversibly finalized. However, I am referring to the feelings that accompany this finalizing that nonetheless feel as if it is irreversibly finalized. This is why the word 'irreversible' is in italics. Additionally, this spring, Belgrade (Serbia) opened negotiations with Pristina (Kosovo) again.

against dictatorship, media-madness, nationalism and war. The late Serbian philosopher and writer Konstantinović then said: *'The Other Serbia is that Serbia that does not reconcile itself with crimes.'* Ever since, *Druga Srbija* refers to those refusing Serbian populist nationalism, and *Prva Srbija* to those who approve or adhere to this. The Serbian intellectual web portal Peščanik¹⁰ wrote much about this and speaks of 'resentment nationalism', referring to feelings of bitterness and attempts at self-victimization that appeared when the initial aggressive militant nationalism suffered its historical defeat.¹¹ While contemporary Serbian nationalism expresses feelings of great pride, it might be more comparable with feelings of humiliation. Political scientist Moisi (2009) divides the world according to three basic emotions: fear, hope and humiliation. According to him, these emotions are closely related to the notion of self-confidence – not only of individuals but also of nations: self-confidence is the decisive factor both in the manner in which they respond to challenges they face, and in the way they treat each other. According to my research participants, it is humiliation that best characterizes Serbian society nowadays, which is strengthened by incompetent leaders and the absence of a real democratic culture. The Serbian scientist Ilić (2012)¹² writes:

'Presently the final bricks are being laid in the wall that will finally separate the Serbian political space from its citizens. The wall is being erected by the leadership of political parties, equally by those in power and those in opposition. They have established a monopoly over political decision making and public space. It does not matter who supports them and whose interests they are protecting. One can easily draw conclusions even without knowing: the only place for discussing and negotiating the type of society in which we will live lies beyond the reach of the majority of citizens.'

He concludes:

'In the context of fatigue and defeatism that paint Serbian politics, perhaps naivety is the only thing we can still rely on. Naive individuals that I am referring to here expect nothing upfront and they know they are destined to lose – regardless of that, they are not giving up.'

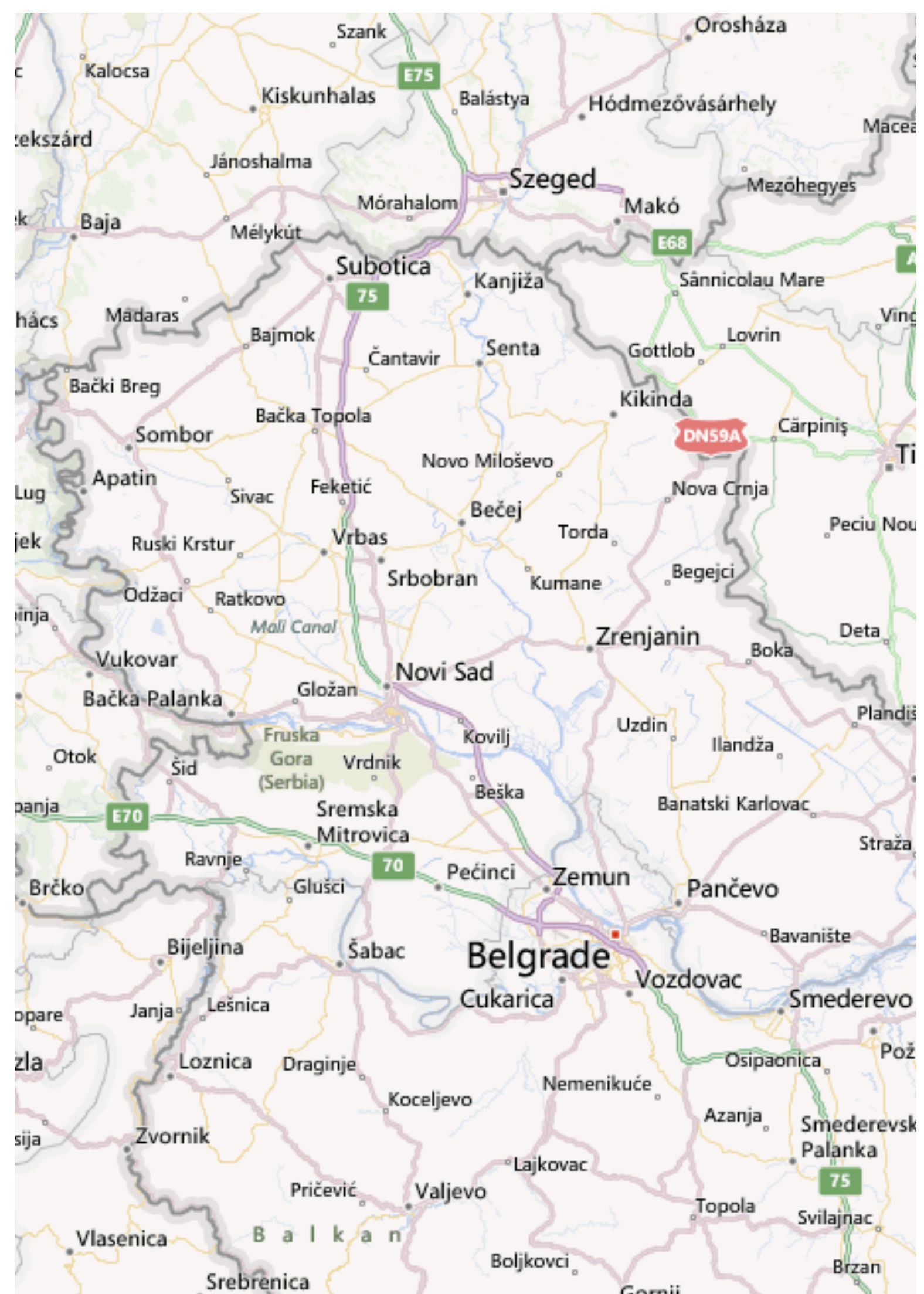
Young people explained to me this feeling of naivety and not giving up. This is the starting point from which Novi Sad's young urban intellectuals build their life stories and *plan* their futures (Bauman 2008; Spasenić 2011).¹³ These are the sentiments I came to know, studied and analysed. Uncertainty, ambiguity but also hopes, dreams and wishes form the outset of this thesis.

¹⁰ <http://pescanik.net/>

¹¹ Writers here explain that despite all militant nationalism, Serbs in the former Yugoslavia did not manage to stay one country. They were overruled by Croatia and by NATO. Besides, also in society, nationalist movements have been demilitarized: quite recently they fought with police forces in Kosovo, but (definitely also because of international intervention) they lost this too.

¹² Original article: <http://pescanik.net/2012/11/in-defence-of-naivety/>

¹³ For as far this is possible. As Jelena Spasenic (2011) notes, the influence of spontaneity and inplanability is perhaps way more characteristic for the life – and especially for the future – of an individual. Zygmund Bauman (2008) explains in his 'The Art of Life' that in our individualized society we are all artists of life, whether we know it or not, want it or not and like it or not. In this society we are all expected, rightly and wrongly, to give our lives purpose and form by using our own skills and resources, even if we lack the tools and materials to do so. In this book, Bauman explains how people choose certain designs-for-life: our liquid modern, individualized society of consumers influences (but does not determine) the way we construct and narrate our life trajectories.



Point of departure: narrating a new understanding

While at the beginning of this century the international community lost its attention for the Balkans and moved to *faraway* places such as Afghanistan, Iraq and more recently Libya, Egypt and Syria, in Southeast-Europe troubled times and uncertain developments continued. In Bosnia, the situation remained strongly divided, blocking every attempt at progress.¹⁴ In Serbia, government after government came and disappeared again. Meanwhile Montenegro and Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia, while Belgrade still does not recognize the latter. Over the past few years Slovenia proved itself a worthy EU member and Croatia recently entered too,¹⁵ while Bosnia and Serbia are being denied any form of rapprochement: still no official EU-integration dates have been set. Meanwhile the EU promotes itself in these countries as the ‘Promised Land’ and their ‘only chance for a better future.’ To get there, however, every time different rules and laws have to be implemented (Bellier & Wilson 2000; Balibar 2004; Todorova 2009).¹⁶ First there was the cooperation with the ICTY, then the recognition of an independent Kosovo – two important cases that get the Serbian nation right in its soul. Suffice to say, at the same time Serbs are and aren’t Europeans; they find themselves kept ‘on the threshold of in and out’ (Khosravi 2007: 332). Many feel misunderstood. Others ignored or inferior, thinking of themselves as ‘second-rate Europeans.’ Especially now that the EU itself is both economical and socio-political in trouble, questions rise: should we join ‘Europe?’ Do we belong? Is there room for us? But also: how does our future look?

At the same time in the northern Autonomous Province of Vojvodina a ‘political and cultural war’ is fought.¹⁷ Its capital Novi Sad is startled by protests, scandals and conflicts, all concerning Vojvodina’s political status. Posters are put up demanding the abolishment of Vojvodina’s autonomy, while others spread posters claiming full independence.¹⁸ On Friday April 12, thousands of Serbs from all over the country came to Novi Sad to demand early elections. Stories that dominate these wars all boil down to cultural differences: what makes Vojvodina different than the rest of Serbia, but also, what makes it exactly the same? The anthropological concepts of identity, nation and collective memory play a crucial role in this, just as popularized academic discussions on multiculturalism, Europeanism and Balkanism. Specific interpretations of these concepts make people value themselves and others in a different way; it divides Vojvodina’s society in opposing groups that have different ideas about their lives today, but also – mutually influencing – about their past and future.

¹⁴ At the moment of writing this theses, throughout Bosnia squares in its biggest cities are filled with people: they protest against incompetent and strongly divided leaders. See: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-id-card-protests-raise-hopes-for-change> At the same time, Serbian politicians keep division alive by stating that Sarajevo’s Muslim capital is not safe for Serbs anymore. See: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-officials-boycott-state-institutions>.

¹⁵ Croatia became the 28th member state of the European Union on July 1st 2013.

¹⁶ For more and concrete information, see also: <http://www.seio.gov.rs/home.50.html>, the website of the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

¹⁷ As this thesis will explain, Vojvodina’s society is nowadays highly divided between opposing groups, especially concerning politics and (“traditional”) culture.

¹⁸ At the same time, discussions about Kosovo’s political status are still going on, territory they lost only 5 years ago, adding extra tension to this.

Young people find themselves in the middle of all this, pushed to different sides by their parents, friends, university, church and media, only creating more confusion, dissension and frustration.

In these uncertain waters I travelled to Novi Sad. Together with its young intellectual inhabitants I formulated an answer to the question what storytelling, both as method and as general approach for ethnographic research, could offer to the current increasingly important popular and academic debate about identity, nationality and *Europeanness*, but also about Balkanism and Orientalism. This thesis therefore contributes to the anthropology of Europe, as well as to the ever-growing designation of the Balkans as a part of today's Europe. It aims to explain how young urban intellectuals – i.e. Youth or first generation intelligentsia as mentioned by Anderson (2006) – use, invoke and rely on certain stories to belong to the community they want to be part of. From the end of January until the beginning of May 2013 I conducted research mainly at the University Campus, but also in the numerous cafés, parks, squares, streets, churches, offices, houses and apartments that the multicultural capital of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina houses. I worked together with eight NGOs, thirteen experts, eight political parties and 34 young *Novosađani*, of which some wanted to remain anonymous and others deliberately not.¹⁹ Where necessary I anonymised. Next to open and informal interviewing I used participant observation, focus groups, daily talks and life stories, but also myths, legends and folktales to formulate an answer that does justice to the wonderful people I met. This study is therefore not only *my* personal story (cf. Radnitzky 1968; Fabian 1971) but also especially *theirs* (cf. Crapanzano 1986; Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992; Linde 1993). I do not settle for a study that is only academically relevant: my research participants should be able to recognize themselves in this story, as well as identify themselves with it. They support this thesis.²⁰ By telling their stories and thus letting them be heard and understood again, this thesis functions as a narrative that is therefore not *about* but rather *with* them.



Human beings tell a lot of stories; about themselves, each other and their environment. These can be small or big stories, unimportant or grand narratives. Stories cover gossip, jokes and everyday knowledge, but also belief systems, geneses and fables with messages and codes about morality and behaviour. Storytelling reveals a person's vision on reality (Van de Port 1994) and greatly influences the self or an individual's perception of the self (Holstein & Gubrium 2000). In current late-modern or 'liquid' times in which everything seems to be fluid, transient and temporally (Bauman 1998, 2001, 2008, 2011), the self becomes an increasingly complex project of daily living (Giddens 1991). It embodies our subjectivity: in the course of everyday interpretive activity, we are more actively

¹⁹ See **Appendix III** for an overview of the research participants, organizations and political parties that contributed to this research. *Novosađani* is the name for people coming from Novi Sad (male singular: *Novosađanin*, female singular: *Novosađanka*, female plural: *Novosađanke*).

²⁰ Together we discussed my concept version. Their remarks have been taken into account and are included. After, they told me that they endorse this version.

engaged in constructing the self than ever before (Holstein & Gubrium 2000; Bauman 2008).²¹ This thesis therefore provides a *new understanding* of an *old narrative* about the social nature of the self. I *restory* the self by following the words of Tim Ingold (2011: 164) that form the basis of this thesis:

‘It is in the art of storytelling, not in the power of classification, that the key to human knowledgeability – and therefore culture – ultimately resides.’

While classification so greatly influences social life (cf. Barth 1969; Eriksen 2002; Castells 2004; Bauman 1998, 2007, 2011), I propose to comprehend late-modern social life by using Ingold’s (2011: 142) claim that culture should be seen as a meshwork of an almost endless intersection of multiple, interwoven stories and narratives. This makes that human beings not only tell, but also live, and thus *are* their stories. Following Carolyn Nordstrom (2007) I find that culture nowadays is a tool of politics: people do not belong to themselves alone, but are born to an identity that comes custom-packaged with religious, political and social overtones, with what is deemed culture. However, ‘what we call culture is no more and no less than a core existential informational system; fluid, flexible, and profoundly multifaceted’ (Nordstrom 2007: 145). In line with Ingold (2011) and Nordstrom (2007), I consider culture to be *habits of knowledge*. By using Hall’s (1997) concept of *circuits of culture*, I apply this to ethnographic research.²² The result is a shift from the classical anthropological emphasis on ‘culture’ to ‘knowledge’, which in my view does more justice to current late-modern, ‘liquid’ times (Bauman 1998, 2008, 2011). I claim that stories and storytelling are important tools for ethnographic research today, because it reveals crucial aspects of socialization and identity formation that otherwise would stay neglected. Studying people’s narrations²³ proved to be a good way to understand the self as a complex project of daily living (Giddens 1991).

My research participants made me aware of an important consideration: there is not only a story in and about the self, but also the self itself is narratively constructed. As varied and inventively distinct stories can be, they are ‘disciplined’ by the diverse social circumstances and practices that produce them all (Holstein & Gubrium 2000; Ghorashi 2002). We are still creatures of everyday life and everyday life-structures (cf. Bourdieu 1981). Storytelling and constructions of the self are conditioned by what we should be or want to be at particular times and places; inventiveness and diversity are always ‘tamed by the social arrangements within which selves are considered and produced’ (Holstein & Gubrium 200: 3).²⁴ Because of this, often only one or a few stories are being heard and told, as if these are the only stories that really matter or are considered *true*. While

²¹ I follow Giddens’ (1991) claim that the self is becoming more of a lifestyle project; while individual identity was less important before, group identity was.

²² The concept of *circuits of culture* entails that participants in a culture give meaning to people, objects and events. These meanings are produced at several different sites and circulated through several different processes or practices (the cultural circuit). See: Hall’s *Representation* (1997).

¹⁷ Thus, not only people’s narratives (the end result) but also people’s narrations (the process of telling a story) because stories – although often perceived like that – are never fixed and always depend on individual and social reflexivity (Radnitzky 1968).

²⁴ Comparable with Bourdieu’s concept of ‘habitus’. While Foucault sees power as ‘ubiquitous’ and beyond agency or structure, Bourdieu sees power as culturally and symbolically created, and constantly re-legitimised through an interplay of agency and structure. Habitus is ‘the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them’ (Wacquant 2005: 316, cited in Navarro 2006: 16).

storytelling thus tends to neglect multiplicity, complexity and intersection in a way that some stories become dominant and certain narratives hegemonic, giving only a partial and limited understanding of human experience, this is not because of the act of storytelling itself – it is because of forces and structures in the social environment that we, anthropologists, need to discover and expose.²⁵ Storytelling shows important power dynamics: who decides which stories are being heard and which stories ignored? And: in whose language, following whose rules? While these questions seem rather rhetoric, throughout this thesis the answers will gradually surface out.

One of the central threads throughout this thesis is the recurrent aspect of ‘re-traditionalization’ that young urban intellectuals experience in their social environment. Some oppose this, because they feel that it keeps them stuck in a world that is becoming increasingly mobile (cf. Bauman 1998, 2007). Others find security and safety in this. Nation, religion and identity politics (cf. Castells 2004) are important aspects of this re-traditionalization.

As already mentioned by Hill in 1955, in earlier times the Church ‘guided all movements of men from baptism to the burial service. (...) [It] controlled men’s feelings and told them what to believe’ (2002: 10-11). Our times are different: politicians, public figures and academics announce the demise of tradition, and they surely have good grounds for doing so. However, ‘although it cannot be denied that de-traditionalization has taken place, it is nevertheless possible to argue that claims that we have lurched – or are lurching – into a post-traditional age are highly contestable’ (Heelas et al. 1996: 1). This thesis therefore also contributes to the growing debate concerning the extent to which our late-modern world has moved beyond tradition.²⁶ Allegations that we have entered a post-traditional or post-modern world are still ubiquitous, while they are increasingly subjected to criticism, revision or even invalidation. I follow Bauman’s (2007) statement that even though important changes have occurred, it is impossible to speak of two separate periods: past and present are inherently connected. Beliefs of de-traditionalization are based on the decline in pre-given or natural orders of things, or in Thompson’s words: ‘Tradition gradually declines in significance and eventually ceases to play a meaningful role in the lives of most individuals’ (in Heelas et al. 1996: 2). This is what Heelas et al. (1996) call the ‘radical thesis.’ Based on qualitative research in Novi Sad, I oppose this triumphalist version of de-traditionalization and argue for what Heelas et al. (1996: 2-3, 7-11) call the ‘coexistence thesis.’ Indeed, de-traditionalization might have taken place in Novi Sad, but re-traditionalization is happening as well: rather than leading to total evaporation of all

²⁵ Sometimes people explicitly want to forget certain stories (Anderson 2006) but it can also be the effect of a more dominant story going around. This is not the given of storytelling itself; while some stories can be dominant, other stories are being told too, which is different in every context.

²⁶ While this is not my main purpose, this contribution is part of a bigger contribution about identity and the Self, especially since this thesis will show that devoting oneself to (invented) traditions (Hobsbawm & Ranger 2006: 1-3) can create security in an age of increasing uncertainty (Bauman 1998, 2006, 2011).

traditions, I consider de-traditionalization as competing, interpenetrating and interplaying with processes based on tradition-maintenance, regeneration and even tradition-construction.

Looking at this more closely, characteristics of the past and the present tend to be conceived in a mutually exclusive fashion. Traditional cultures are often seen as dominated by fate and embeddedness, and excluded of choice and freedom. This is too simplistic. First, overarching orders rooted in past events (or simply: the past) are often considered highly authoritative – or ‘sacred’ in the Durkheimian tradition. In short, the tradition-informed way of life is hierarchically distinguished, both within particular traditions and with regard to how other ways of life are evaluated (for example: the West). Second, by contrast, de-traditionalization entails that people have acquired the opportunity to stand back from, critically reflect upon, and – therefore – have lost their faith in what traditions have to offer. This undermines the authoritative or ‘sacred’ properties of grand narratives. With components from different cultures becoming more and more available in any particular cultural setting, the cultural realm becomes more pluralistic too (cf. Hannerz 1992, 1996; Appadurai 1996; Driessen & Otto 2000). Vividly described in Fukuyama’s *The end of History* (1992), rational selves come to agree that life is best led by liberal ethics that cease to provide any determinate sense of moral identity, a feature called post-modern by Gellner (2009). Although I do not agree with the idea of a radical break and base myself upon an idea of continuation (cf. Bauman 2006),²⁷ it can be argued that the intensification of consumer culture has resulted in the disintegration of whatever sense of identity the utilitarian self might have been able to achieve. According to Heelas et al. (2011: 7), that collection of desires, wishes, needs and ambitions that compromise the utilitarian self becomes yet more fragmented and dispersed as the subject is taken over by a ‘whole range of variegated consumer-seductions.’ Theorists of post-modernity typically see de-traditionalization resulting in a world where people can no longer act as coherent or determinate moral subjects. However, I follow Giddens (1991) in that coherence and determinacy can still be a subject’s aim. Shaped by different stories, people’s narrative identities (Holstein & Gubrium 2000: 3) and nation’s biographies (Anderson 2006: 204-206)²⁸ are based upon ideas of consistency and continuity.

That is the argument of this thesis. The current world is not as de-traditionalized as often claimed; for some, grand narratives are now even more important than ever (Castells 2004). People always live in terms of typically conflicting demands (Heelas et al. 1996: 7). This is why Luke (in Heelas et al. 2011) argues that traditions are no more than traces of practices, signs of belief, and images continuously sent and chaotically received throughout all generations. Traditions are never simply received as pre-given certainties: they are always open to human agency. Consequently, everybody interprets the traditional in different ways. In Rosaldo’s (1980: 22) words, life is ‘more

²⁷ As explained, we did not pass by modernity (Bauman 2006). I claim that today’s world is simply later phase of modernity, even though many things have changed since early modernity. This is why I rather speak of late-modernity than postmodernity.

²⁸ And vice versa: identities are also biographically shaped (Giddens 1991) and the nation is highly dependent on its narrative.

actively constructed than passively received.’ My point is that Vojvodina is both as re-traditionalized as it is de-traditionalized, and that individuals are never simply tradition-informed nor simply autonomous; there is coexistence. We can speak as individuals, but we cannot speak as individuals without being informed by all those voices of external authority that influence our choices and opinions. Thus, there is no such thing as a de-traditionalized self: the late-modern autonomous self that is central to the idea and process of de-traditionalization is itself as much constructed as the supposedly traditionalized self (Poster in Heelas et al. 1996).

In sum, far from presenting a post-modernist argument that questions long-established concepts of culture and identity, I find them now more relevant than ever; but we need to show their processual and meaningful sides.²⁹ The narrative approach (cf. Genette 1980; Holstein & Gubrium 2001; Gadamer 2004) that my research participants and I used³⁰ during this research proved to be a good alternative and a very suitable tool to put the emphasis on meaningful construction and power dynamics³¹ in which this storytelling takes place.

Besides discussing knowledge rather than culture, I leave this knowledge in its original context – i.e. the location on which their stories were told – and do not put it in a well-oiled and tightly organized analysis. Theory therefore follows data, instead of the other way around. This thesis should be read as a walk through the urban setting of Novi Sad and the life environment of its young urban intellectuals and (socio-political) activists. Every chapter is a different setting where in different ways important socialization and storytelling processes take place. At these settings I will discuss the stories young people told me and use to form their selves. Starting from the Petrovaradin fortress, we will hang around at the University Campus, attend lectures and visit living rooms. Then we will go to church, enter the football stadium and join young people at the square where they come together at nights. Following a protest in front of the parliament building we will end our journey on the way to Europe, explained as a way to normalcy. I will not end with an all-encompassing conclusion for the simple reason that life does not let itself be closed (Ingold 2011). Therefore ethnography can also never be complete.

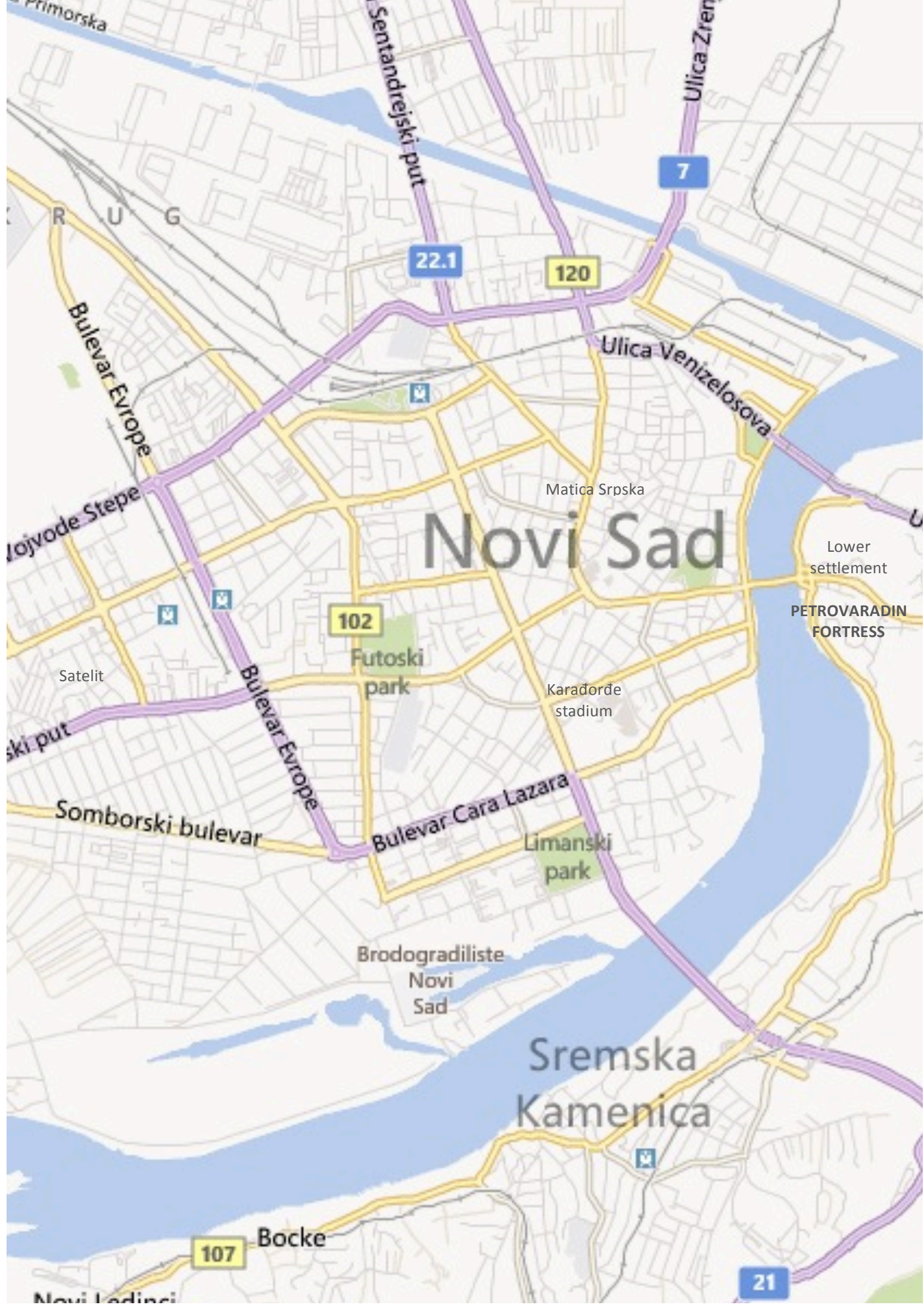
While stories are inherently complex, unclear and fragmented, they can at the same time be experienced as true, complete and definitive (cf. Anderson 2006; Ingold 2011). Letting this reflect in the structure of this thesis, I reveal important, often neglected characteristics of human being and offer another way of active ethnography (cf. Tsing 2005). I direct myself to Ingold’s (2011) idea of life

²⁹ While numerous social scientists already for a long time talk about and discuss identity and culture as constructs, the way they still often research it and formulate their conclusions about it as if they are not. While researches are still often wrapped in a ‘constructivist’ package, the conclusions drawn from it are just as often presented in the same ways as was done before (for example by structuralists).

³⁰ Of course, their narrative approach was different than mine. I consider their narratives as a framework within identity discussions; they use the opportunity to tell freely about what they want to tell me, without being pushed in certain directions or interview schedules. We do, however, discuss and debate, so in that way both our narrative approaches coincide and work together for the same result.

³¹ Not: power structures, since power differs per situation and is unfixated in the project of storytelling; everybody creates and tells its own (personal) story.

as lived along lines, or wayfaring. Life should be seen as a meshwork; a continuing texture of interwoven threads. This means that in life, knowledge is not vertically but *alongly* integrated (Ingold 2011: 160). In classification, everything is interpreted on the basis of intrinsic characteristics that are given quite independently from the context in which it is encountered and of its relations with things that presently surround it, that preceded its appearance, or that follow it into the world. By contrast, in a story it is precisely by this context and these relations that every element is identified and positioned: stories always and inevitably draw together what classifications split apart (Ingold 2011: 160). This is in accordance with my claim for coexistence (Heelas et al. 1996), since even traditions are often invented, attempting to establish continuity with a 'suitable' historic past (Hobsbawm & Ranger 2006). This thesis explains that people *are* their stories, identified not by fixed attributes but by their paths of movement in an unfolding field of relations. In our storied world, we are bound up in stories. It is in this binding that knowledge is generated.



Novi Sad

Matica Srpska

Lower settlement

PETROVARADIN FORTRESS

102

Futoski park

Karadžorđe stadium

Limanski park

Brodogradiliste Novi Sad

Sremska Kamenica

107

Bocke

21

22.1

120

7

R U G

Bulevar Evrope

vojvode Stepe

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Somborski bulevar

Ulica Venizelosova

Ulica Zren

Sentandrejski put

ski put

Satelit

Novi Ledinci

На тврђави / on the fortress

Next to a small chimney sticking out of the defence wall Branka and I sit down. Only last summer this wall was decorated with the slogan ‘Welcome to Novi Sad, capital of Vojvodina,’ but now there is a banner shouting *Stop Separatizmu!* (Stop Separatism!). It is the first beautiful, sunny and warm day after weeks of cold, snow and grey clouds. We decided to take a walk on the other side of the Danube, the international waterway that divides the city of Novi Sad with the old settlement of Petrovaradin of which the first bricks date back to the Bronze Age, 3.000 BC. After the arrival of the Celts and later the Romans, followed by the Slavs, the year 1235 AD marks its turning point: after King Bela IV of Hungary brought a group of Catholic monks here to build a monastery on the remains on the Roman fortress on top of the hill, for the next 700 years the Petrovaradin fortress became the site of continuous fights, conflicts and wars between the Hungarians and other Central-European people on the right bank of the river and the Ottoman Empire on the left bank. This fortress is the place where the Serbian story of Vojvodina starts.



Exactly at the curve of the wide river we look over the whole city. The fortress is built on a volcanic hill, but the area of Novi Sad is totally flat. Thin banks of mist cling above the streets of the city, leaving only the many small, highly decorated church towers in front, the light poles of the Karađorđe Stadium to the left and the numerous socialist flats in the back to be seen. ‘*When did you move here?*’ I ask Branka. ‘*Nine years ago, when I started studying,*’ she answers. Like many people living in Novi Sad, Branka is also *došljanka*, a newcomer.³² In the last twenty years the population of the city doubled, but migration to this place in the current north of Serbia goes way back. According to stories told by young people about their homeland, the ‘Great Serb Migration’ at the end of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century was most influential: they explain this as a crucial moment in Serbian history. When during the Great Turkish War (1683-1699) the Habsburg army retreated from the Ottoman territories on the Balkans, big numbers of Serbs fleeing from the Turks were allowed to cross the rivers Sava and Danube and settle in the Habsburg land of today’s Vojvodina. Sources provide different data regarding the number of people that moved here in this period, leading some researchers to seriously doubt whether it really happened. According to Malcolm (2002: 161), data that states that 37,000 families participated in this migration derives from a single Serbian monastic chronicle that was written many years after the event and contains several errors. Anscombe (2006: 792) maintains that these migrations never took place, or at least never on

³² Next to the rather neutral term *došljaci*, (singular male: *došljac*, singular female: *došljanka*) Vojvodinians not fond of newcomers often use *dođoši*, which has a slightly insulting connotation.

such a large scale, and describes it as a 'myth' created to lay claim to the territory of Kosovo. The fact is that the amount of Serbs increased immensely, giving them the status of a recognized nation with extensive rights. In exchange, Serbs fought invaders and guarded the southern border of which this fortress was the centre. Young people are proud of this: *'For a long time, we defended the borders of Europe,'* or *'Because of us, Christianity remained in Europe'* are just some statements illustrating this.

Like in the rest of Europe, in the eighteenth century romantic ideas of nationalism flourished in Vojvodina (Van de Port 1994). Like Anderson's (2006:37-44) conceptualization of popular nationalism, ideas of a distinct Serbian nation or national consciousness arose among the Serbian people in Vojvodina themselves.³³ Unlike their southern counterpart under Ottoman rule, Serbian people under Habsburg rule were able to develop their nation and Serb intellectual life, of which *Matica Srpska* (Serbian Queen Bee), the oldest Serbian cultural-scientific institution of Serbia, is the best example. It was built on the other side of the river, together with numerous churches and other public and cultural buildings, resulting in *Novi Sad* (New Settlement) that therefore got its nickname of 'Serbian Athens.' Young *Novosađani* tell me that they are proud of this title. In 1848, due to opposite national views and the wish of the Vojvodina Serbs to join the Serbs in the principality of Serbia under Ottoman rule, Serbs declared the constitution of the Serbian Duchy, an autonomous region within the Habsburg Empire. According to the 1910 census, Serbs made only 33,8% of the population,³⁴ but after World War I the Habsburg Empire collapsed and Vojvodina joined the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs: the reunification of the Serbian people was a fact.

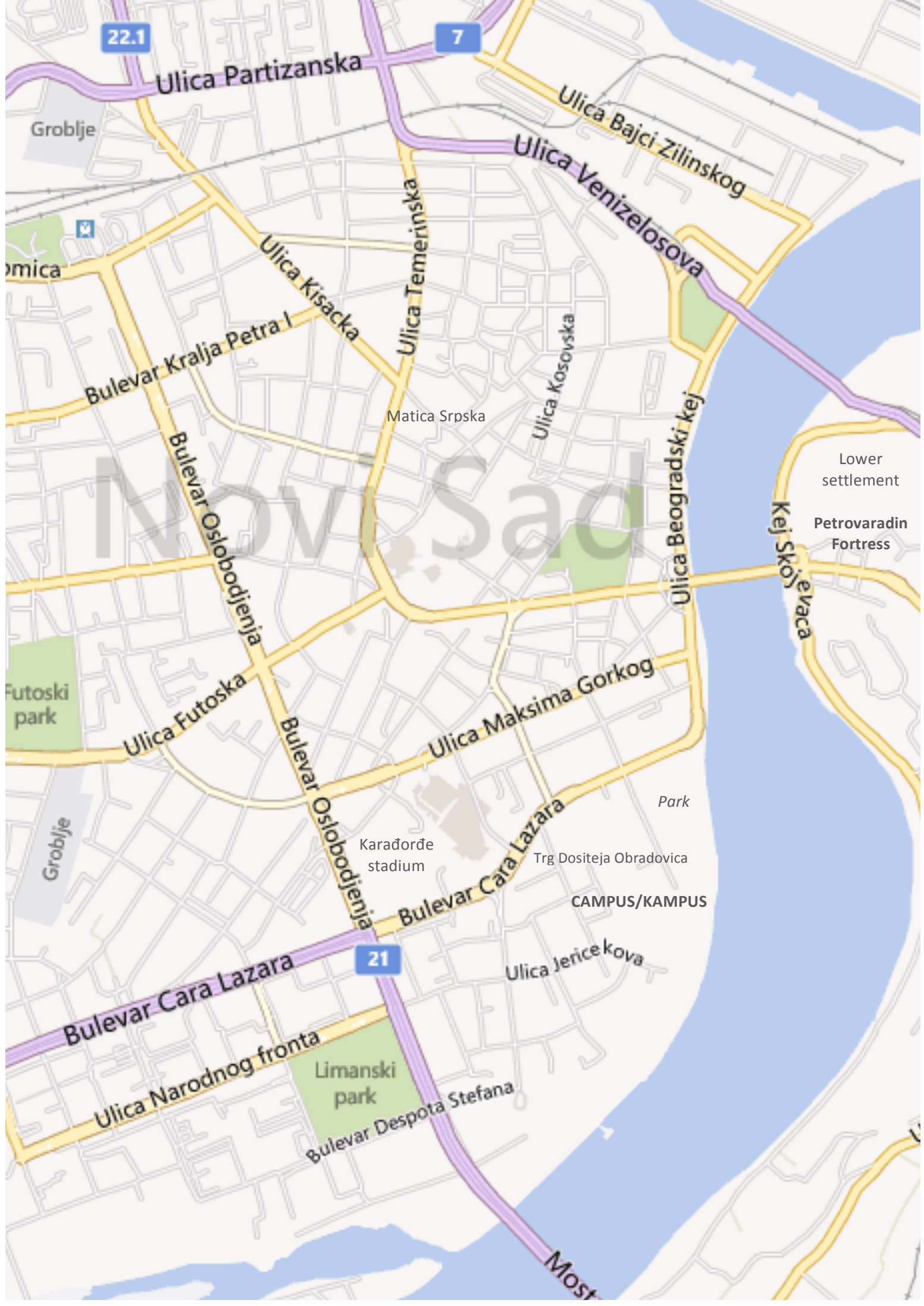
As soon as the mist disappears, our sight improves. *'Do you see that area there in the back, far behind the football stadium? That is Satelit. Twenty years ago it was a totally separate part of the city, but now it's completely connected, absorbed almost,'* Branka points out. During the recent wars in the 1990s many people from Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo and southern parts of Serbia fled to Novi Sad. *'Most people to find shelter from the wars, but some also for economic reasons: Belgrade and Novi Sad are the only real places in the country for young people to study or to find work.'* Many people I met speak of this period as the second big migration of Serbian people from all over the Balkans to Vojvodina: some see this as positive, some negative. Greatly generalized, young people like their city to become bigger, bringing with it not only more people, but also more activity, facilities and possibilities. However, some do not like the people that came, accusing them of lacking manners: *'Uncivilized people came from the poorest rural areas in the former Yugoslavia, from the empty fields in Croatia or the isolated mountains in Bosnia.'* *'You can't blame them,'* some remark, *'they came driven by hatred and violence and were forced to leave their homes and leave everything behind.'*

³³ This is different from official nationalism (Anderson 2006: 83-111), what is best seen as a response to popular nationalism and 'creole pioneers' in the Americas, since this was nationalism 'from above', implemented by the rulers to 'create' a nation among its subjects.

³⁴ Being almost equal in terms of size to Hungarians (28,1%) and Germans (21,4%). See also: <http://www.hungarian-history.hu/lib/hmcb/Tab2>

According to Branka, who does come from Bosnia but did not come during the 1990s, there still is a segregation of people within Novi Sad: *'true Novosađani don't mingle with došljaci. They either feel superior or they simply don't meet: they grow up in their own neighbourhoods and keep the same groups of friends for the rest of their lives. I have been here for nine years now, but none of my friends are born Novi Sad.'* When she tells me this, I remember what Kristina told me one week before, when we found shelter from the rain in a café on the corner of *Trg Mladenaca* (Newlyweds Square), next to the office of her political party: *'It is strange that people are so obsessed with this whole "where do you come from-thing." In the end, all of us come from somewhere. People here are so proud that they are "true" Novosađani while under Hungarian rule so many Germans, Slovaks and Romanians lived here... Serbs came way later, and now they think they are the "true" Novosađani? Don't make me laugh! Novi Sad is a place where people go in the hope to find a better life, which they find here and makes them stay. That is Novi Sad, at least for me. I am from a mixed marriage: my father is Montenegrin and my mother Bosnian, but I always felt welcome here.'*

Since both of us are hungry, Branka and I decide to leave. We take the stairs that lead us to the centre of the lower settlement, where most old, neo-classical houses could really well use a lick of paint and new tiles. Branka disagrees: *'I like it like this, it's as if you're hundreds years back in time.'* If there is something that I noticed during my three months in Novi Sad, it is that Serbs like to feel connected with 'their past,' especially their Medieval one, in which Serbia was the biggest kingdom in the Balkans (Van de Port 1994; Todorova 2009; Spasenić 2011). They all know where they come from and they all know their national history very well: most is taught extensively at schools, but many young people also like to read and learn more about it in their spare time. Branka is not one of them; she just likes the atmosphere of the settlement. *'I am directed towards the future, not to the past,'* she says. *'I don't see the use of it, but I also don't really feel a deep connection with it either. I lived in South Africa, Bosnia and Qatar, and to be honest I can't wait to leave again. Not because I don't like it here, but because there are few chances and everybody here is worried.'* The latter I heard often. Concomitant with Kristina's marks above, many young do not directly see Serbia as the place to build their lives or raise their children. They do not see a bright future. Would this be connected with the fact that history is so important? Having this in mind, let us now enter the city.



22.1

7

Ulica Partizanska

Ulica Bajci Zilinskog

Ulica Venizelosova

Ulica Temerinska

Ulica Kisacka

Bulevar Kralja Petra I

Bulevar Oslobođenja

Matica Srpska

Ulica Kosovska

Ulica Beogradski kej

Kej Skopljevac

Lower settlement

Petrovaradin Fortress

Novi Sad

Futoski park

Ulica Futoska

Ulica Maksima Gorkog

Park

Karadjorđe stadium

Trg Dositeja Obradovica

CAMPUS/KAMPUS

Bulevar Cara Lazara

21

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Ulica Jerice kova

Ulica Narodnog fronta

Limanski park

Bulevar Despota Stefana

Most

У кампусу / at the campus

Coming from Petrovaradin, one only has to cross *Varadinski most* (Varadin bridge) and go left on *Beogradski Kej* (Belgrade Key). From here you have the best view of the fortress, especially on sunny days. When passing the World War II monument, just continue straight. After some hundred meters you reach the junction of *Sunčani Kej* (Sunny Key) and *Bulevar Cara Lazara* (Boulevard of Tsar Lazar)³⁵ where in the small park the Exit festival was held for one hundred days throughout the summer of 2000. This was set up by students of the University of Novi Sad as another form of the anti-Milošević protest. In front of 20,000 spectators, it ended with the message '*Gotovo je!*' (It's done!), linking them with the student movement *Otpor!* (Resistance) in Belgrade that helped forcing Milošević to step back. Just behind this park the campus is situated. This is the place where I both started and ended my fieldwork; although I went to different places throughout the city, the province of Vojvodina and the whole country of Serbia, the campus remained my base.



The University of Novi Sad comprises 14 faculties located in four towns: Novi Sad, Subotica, Zrenjanin and Sombor. It is the second largest among six state universities and its main campus covers an area of 259,807 m² where around 40,000 students and 10,000 professors all come together.³⁶ The first time I entered its premises, hundreds of students were rushing to their lectures or had just finished them; others were just hanging outside, sitting on the benches or smoking a cigarette. It was still cold and the trees did not have any leaves, nor had the grass its bright green colour. Yet it was colourful: to me it seemed a mosaic, people who constitute one image altogether, but Marko rather described it as *mučkalica*, a traditional Serbian stew of minced meat and vegetables with herbs and oil that has to be on the stove for several hours.³⁷

My decision to study young intelligentsia as prospective bearers of social change led to the belief that this study would have to be carried out at least partially at the university, on its campus. It also makes a good ethnographic setting, because it delimits groups of individuals and recreates social order on a micro level. It establishes communities that often last for several years and then, just as often, disband. Arriving from different parts of the city, from different parts of the country or even from the surrounding countries (i.e. pilgrimage, Anderson 2006: 140),³⁸ from periphery and nearby places, from various class and ethnic backgrounds, university students are mixed and placed in

³⁵ Medieval Serbian ruler (1373-1389), who created the largest and most powerful state on the territory of the disintegrated Serbian Empire, known as Moravian Serbia. Lazar had full support from the Serbian Church, but found his death during the Battle of Kosovo.

³⁶ See: <http://www.uns.ac.rs/sr/>

³⁷ There are many different Serbian stews of which the one originally coming from the central-Serbian town of Leskovac probably is the most famous one.

³⁸ As Anderson (2006: 139-140) describes, especially in the empires of the late nineteenth century were too large and far-flung to be run by a handful of nationals. At the same time, the state was rapidly expanding its functions. An important consequence of this is the centralization and standardization of school systems (as also greatly elaborated by Gellner 2009). Educational pilgrimages were paralleled and replicated by administrative pilgrimages, producing the territorial basis for new imagined communities in which they would come to see themselves as nationals.

groups with others, many of whom they otherwise would probably never meet. As an institution, university on the one hand imposes uniformity in that it standardizes everything within its reach, but also represents a focus for the display of plurality and difference. On the other hand, though similarly, it safeguards tradition while it also encourages novelty, originality and uniqueness (cf. Spasenić 2011). Maybe even more than any other social site, it is a world of paradoxes and contradictions due to various social forces. The condition of one world rooted within another – here university and society – represents a condition of movement and interconnectedness (cf. Tsing 2005; Ingold 2011). This means that when something with relevance for the whole of society takes place, there is an expectation that it will echo in its segments and members. In reality it may look almost the opposite: I noticed indifference resulting from oversaturation with (useless) information, a sense of powerlessness and withdrawal from public into private sphere due to a lack of evidence that one's actions can actually make a difference, or a deeply rooted understanding of reality and one's society that disables new perceptions and interpretations. Thus, things that happen in society can also pass unnoticed or be ignored while they will nevertheless affect young individuals one way or another.

Two remarks have to be made. Firstly, next to focussing on young urban intellectuals I directed myself also to politically and socially active youth, who are very critical about their society. This sometimes reflects in my analyses. Secondly, in a country such as Serbia where state-building and establishing order after an incredible tumultuous period has become a difficult and almost exhausting enterprise, there is never a dead calm. While I thought it was remarkable how often one scandal followed the other, most young people around me already stopped caring. Viewed from a long-term perspective, political recklessness influences the course of lives and takes its toll: many young people emigrate, or are either unemployed or underpaid and often not satisfied with life and the world in general.³⁹ Of course there are also those individuals who are optimistic. They furthermore emphasize the importance of politics and responsibility of every individual citizen.

The temporal character of consciousness (cf. Schutz 1972; Schutz and Luckmann 1974) is reflected in the condition that people compare what once was and how things are now or how they want it to be in the future. To break with the recent past⁴⁰ – like most of the young people and especially the activists I worked with, but also many politicians and experts regard as indispensable – is a difficult enterprise (cf. Dimitrijević 2003, 2005: 23-28, 2008; Đerić 2007; Ilić 2009; Spasenić 2011: 65). But while young people appropriate and internalize already existing cognitive schemas in the course of their socialization, they also give a unique expression to them (Mead 1934). Many internal divisions in Novi Sad demonstrate a fierce social dynamic, where old and new cultural patterns are at interplay and being negotiated, ranging from conflictual to syncretical forms.

³⁹ See also: 'Youth Emigration Causes Balkan 'Brain Drain'' on: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/young-people-leave-serbia-bosnia-the-most>

⁴⁰ Meaning the wars and ethnicised conflicts during the 1990s.

I am on *Trg Dositeja Obradovića* (Square of Dositej Obradović, an 18th century author and linguist). Recording the environment, I get offered a cigarette. 'Milena,' the girl says curiously. She is a bit shorter than I and has dark, long hair. 'Luc,' I answer. 'Ah, nisi odavde? (you are not from here?) Come with me and my friends,' she says, 'we'll have a coffee.' They all study at the Faculty of Philosophy, and he guys immediately ask what I think about the girls here. Withholding myself of a clear answer, the girls distance themselves from *fenseri* (from the English word fancy, meaning exactly the same) and their existential aim to follow the latest fashion. Unlike them, they do not listen to turbo-folk; popular Serbian folk music that is interrelated with the former as well as current socio-political conditions and their particular reference to the time of Milošević, when turbo-folk developed into a strong music industry. As *alternativci* (alternative people) they describe to me the growing dominance of turbo-folk as one of the evidences of the decline of Serbian high culture and the accompanying moral crisis that followed after the break-up of Yugoslavia. In Novi Sad, the music young people listen to bears clear implications of their identities and ideological likings. As Bucholtz (2002: 541) notes, musical cultures are 'founded on a politics of distinction, in which musical taste is tied not only to pleasure or social identity, but also to forms of power.' The opposite of mainstream culture therefore holds great importance.

Turbo-folk represents a part of Serbian national culture that the majority of rural origin can identify themselves with (Đurković 2004). What is important is that instead of being imported from the West, it is something that comes from *narod*, the people. As argued by Simić (2009), educated urbanities tend to regard national culture as primitive and backward.⁴¹ This relates to syncretism of cultural conditions that bring together many different models, remains from various conquerors throughout history, but also from recent post-WWII modernization; its uneven character has made the urban-rural division of Serbian society so important up to present time. Regarding this, Spasenić (2011: 77) notes that pluralism of cultural forms has in many respects been a wealth, while it also has caused great oppositions. Pagan, Slavic, Ottoman and Western influences have, as explained by Đurković (2004: 274), always co-existed in Serbian society from the 19th century, but it was particularly the Ottoman heritage that was unwelcomed by the Western-oriented cultural elite that spread Western culture at schools and universities. The same was true during Socialist times, when communists promoted Western culture and urban identities among its citizens: almost overnight they *changed* their citizens from peasants to city-dwellers, not in the last place by providing them apartments in vastly expanding cities and jobs in state-owned factories (Van de Port 1994).

⁴¹ I consider this similar to the difference between official and popular nationalism as described by Benedict Anderson (2006). The new European nationalisms of the 19th Century came into being because the bourgeoisie started reading, and this led to them imagining being part of a larger group of equals to which the masses had to be invited into. Old (popular) and creole nationalism used vernacular languages, while many bourgeois and state elites often swore to more 'sacred languages' (Anderson 2006: 37-87). With official nationalism the European Empires then tried holding the nationalist tide by choosing a vernacular and elevating it to the status of state language. The reason for this was not simply a reaction to nationalism, but for what could be seen as practical purposes. Ironically, most emperors that tried hard to make their empires work were the ones that ultimately sent their empires crumbling (ibid: 83-111).

Much has been written about ‘peasantization of the cities,’ (Denich 1969; Simić 1973, 1984; Spangler 1984) which gained more importance in the last twenty years and is connected to the discussion about turbo-folk presented by the students above. During the 1990s, all living in times of crises, old residents of Novi Sad felt threatened by tens of thousands of Serbian refugees coming from Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo that settled in Vojvodina (Dragojević 2008: 300). While communication between autochthonous *Novosađani* or *Vojvođani* (residents of Vojvodina) and those at the margins left a lot to be desired, the division between the urbanites and those from the rural peripheries was the most conspicuous one. And it still is. Students living or originally coming from outside Novi Sad are derogatorily called *seljaci*, meaning both peasant and churl.⁴² While there is often no resentment between them, they prefer to ignore each other.

The reason I elaborate extensively on this is firstly because I have been told it often. Secondly, this division has multiple connotations that resound in many debates and throughout public life. As Van de Port (1994) noted already twenty years ago, everybody in Novi Sad seems constantly busy drawing lines that make sure that Novi Sad ends up in what they consider here as the ‘civilized’ half of the world. They draw borders between Novi Sad and the surrounding rural areas, between Novi Sad and Belgrade, between Vojvodina and the Balkans, between the former Austro-Hungarian areas and the former Turkish-Ottoman areas, between Central-Europe and Eastern-Europe, between Tito’s Yugoslavia and the Communist East block, and between a ‘Western’ and an ‘Oriental’ influence sphere. They direct themselves loudly to the city, to Europe, to the former Austro-Hungarian areas, and they reject its respective opposites: the village, the Balkans and the Orient (Van de Port 1994: 64-65). This corresponds with the argument of this thesis: young people use certain stories to classify themselves as part of ‘Europe,’ the European community and urban society. They do so by emphasizing ‘multiculturality’ and ‘tolerance’. Some doubt whether this specific Novi Sad/Vojvodina identity is still alive and maybe is an old, romantic image that people use to distance themselves from everybody ‘*tamo dole*’ (down there, the rest of Serbia).

Referring back to the *fenseri* that Milena and their friends condemn, many people explained to me that because people in Serbia so badly want to be recognized as part of the European community and have the things their peers in Western-Europe have, relentless materialism overruns everything else and appearance means a great deal. ‘*Even if you don’t have anything, nobody can see it,*’ I was often told. Walking through the city, Branka explains: ‘*Young people here put so much effort in their looks... My sister and I developed a theory: we think it’s because they don’t really have anything else. They don’t have any work or money, so they also don’t have other things to occupy themselves with. Besides, they dream of a better life, the kind of life that pop stars and models have.*

⁴² There is something interesting about the use of the word ‘*seljak*’ that literally means peasant or person coming from a farm. Many of my friends in Novi Sad would not use it for somebody who comes from outside of Novi Sad, but rather for ‘some really fancy guy who is wearing a tight polo, having an iPhone and new, shiny sneakers.’ This is the more colloquial meaning; everybody has their own definition that they use for somebody opposite in style of them.

Too bad, however, that most of them take the wrong role models. They watch Pink TV, Big Brother and Zvezde Granda.⁴³ Video clips they watch consist of sluts, hookers, criminals and a lot of sex and nudity. To be honest, you see that on the streets too.’ In that sense, she shares Višnja’s opinion: ‘I am worried for this young generation: they grew up in the 1990s, in which war and conflict was the order of the day. Girls behave like hookers and guys like criminals, and their parents don’t care.’

Both Branka and Višnja make plans to leave the country. Their friends Đorđe and Rastko already lived abroad. While Branka went to Qatar, Đorđe to Equatorial Guinea and Rastko to the United States, Višnja is planning to go to Colombia. For them, simply leaving the country seems more important than moving to Western Europe, something that Miodrag is planning to do. Several times every week we would meet in *Mašinac*, the student café in the cellar of the building of the Faculty of Technical Science. Mostly we had positive conversations, but today he was negative:

‘I don’t like it here, Luc. I feel constantly forced, pushed and judged. I cannot live in this uniformity! Maybe I should go somewhere else, somewhere where I can express myself freely and don’t have to follow the rules that are forced upon me by my parents and society. I see it happening around me: people are unhappy. And once they are too deep in this forced uniformity, they cannot escape from it anymore in a normal way, so they start drinking and cheating. And then, of course, they get judged by society even more and become even unhappier. It’s a circle you cannot break, you see?’

He continues:

The biggest problem here is that we don’t know what will happen tomorrow – not politically, economically, socially, nor personally. (...) You have to understand that everybody has the same, so why talking about it all the time? Even friends are really often not open for this. As soon as you, as a guy, show your doubts, people will call you “different” and as soon as you’re different, not following the traditional path that society wants for you – like going to church, having a wife and children –you’re fucked: “different” here equals “bad.” Society decides for you, not individuals themselves.’

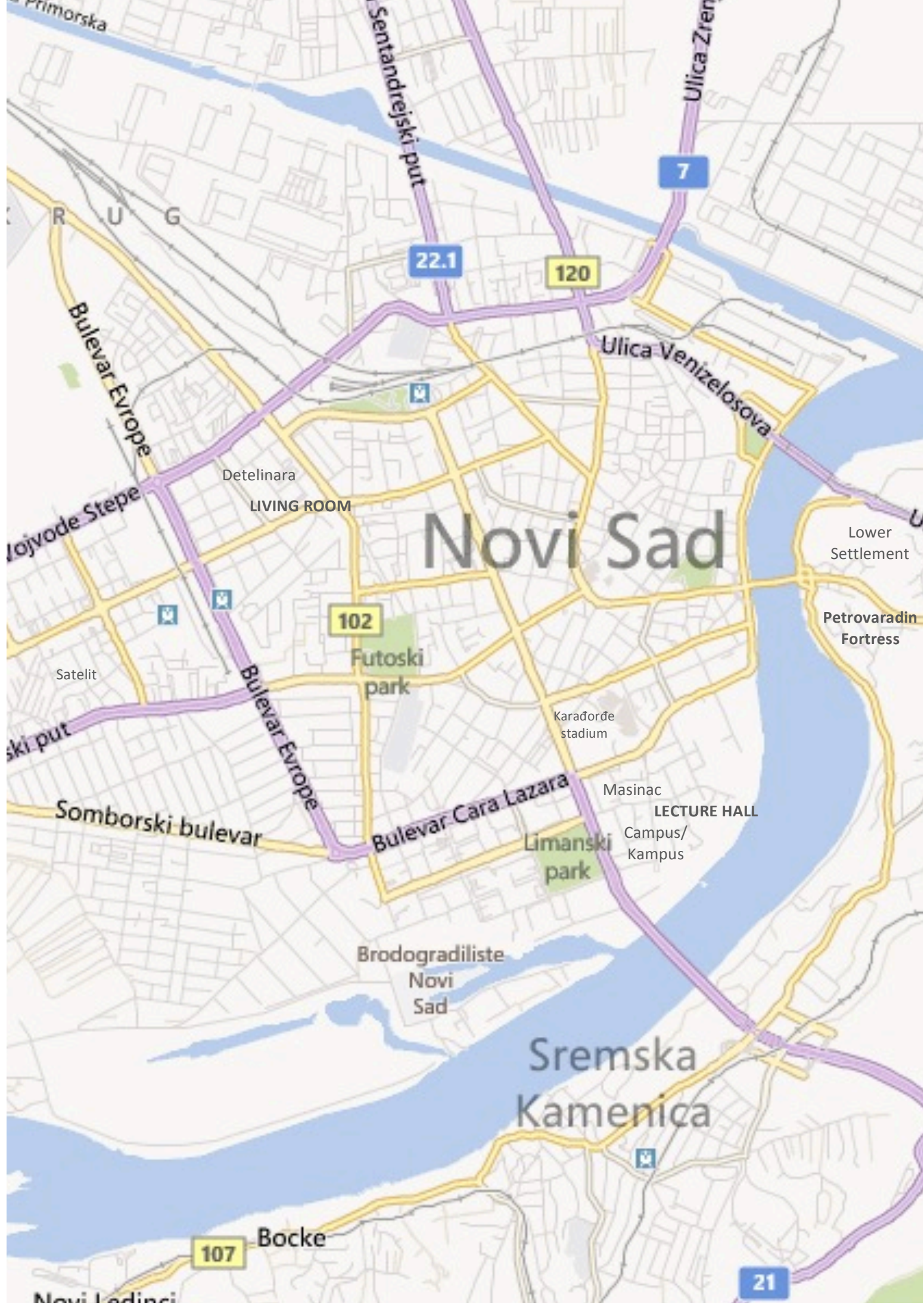
That is probably the reason why when I met one of those *fenseri* nobody claimed: ‘we are *fenseri*,’ or ‘we are turbo-folk youth.’ As this has come to constitute the norm, there is no need. Deviations, by contrast, are put into the foreground (cf. Spasenić 2011: 80). However, both mainstream and sub-culture have a world in common, and both have difficulties with finding more authenticity (cf. Ghorashi 2002; Heijne 2011), i.e. living in a less ambiguous reality, where essential normative distinctions are maintained and followed (cf. Van de Port 1994). The search for authenticity exhibits traits of nostalgia. But nostalgia is not without risks: it can lead to sentimentality and kitsch (Buruma

⁴³ *Zvezde Granda* is a folk, pop-folk and turbo-folk singing contest like *Idols* or *X-factor*, broadcasted live on commercial television throughout the Balkans by the Serbian Pink TV. *Radio Televizija Pink* is a popular, private owned, national TV network in Serbia. It is the leading commercial station and has gained a strong reputation for its entertainment programming, only broadcasting movies, American sitcoms, dramas and Latin *telenovelas*, as well as locally produced sitcoms and talent shows such as *Zvezde Grande*. The last years they are putting on a slew of reality and quiz shows, like *Big Brother*, *Survivor* and a dozen of local variants of it. RTV Pink has gained a large following of both admirers and critics. Most of my research participants criticize it, especially over its programming content which they consider light, kitschy, too commercial, sensationalist and vapid. However, they are not alone in this. According to the Open Society Institute, which monitors telecommunications independence within the European Union, as a result of private intrusion in the television industry, Pink have ‘resorted increasingly to low-quality entertainment and sensationalist newscasts.’ See also: <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/>

2012). Musing about the past withholds people from seeing reality clearly: purity is often fiction, but its power stems from the togetherness of the collective memory (Taussig 1987).

Considering this, Antonić (2008) explains that the question of what social, political and cultural norms should dominate in Serbia became the object of a 'cultural war.'⁴⁴ I will unravel this war on different ways in the following chapters, starting with diving deeper into what socialization processes students go through at their faculties. From there on, I will expand the analysis to different settings in young people's social environment, beginning with the home setting and the church.

⁴⁴ Of which the schisms between the educated elite and the uneducated *narod*, the opposition between the nationalists and anti-nationalist factions, but also between the pro- and anti-European factions are good examples. As I will explain in the next chapters, there is *coexistence* between both de- and re-traditionalization.



Novi Sad

LIVING ROOM

Detelinara

102

Futoski park

Karadžorđe stadium

Masinac

LECTURE HALL

Campus/
Kampus

Sremska
Kamenica

Brodogradiliste
Novi
Sad

Bocke

107

21

22.1

120

7

Satelit

Lower
Settlement

Petrovaradin
Fortress

Bulevar Evrope

Ujvođe Stepe

Bulevar Evrope

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Somborski bulevar

Sentandrejski put

Ulica Zren

Ulica Venizelosova

R U G

ski put

Novi Ledinci

Од амфитеатра до дневног боравка / from the lecture hall to the living room

A considerable sense of empowerment exists in the act of thinking through, talking and being listened to. In a world where young people explained having the feeling that ‘everybody talks but nobody listens,’ we did. Our conversations always took place as if it were just a random conversation, even if I sometimes recorded them. To get to the stories that I wanted to ‘catch,’ they had to feel unrestrained and free, so that they could express thoughts spontaneously and sincerely, not thinking too much about my research or me. We would therefore always meet at their favourite places, places they knew or at the campus, which also brought us closer together: to some extent, we all had the same role⁴⁵ – on this research we were working together.

In Novi Sad, stages of studying are similar to any other university in Europe and they are implementing the ‘Bologna system.’⁴⁶ Many things are also different, distinguishing their reality from other students in Europe, for example by the fact that they grew up in the aftermath of war and crises during a ten-year period. This makes the life of young *Novosađani* more complicated, as their identities come into being amidst (extra) contradictions resulting from the recent past. There is no doubt that they are affected by the deterioration of Serbian society and the whole of the post-Yugoslav region (Mihailović 2003). The ensuing sense of isolation (Greenberg 2011) has been pervasive for a long time and still affects young people I spoke with. But does this turn them into slave-like captives of ideologies? No. Rather, they reflect intricate dynamics between past and present in the form of previous and subsequent visions of the world. I clarify this by looking closely at the relationship between ‘old’ and ‘new’ in the lecture hall, at home and in the church – three places where the coexistence of de- and re-traditionalization (cf. Heelas et al. 1996) can be noticed.

Neither directly nor systematically is the recent past brought up at schools. ‘*Serbian history ends with the Second World War,*’ young people explain.⁴⁷ Sometimes they do speak about it with their teachers, parents or friends, but they are not taught to think in *one* single way about their recent history. Dissensions in the opinions on the current state of the matter tend to follow the lines of divisions between rural and urban, traditional and modern, nationalist and anti-nationalist, Eastern and Western, to name just some of them, which all merge in Serbian society, and so too in Novi Sad. These oppositions predate Yugoslavia’s break-up, but acquire additional importance and meaning with the instabilities caused by the recent wars (cf. Dimitrijević 2000). Similarly, there are ongoing discussions about a forestalled process of modernization and concomitant re-

⁴⁵ Especially when at the campus, because even though it was their university, faculty or campus, I myself was a student as well; we lived in similar worlds.

⁴⁶ The Bologna system is the result of a series of ministerial meetings and agreements between European countries to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications, completed with the signing of the Bologna declaration by Education ministers from 29 European countries in 1999, thus contributing to European integration. See also: <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/> and http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/bologna_en.htm.

⁴⁷ As noted before, most people are really well informed about their history, especially medieval times. This is not true for the recent history, that – as this quote explains – tends to end after the Second World War.

traditionalization, as a result of nationalist politics of the 1990s (cf. Vujović 2003). Apart from this, like in other Balkan countries, Serbian society is built on informal social networks (Todorova 2009), making corruption and nepotism common, everyday stuff. To understand how these processes affect individuals in the course of their lives, let us return to the university premises.



I meet Marko at twelve in *Mašinac*. As usual, before going to the lecture we have coffee. He studies Political Science and today there is a lecture about the Serbian political system. When discussing the people that study at his faculty, I remember the comparison he made with the traditional Serbian stew. What happened at his faculty I saw as the involvement of young people in the process of identity-making that is ‘not yet’ (cf. Spasenić 2011) – a complex open-ended socialization of which an important part is (university) education – or, to stick to Marko’s own words: still boiling on the stove. As Berger and Luckmann (1967: 138) note, new members of society are introduced into the life of their communities in stages or, as they say, in terms of primary and secondary socialization. The relationship between the two designates between the social world of the significant others first imprinted on the individual’s consciousness on the one hand, and the subsequent acquisition of role-specific knowledge and ‘subworlds’ or ‘partial realities’ on the other (cf. Schieffelin and Ochs 1986; Erchak 1992). Pieces of knowledge obtained in secondary socialization are less certain in the sense that they are relatively easily challenged and exchanged (Berger and Luckmann 1967: 142; Spasenić 2011: 95). In general, chances of finding a job immediately after High School are few. Therefore, many young people attend universities. Although often described as a so-called ‘prolonged youth’ or ‘postponed adulthood’ (Divac 2009; cf. Hendry and Cloep 2010) and commonly viewed as the after-effects of recent social transformations, the same tendency is visible in other parts of Europe due to current social and economical situations (Hendry and Cloep 2010: 169).

After an hour of sipping our espresso, we take a seat in a half-full lecture hall with about sixty other students and three big, closed windows, listening to what the lecturer has to say. No questions are asked. During the break, Marko and his friends explain that the professor-centered model is still dominant in Serbia: authorities are supposed to transfer knowledge that is to be reiterated by students. Students’ results therefore largely depend on self-discipline and individual skills. *‘This is why almost nobody gets good grades,’* Marko laughs, *‘and why we all study for like seven years.’* During workshops this is the same: the professor pronounces sentences verbatim, as formulated in the book, and students reiterate facts, definitions and explanations, even if they may not always know exactly what they mean. What I saw happening here and in other classes I attended was the very act of repetition: the creation of habitual doing of things, and not acquiring a more profound understanding why something is the way it is or how things are interconnected.

Learning by heart eventually achieves assimilation. According to Spasenić (2011: 96), underlying this is ‘the ability to take on the perspective of the other, which does not imply that one in effect reads minds, but, more significantly, the capacity to anticipate and imitate the behaviour of the other.’ In line with Hammersley (1990: 25), my research participants admit that it is not a situation in which one can think freely, question the questions, or oppose anything: it is a way to make them ‘culturally competent’ and prepare them for society, where one finds oneself in obedience to persons, rules, systems and structures. This exemplifies different expectations attributed to the positions that individuals occupy in social relationships, as explained by Stryker and Burke (2000) who define identities in terms of ‘internalized role expectations.’ Regarding this, Babad (2009:5) speaks of social norms as implicit, hidden and undefined, contrary to rules that are ‘delivered in explicit and exact terms.’ While the teacher’s authority and respect are givens, they are at the same time constantly created and maintained.

Why is this important? Because the ‘cultural war’ and the ‘(moral) decline of Serbian high culture’ is related to this, something that becomes more apparent when we leave the university setting and expand our view to other social situations. In the few conversations I had with professors, they explained to me that they wanted to be good role-models for their students and disapproved the contemporary role-models of Serbian youth which, according to them, was problematic because the young are internalizing wrong values.⁴⁸ Joksimović (2003: 174) understands these so-called wrong values as ‘the individualist-egoist orientation’ that has infiltrated the whole of society. Likewise, Popadić (2003) maintains that media nowadays exert far greater influence on the values of Serbian youth than education. He speaks of a ‘crisis of authority’ and observes that while former role models of Yugoslav youth came from the political and educational sphere, after the break-up of Yugoslavia they are now replaced by public personalities from the worlds of sports and entertainment.⁴⁹ While Popadić (2003: 199-200) notes that the trend among youth to distance themselves from the realm of politics is a phenomenon present in many other European societies too, Walker and Stephenson (2010: 523) claim that youth in post-socialist societies have become ‘metaphor for a collapsing society.’ One could however also add that these developments go hand in hand with spreading Western consumerism (Simić 2009: 93).

The question is how this influences young people’s identity-formation. Considering this, an important realization should be made: my research informants state that being a student is far from negative. Rather, they see it as a time in which they do not have any worries. According to Branka, *‘as a student, you feel happy and fulfilled. Before it’s all about family and after it’s all about work, but*

⁴⁸ Many people complain that Serbian children nowadays like real values. Because they only watch television programs such as Big Brother and the Serbian variant of Idols, and they listen to music that is only about sex, cheating, money, cars and gangsters, plus the fact that they grew up in a post-war society marked by transition from Socialism to Capitalism, makes all of this a ‘dangerous mix.’

⁴⁹ A good example of this is the popular Serbian tennis player Novak Đokovic, who is always and everywhere in Serbian media. Many of my research informants made jokes about him, stating that he is more important than the president. Others also told me: *‘He foresees Serbs with pride that people lost.’*

during your student-time you are free: you make your own choices and just have fun.’ This is another reason that students tend to take their time, but also the reason that many young people eventually stay in Serbia, including Branka and Đorđe. They tell me that they do not really have a choice, but that the choice that is offered to them is not that bad: if they *really* wanted to leave, they would have left, for example to their families in Bosnia. They also admit that it is something typically Serbian or Balkan to constantly complain about everything. Đorđe’s says:

‘That ever-present pessimism among people, young ones especially. I have been "fighting" that for quite some time. I hate it when they bitch about problems but are too lazy to change it: do something to be better off!’

At three the workshop is done and everybody goes home. ‘Do you want to join?’ Marko asks. ‘We’re having lunch at four, my family would like it if you came.’ Marko and his family live in *Detelinara*, a neighbourhood consisting almost exclusively of big socialist apartment blocks of which many have small supermarkets, bakeries and *trafike*⁵⁰ on the ground floor. On the third floor of an apartment block on *Braće Popović ulica* (the street of Brother Popović, a Serbian military commander in two major uprisings against the Ottoman Empire) Marko’s mother opens the door. It is a small apartment in which Marko lives with his parents and two younger cousins. ‘Their father died after he was mobilized to fight in Croatia in 1992 and their mother died from cancer’ Marko explains, ‘so my parents take care of them.’ The living room is equipped with two small couches and a big carpet on the floor. On the walls there is a painting of the Petrovaradin fortress and one of a monastery on *Fruška Gora*.⁵¹ Marko’s father works at the post office, a stable, state-owned enterprise, meaning that you are most often sure of your salary. His mother is a housewife.

According to Berger and Luckmann (1967) ‘cultural continuity’ is made possible through primary socialization that children experience within the family. Memory and identity have relevance in this context insofar as the personal memories are derived from family life, i.e. the experiences of it that turn into memories, are pivotal to the self (Spasenć 2011: 176). As I observed, the role of family in the process of mediation of socio-cultural meanings between an individual and society is very important. Many Serbian researchers (Rajković 2002; Nikolić-Ristanović 2003; Malešević 2004, 2005; Milić 2004; Minić 2004; Tomanović 2004; Tomanović and Ignjatović 2006; Pavičević 2007; Divac 2009) agree that their society has been experiencing ‘re-traditionalization’ (cf. Heelas et al. 1996). This is most visible in the domain of family life, like that of Marko. Against the backdrop of the socialist project of modernizing the families of Yugoslavia, current circumstances are often interpreted as a setback. However, it is important to note that while re-traditionalization suggests ‘falling back into the traditional,’ it does not simply imply that the actual conditions are the same as

⁵⁰ Small newsstands where they also sell sodas, snacks and cigarettes, spread throughout the whole city and sometimes totally dominating the street view.

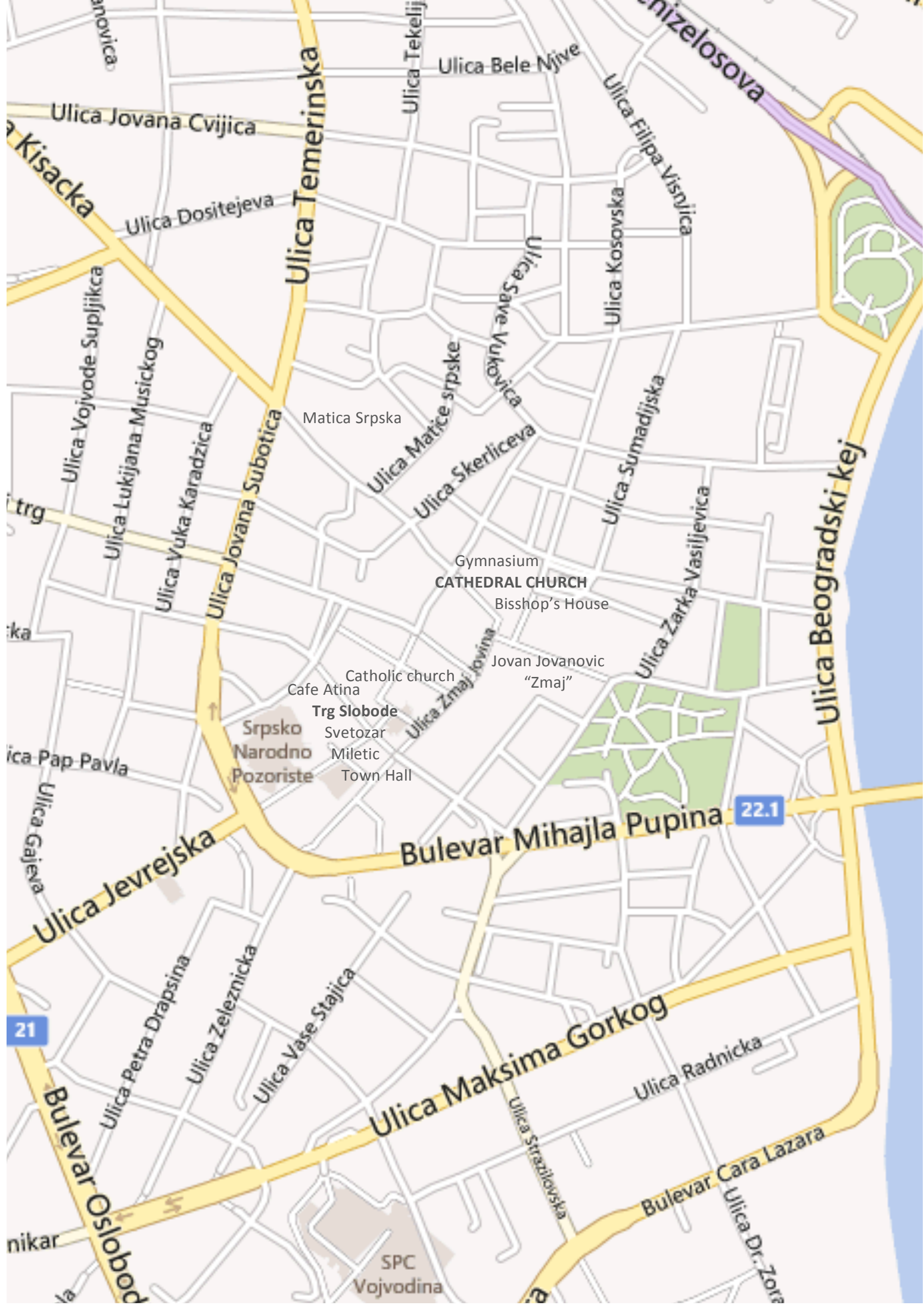
⁵¹ A big mountain just south of Novi Sad, the only hilly place in the flat lands of Vojvodina and a popular place for hiking or barbecuing, especially on the first of May. First of May is a traditional spring holiday in many cultures, coinciding with International Worker’s Day. In Serbia, this is a left-over from Socialist Times, but probably one of the most popular public holidays: everybody goes barbecuing with friends or family in nature.

they were in previous times (Heelas et al. 1996). Rather, it is 'an adjustment tradition to a new context rather than true retrogression' (Blagojević 2003: 168). According to Kostić et al. (2004: 37) and Gavrilović (2005: 201), the contemporary family has demonstrated resilience and vitality, acting as a rampart of stability in crisis. Nevertheless, many young people admit to having difficulties with this. This emphasises socialization's dialectical character: the world is not just put into young people's heads but created in concert with social agents. This is why Berger and Luckmann (1967: 130) note that 'we not only live in the same world,' we also 'participate in each other's being.' The perceptions of family indicate its centrality, both as an arena of primary socialization, but also as the domain of social life that continues to stand firmly when everything else is unstable.

Just as Divac (2009) and Greenberg (2011) observe, many young people link this with moral and cultural decline of society. According to many it is also a reaction to current pornographic, chauvinist and xenophobic popular culture (cf. Jansen 2005; Kronja 2007). Since choice of styles in music, clothing and hair marks where one stands politically, ideologically and culturally, Kronja (2008: 103) speaks of 'pop-politics', implying that class, political and social struggle unfolds within the realm of popular culture, especially in so-called 'transitional societies.' While many young people enjoy their lives in Novi Sad and don't have too many concerns yet, they feel that while everybody in Europe is gaining more freedom, their options are getting less. They also notice re-traditionalization in nationalist awakenings and growing influence of the Serbian Orthodox Church (cf. Malešević 2005; Blagojević 2009). Some maintain that a typical Serbian family no longer exists, while others suggest that there are now two types of families: the modern European and the traditional one. Young people I spoke with prefer the first one, but see some of their peers struggling breaking away from the second. Ana, whom according to herself grew up in a traditional family, explains:

'Our whole world has come down to our family circle in which we are closely united. (...) But everybody is enclosed inside these high walls of our micro-world. This makes it difficult to communicate with people outside of our own family, let alone understand and accept them. The only moments I get out of these walls is when I go to the faculty or to the church.'

University, family and church are strongly interrelated in the sense that on all three places re-traditionalization plays a decisive role, affecting both individuals as the whole of society. However, the Serbian Orthodox church is related to other issues as well. These will be dealt with now.



Ulica Temerinska

Ulica Bele Njive

Ulica Filipa Vistića

Ulica Jovana Cvijica

Ulica Dositejeva

Ulica Tekelij

Ulica Kisacka

Ulica Vojvode Suplijkca

Ulica Lukijana Musickog

Matica Srpska

Ulica Matice srpske

Ulica Save Vukovica

Ulica Kosovska

Ulica Jovana Subotica

Ulica Skerliceva

Ulica Sumadijska

Ulica Beogradski kej

Gymnasium
CATHEDRAL CHURCH
Bishop's House

Catholic church
Cafe Atina

Jovan Jovanovic
"Zmaj"

Trg Slobode
Srpsko Narodno
Pozoriste
Svetozar Miletic
Town Hall

Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 22.1

Ulica Jevrejska

Ulica Pap Pavla

Bulevar Oslobođenika

Ulica Petra Drapsina

Ulica Zeleznicka

Ulica Vase Stajica

Ulica Maksima Gorkog

Ulica Radnicka

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Ulica Dr. Zora

SPC
Vojvodina

У цркви / at the church

'St. Vitus Day! Like an eternal flame burning in our hearts, the Battle of Kosovo remains the truth.
Wherever I may go, I will always return to you. Who can tear Kosovo away from my soul!'

Extract from the 1989 patriotic folk song *Vidovdan* (St. Vitus Day, see **Appendix I**).⁵²

On Sunday morning March 17 I join Aleksandar, Boris, Jovan and Bojan to *Saborna Crkva* (Cathedral Church) in the old centre of Novi Sad. They all live with their parents in the old neighbourhood of *Podbara*. Aleksandar (24) and Jovan (26) both study medicine. Bojan (23) does administration for a bus company and Boris (19), Bojan's younger brother, '*samo bleji*' (is just chilling). The Cathedral Church is situated between Novi Sad's most prestigious Gymnasium and *Vladičanski Dvor* (the Bishop's Palace). While I expected predominantly old people, many young people gathered within the gates. I am explained that it is old-fashioned to be an atheist and modern (i.e. post-Socialist) to go to the church. According to them Serbian people have always been religious, but were dechristianized during socialist times. According to most of my research participants this religious quest is nothing more than a 'fashion fad', but these guys claim the opposite: '*Youth in Serbia wants to believe in something eternal. Politicians have told us so many lies and made us believe false ideologies. Christianity is our escape.*' Bojan says: '*I hope that everybody will rediscover our original faith and build a society that is based on orthodox values and a big role for the Church.*' Aleksandar adds: '*We are "sandwiched" between Europe and Asia, between West and Orient, and have always been mixed with others. Now we have to find our own spiritual core so that our country can become healthy again.*' I remember the famous letter of Saint Sava, the first Archbishop of the independent Serbian Orthodox Church and patron of the Serbian education system (Merill 1999), at the beginning of the 13th century:

'At first we were confused. The East thought that we were West, while the West considered us to be East. Some of us misunderstood our place in the clash of currents, so they cried that we belong to neither side, and others that we belong exclusively to one side or the other. We are doomed by fate to be the East of the West, and the West of the East, to acknowledge only heavenly Jerusalem beyond us, and here on earth – no one.'

There is no harm in Aleksandar's words. However, in Vojvodina, ethnic Serbs only make up 70 per cent of the population. Cities like Subotica have other ethnic majorities and in some villages no ethnic Serbs live at all. I ask how an Orthodox society would work out, but then the mood becomes serious: '*People here have always been Christians, but we have been screwed by Western culture, especially by Americans. They want to rule the whole world and they attacked us because we didn't want to give up the fight.*' Aleksandar continues: '*No offence to you, Luc, but I cannot say anything*

⁵² An important Serbian orthodox religious holiday and a memorial day to Prince Lazar and the Serbian holy martyrs who gave their lives to defend their faith during the epic Battle of Kosovo against the Ottoman Empire on June 28, 1389.

positive about Western culture nowadays: it's materially full, but morally empty. It only consists of soap operas, Coca-Cola and McDonalds. People cheat and everything is commercial.' When I ask him how this is different in Serbia, Boris backs his friend: *'He's right: we want to have the life that people in the West lead, with all possibilities and chances, but you people don't live, you only work and consume.'* Aleksandar continues: *'What kind of civilization is it when it uses bombs to solve problems? They did the same here as they did in Libya, and now our countries are fucked.'*

Suddenly I feel a hand on my shoulder. *'Da li ste novi ovde?'* (Are you new here?), a young priest dressed in a long, black cassock asks me. When I explain why I am there, he tells me that the doctrine of the Orthodox Church is identical to the Serbian nation, as Saint Sava proclaimed in 1219: *'The Orthodox church of Serbia has always been based upon local traditions, and exactly those traditions have been destroyed in the past years.'*⁵³ *'They burned our churches and cloisters, and danced on our graves if they did not destroy them, in the heart of our country!'* The Serbian Orthodox Church sees itself as a suffering church and proposes the Serbian people as victims. This keeps them under the spell of myths from the past (Van de Port 1994; Judah 2009). As Prince Lazar⁵⁴ already spoke on the eve of combat on the field of the blackbirds, *Kosovo Polje*, the real fight is not about the earthly but about the heavenly lands:

'If the sword, if wounds, or if the darkness of death comes to us, we accept them sweetly for Christ and for the godliness of our homeland. It is better to die in battle than to live in shame. Better it is for us to accept death than to offer our shoulders to the enemy. (...) Suffering begets glory, and labour leads to peace.'

In all of European history it is impossible to find any comparison with the effect of this battle to the Serbian national psyche: *'The battle changed the course of Serbian history, but (...) its real, lasting legacy lays in the myths and legends which came to be woven around it, enabling it to shape the nation's historical and national consciousness'* (Judah 2009: 30, cf. Hoogbergen 1992). Every young person I met could tell me about it and every time I heard something new. While today this battle is written and talked about as the great defeat, the end of the Kingdom and the beginning centuries of Ottoman bondage and oppressions by other countries, none of this is actually true. But that is exactly the point: it is the power of the story itself that is of crucial importance. The fact that all Serbs share this story is the reason it still being heard and told today. With the breakup of their country still going on, it furthermore remains important. According to Stefan, this is the reason that most nationalists are religious, and that most religious people seem nationalistic. He explains that religious authorities (all, not only Orthodox) nowadays get more attention in media and at schools; therefore they get some kind of indirect say in state affairs (Seierstad 2004: 100).

⁵³ He is referring to the territory Kosovo and all the violations that took place there.

⁵⁴ Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović was a medieval Serbian ruler, who was able to create the largest and most powerful state on the territory of the disintegrated Serbian Empire, with full support by the Serbian Church. He found his death on *Kosovo Polje* confronting an invading Ottoman army on the 15th of June 1389. Although the battle was tactically inconclusive, the heavy losses were devastating only for the Serbs. Later the Ottomans occupied Serbia. Prince Lazar is seen as an important figure for Serbian history and culture, and his coat of arms, the white bird on a red shield, is displayed on Serbia's current national flag.

At that moment the church bells ring, telling us that the Divine Liturgy is about to start. When we enter, my eyes have to get used to the darkness before I can see all the beautiful icons that cover the walls. Some are in Baroque style, but most are Byzantine. Baroque icons have friendly faces with red lips and rose cheeks, painted in smooth and round shapes. Some ride horses or look like warriors. The Byzantine icons are painted in gold and deep blue. Different from the baroque ones, they have almond-shaped eyes, looking you straight in the eyes; without any emotion or romantic details to distract you. Right in between a painting of Saint Sava on my left side and a statue of Holy Mary on my right I stop for a moment. There are candles everywhere, spreading a warm smell of wax throughout the cold church. In front of the altar there is a crucifix with next to it a painting of Jesus. Near the chairs on the left side, we stop. The liturgy takes two hours. Six priests walk consecutively in procession: they take the Bible, kiss it, put it down, make a cross and kiss it again. They use various relics, sing and pray. Then they leave the church, having every visitor follow them.

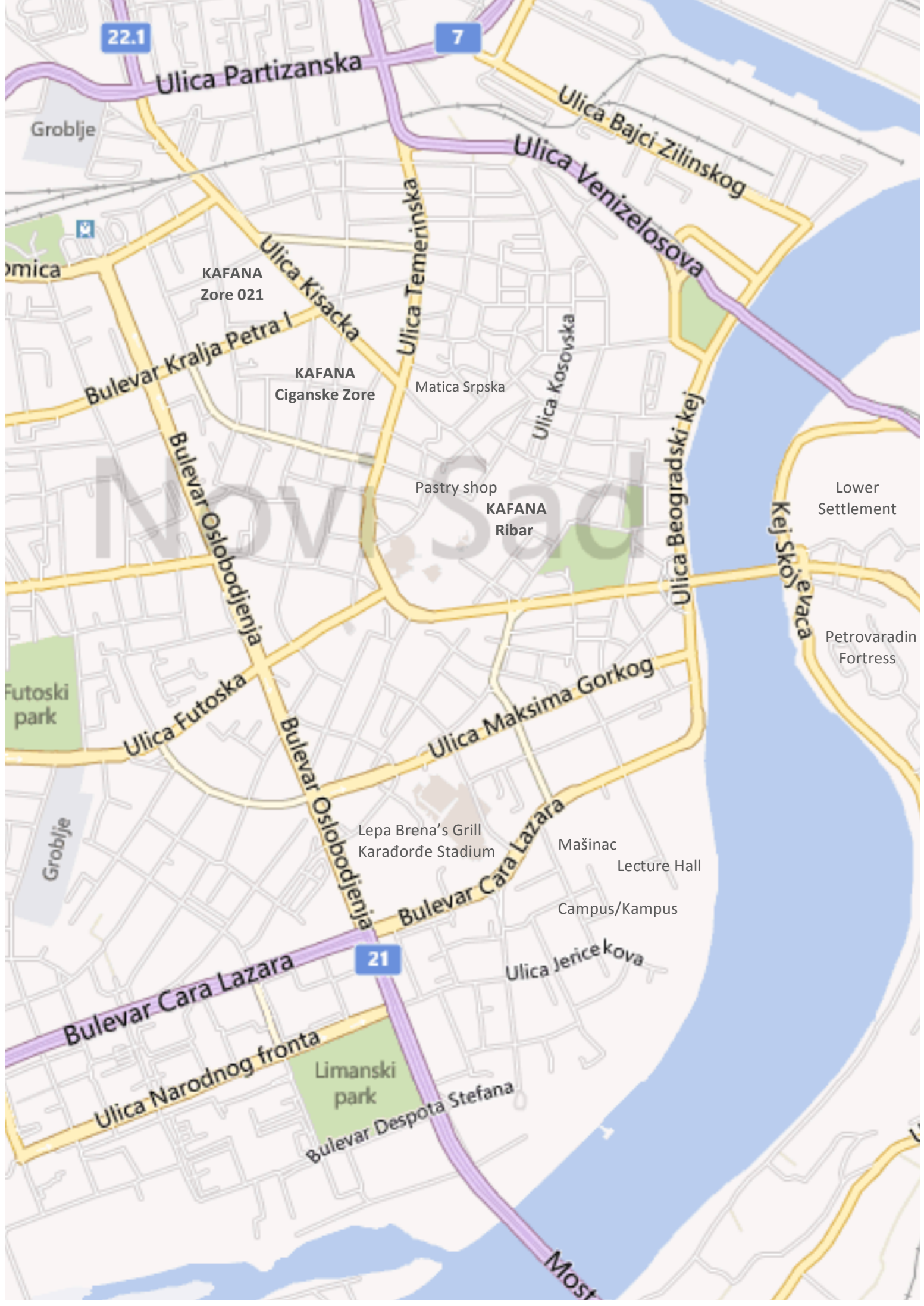
Outside I tell the guys that the mythical and spiritual character especially impressed me, but that I could not understand anything of what they were saying. *'That is because they mostly speak old Serbian. Nobody really understands it, we just know it; it's our tradition'* Bojan reassures me. Similar to Anderson's (2006) conceptualization of 'sacred languages,' they explain that the nation has to be understood by aligning it with the cultural systems that preceded it: the religious community and the dynastic realm.⁵⁵ Because there is time left before lunch is served, we decide to have coffee. We follow the curve in the road and pass both the Bishop's Palace and the statue of Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, one of the best-known Serbian poets but physician by profession (1833-1904). Walking down the street that also carries his name, we arrive at *Trg Slobode* (Liberty Square) of which the Town Hall and the big Catholic Church dominate its outlook. *'Luc, Luc!'* Bojan shouts, pointing to the huge statue of Svetozar Miletić (1826-1901) in middle of the square. *'You know what is funny? He was the major of Novi Sad and political leader of the Vojvodinian Serbs. Do you see what he's doing?'* I answer that he clenches his fist. *'Exactly, right at the Catholic Church!'* They laugh. I wonder why I never noticed this before.

We decide to sit in café *Atina* (Athens). After some five minutes Aleksandar asks me if I know what date it is. I have no idea. Boris answers that it is the 17th of March: exactly nine years ago Kosovo Albanese destroyed about thirty churches and cloisters, comparing it to 'Kristallnacht' in Nazi Germany. *'They were all set on fire. Fresco's dating back to the twelfth century disappeared, crucifixes were damaged and icons dishonored. They killed around fifty Serbs and hurt many others,'*

⁵⁵ This usage of language is similar to what Anderson (2006) calls 'sacred languages' in his chapter 'Cultural Roots': while the religious community incorporated 'great sacral cultures', by the late Middle Ages they began a decline. Two reasons Anderson gives are the explorations of the non-European (New) World that expanded geographical and cultural horizons, as well as the gradual waning of the sacred languages and their replacement with the vernacular (Anderson 2006: 12-19). From the 17th century, also the automatic legitimacy of the sacred monarchy in Western Europe began to decline. As late as 1914, dynastic states were still in a majority, they were already using the idea of the 'nation' rather than the sacred principle as a source of legitimacy (ibid: 19-22). In the Church, many of these old, sacred remains are still used, like here the old Church-Serbian during the holy liturgy I attended.

Aleksandar says. *'But you probably have never heard of this, have you?'* I admit that I only know because I looked it up myself, not because it was extensively in the Dutch news. They tell me that after Serbian troops left Kosovo in June 1999, about 150 churches and monasteries have been destroyed, as well as ten thousand religious objects. They continue: *'Islam is Europe's biggest problem. If we don't attack now, it'll spread throughout the whole of Europe and cause many problems, starting in the West. Didn't you see what happened here?'*

Serbian media almost never covers Serbian mistakes. When it does, it mostly pushes it aside as 'pro-Western' propaganda or lies spread by the opposition. Serbs are always victims, never perpetrators. They are simply misjudged and misunderstood. Most stories about this were narrated in *kafanas*, the local, traditional version of cafés. That is why the next chapter takes place there, providing a deeper understanding of everything that is said until now.



22.1

7

Ulica Partizanska

Ulica Bajci Zilinskog

Ulica Venizelosova

Ulica Temerinska

Ulica Kisacka

Bulevar Kralja Petra I

KAFANA
Zore 021

KAFANA
Ciganske Zore

Matica Srpska

Ulica Kosovska

Pastry shop

KAFANA
Ribar

Lower
Settlement

Bulevar Oslobođenja

Ulica Beogradski kej

Kej Skopljevac

Petrovaradin
Fortress

Futoski
park

Ulica Futoska

Ulica Maksima Gorkog

Bulevar Oslobođenja

Lepa Brena's Grill

Karadžorđe Stadium

Mašinac

Lecture Hall

Campus/Kampus

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Ulica Jerice kova

21

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Ulica Narodnog fronta

Limanski
park

Bulevar Despota Stefana

Most

У кафани / in the kafana

'In this wide world, there is no mercy. The kafana is my destiny. The kafana is my truth.'

Extract from the popular 1990 song *Kafana je moja sudbina* (The kafana is my destiny) by Toma Zdravković.

Dobrica Ćosić is one of Serbia's greatest novelist and intellectuals of the previous century that in the most critical period, end 1980s to beginning 1990s, became a prominent authoritative figure in Serbian political life and its national movement (Dragović-Soso 2002). For a short time, after the break-up of Yugoslavia, he even became president of its leftovers.⁵⁶ Initially Ćosić was a convinced Yugoslavist who argued fiercely 'against the parochial interest and particularism of political constituencies and cultures' (Spasenić 2011: 524). However, in 1991 he made a big turn and became one of the most influential advocates for the unification of Serb 'ethnic territories' (Budding 2004: 200). Serbs came to see him as the 'purveyor of truth, consolidation and renewal' (Miller 1999: 524). It is important to note that Ćosić was not just a politician (like Milošević, who gradually absorbed Ćosić's ideas), but also a renowned writer who was not solely interested in political power.

Serbian students learn much about him. In most high schools they teach his books as well as his poems. In his work Ćosić often addresses Serbia's failure to become a modern nation, first consigning this to the uneven process of modernization in Yugoslavia, but later to the cultural and political divisions of the Serbian people, that he regards imposed by others (Budding 2004: 187). While most Serbian researchers agree with him on his first stance (e.g. Đurković 2004; Simić 2009, Spasenić 2011), his second stance is a paradox: Ćosić builds his political career by arguing to put aside all divisions and takes for granted that all Serbs share the same interest, while as a president of Yugoslavia he realizes that the political interest of the Serbs he wants to unite are not compatible. He fails to recognize that disunity is not a predicament but a reality of any political body, including a nation (Spasenić 2011: 128-129; cf. Wimmer 2002).

Similarly, he pleaded for 'cultural regeneration' of the Serbian community that needed to attend to its history, culture and democratic tradition in order to create a sense of cultural identity and continuity with the past (Miller 2004: 165). Thus, in order to become modern, Serbs needed to become aware of their cultural and historical roots that communism estranged them from. Considering this, Spasenić (2011: 130) writes:

'The roots of social problems and phenomena may seem firm and unequivocal, but most often they are not. Ćosić's life and work indicate the ambiguous nature of the past and the ambiguous ways in which it is perceived – two processes that are difficult to keep apart.'

⁵⁶ This being Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Vojvodina.

I consider this important for three reasons. First of all, because most students read Ćosić's work during high school and his book *Koreni* (Roots, 1954) towards the end of the last year. Secondly, because Ćosić became Slobodan Milošević's spin-doctor and helped raise Karadžić to leadership of the Bosnian Serbs, but also because it is exactly these years (the 1990s) that burden young *Novosađani* today. Thirdly, Boyer and Lomnitz (2005) but also Anderson (2006) and Gellner (2009), though more indirectly, argue that nations and nationalism can be analysed by looking more closely at the intellectuals who have come to embody collective social processes. Therefore, Ćosić's life constitutes a suitable background for my dealing with collective experiences, *belonging* and identity: while much attention should be for the individual character of identity, emphasizing a great deal of choice agency (Driessen & Otto 2000; Eriksen 2002; Sen 2006), the past of the forebears is said to be collective, just as being a Serb is a collective identity. Memories about war, isolation or a repressive regime seem individual, but are understood and acted upon collectively (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1978; Taussig 1987; Thoden van Velzen and Van Wetering 1988; Van de Port 1994; Thammawat et al. 2009). Neither identity, nor the past, nor memory is a fixed entity with uncontested collective meanings. In analyzing this, I see the *kafana* as an important social and ethnographic setting.



After eating *pljeskavica* at Lepa Brena's Grill on *Bulevar Oslobođenja*,⁵⁷ Aleksa, Aleksandar and I went for *kolači* (cakes) at the old-fashioned, Albanian *postlastičarnica* (pastry shop) near *Laze Telečkog*, the main café and clubbing street in the old town. After the best *voćni krem pita* (typical Yugoslavian cream pie dessert with fruits) they took me to their favourite *kafana Ribar* (fisherman) in *Dunavska Ulica* (Danube street); one of the main pedestrian streets in the old town, just around the corner of the Gymnasium and the Bishop's house. From outside, it is almost impossible to notice the undecorated façade and the worn out, brown door in the middle of all the shops and boutiques that decorate their shop windows with bright colours and lights. While their shelves are always full, their shops are often empty. Buying there is only possible for a small, rich part of Novi Sad's society. Totally different is the situation in *Ribar*; it is packed with people. Around wooden tables, groups of friends of all ages and genders sit on brown wooden and white plastic chairs, or on empty crates of beer. On the table there are red-white chequered tablecloths. The originally white painted walls are yellow, probably due to the thick cloud of smoke that is the main decoration of the *kafana*. On the side, a mirror with a missing corner and two old paintings of the Petrovaradin fortress adorn the room. From the ceiling, two light bulbs hang. The floor is made up of obviously fake-marble tiles, also

⁵⁷ *Pljeskavica* is a traditional Serbian patty dish made from a mixture of ground meats, often served as a hamburger in thick *lepinja* with lots of *kajmak* and onion. *Lepinja* is a round pocket bread widely consumed in many Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan cuisines, originally coming to Serbia under Ottoman times. *Lepinja*, or pita bread, is created by steam, which puffs up the dough. As the bread cools and flattens, a pocket is left in the middle. *Kajmak* is a Turkish and Balkan dairy product, similar to clotted cream, made from milk of cows. This also came during Ottoman times. Lepa Brena (1960-) is considered to be the most popular and top-selling female singer of the former Yugoslavia.

once before white but now undefinably shades of light grey or brown. According to Aleksandar, this is *'way better than all those fancy cafés in which the only thing that counts is to see and be seen.'* What he likes best in *kafanas* like *Ribar* is *'the mixture of people. Everybody comes here, from professor to students, labourers and elites, young and old – they just like the atmosphere here.'* When I ask Aleksa, he tells me it has a specific soul: you can still feel the real Serbian spirit here, or actually the real Yugoslavian and Balkan spirit, that you cannot find in Croatia or Bosnia anymore. However, he ensures me that there are two types of *kafanas*: one is like *Ribar*, where everybody mingles and nobody cares, where they often play folk, but not always – depending on who is working behind the bar. The other is the *real kafana*, or *ciganske kafana* (gypsy *kafana*) as others often call them.⁵⁸ *'We have to go there!'* Aleksa and Aleksandar ensured me.

A few weeks later, we are looking for *Ciganske Zore* (Gypsy Sunrise) in *Kisačka* Street. When we finally find the right address, the lights are off and we cannot open the door. A man coming down from the strip club above tells us that it is closed, but if we are looking for a real *ciganska kafana* we only have to continue down the road. After the first main crossroad there is another one, called *Zore 021* (Sunrise 021, Novi Sad's local area code). When we arrive the door is closed, but we can hear the sound of glasses breaking and the almost hypnotizing high melodies of a female singer. We enter and take a seat at the first table to the right that we share with a man who does not notice us because he clearly had too much alcohol already. The woman singing wears a blue dress that, according to the guys I am with, is too naked for her age and posture. Behind the bar there is an old man. A young guy takes orders and gives people their drinks; a young girl, also scarcely dressed, flirts with men, sits on their laps and dances promiscuously. Next to the woman singing and the other one hopping from lap to lap, all guests are male, ranging from an age of 30 to 60. While in most *kafanas* gypsy men play violins, cimbalom, clarinet and accordion, in *Zore 021* an old man plays keyboard. The first songs are still relatively calm, about love and broken relationships. But the music gradually intensifies, and only fifteen minutes later, both the musical and the lyrical aspects make me giddy: singing about cheating, pain, the music goes from low to high tones in only a fraction of a second, repeating this until the song ends. Then a new song starts. While before everybody was still sitting, now the singer and the girl are no longer the only ones dancing. Rapid, round arm movements, singing and shouting takes place both between the tables as on them. Besides us, only the two old men in the corner remain in their chairs. Faces express pain and despair and on a few cheeks I see a tear. *'Ovo je Balkan,'* (This is the Balkans) I am told, *'to surrender is the only thing you can do.'*

'Living in Serbia is like living in a flat with many floors, built with different layers and sorts of deceit: when you start looking for the truth, you can look forever and never find it.' – Bojan, 28 in *Crna Kuća*

⁵⁸ While 'Roma' is the socially acceptable word for 'Gypsy,' I nevertheless choose to use 'Gypsy', because in Serbian language they use this instead of Roma.

In stories told by young people, this is mostly due to socio-political facts. Historically, life in Serbia makes a mosaic of protracted suffering and short spans of joy (Judah 2011). Branković (1995: 43) describes it as ‘an incessant struggle for survival in a region where wars have succeeded one another with appalling frequency.’ According to Stojanović (in Luković and Vuković 2005: 133-134) history in Serbia swings too much and too often between extremes, thus permitting no continuity of progress. It is a society in a state of permanent struggle (Spasenić 2011: 138). This is why Ćosić during the beginning of the 1990s repeatedly mentioned: ‘Serbs perish in peace, but conquer in war.’

In many folk songs, but especially the ones sung in *kafana*, suffering greatly recurs. Many songs are about an old, unreachable love or about a cheating partner, or about the pain of a people. *Kafana je moja sudbina* (presented at the beginning of this chapter) and *Vidovdan* (presented in the chapter at the church, see also **Appendix I**) are good examples. And so is *Tamo Daleko*,⁵⁹ the anthem for every Serb soldier that leaves his family and goes to fight for his country:

<p>Tamo daleko, daleko od mora, Tamo je selo moje, tamo je Srbija. Tamo daleko, gde cveta limun žut, Tamo je srpskoj vojsci jedini bio put. Tamo daleko gde cveta beli krin, Tamo su živote dali zajedno otac i sin. Tamo gde tiha putuje Morava, Tamo mi ikona osta, i moja krsna slava. Tamo gde Timok, pozdravlja Veljkov grad, Tamo mi spališe crkvu, u kojoj venčah se mlad.</p> <p>Bez otadžbine daleko, na Krfu živeh ja, ali sam ponosno klic'o, Živela Srbija!</p>	<p>There, far away, far from the see, There is my village, there is Serbia. There, far away, where the yellow lemon blooms, There was the Serbian Army's only path. There, far away, where white lilies bloom, There, father and son gave their lives together. There, where the silent Morava⁶⁰ travels, There my icon remained, and my family saint. There, where the Timok⁶¹ hails Veljko's city,⁶² There they burned down my church, where I married when I was young. With my homeland far away, I lived on Corfu, But I proudly cheered: Long live Serbia!</p>
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Most important is the specific meaningful symbolism. With certain references, stories are not only kept alive, but also extremely relevant. Explaining this, Van de Port (1994) claims: Nothing is what it seems. My research taught me that this works both ways. On the one hand stories about Novi Sad as the ‘Serbian Athens’ and the developed, European part of their country have been and still are under great pressure by historical events such as war and refugees, but also by the huge amount of people begging on the streets, the empty boutiques and the numerous, packed second-hand clothing shops, the Yugos and the Zastavas⁶³ parked next to the Mercedes and BMWs, the horse and carriage crossing the town every afternoon and night in order to collect paper, cardboard, and by the odds

⁵⁹ The song is sung by a soldier on the Greek island Corfu, because here the Serbian army had to retreat during WWI. He sings of his village, his – now destroyed – church in which he married, and the fatal withdrawal in which many of his comrades died of cold, hunger and disease; this is why the small island of Vido is still known today as the Blue Graveyard, since many soldiers were buried in the sea due to a lack of space to bury them all on the land.

⁶⁰ Big river in Serbia starts in Central Serbia and from there on goes in every direction, including the Danube.

⁶¹ Less big river in eastern Serbia, but it marks the border between Serbia and Romania, also later confluencing into the Danube.

⁶² Referring to Veljko Petrović (1780-1813), one of the military commanders of the First Serbian Uprising (1804-1813) against the Ottoman Empire. His city is the city of Negotin, in the northeastern part of Central Serbia.

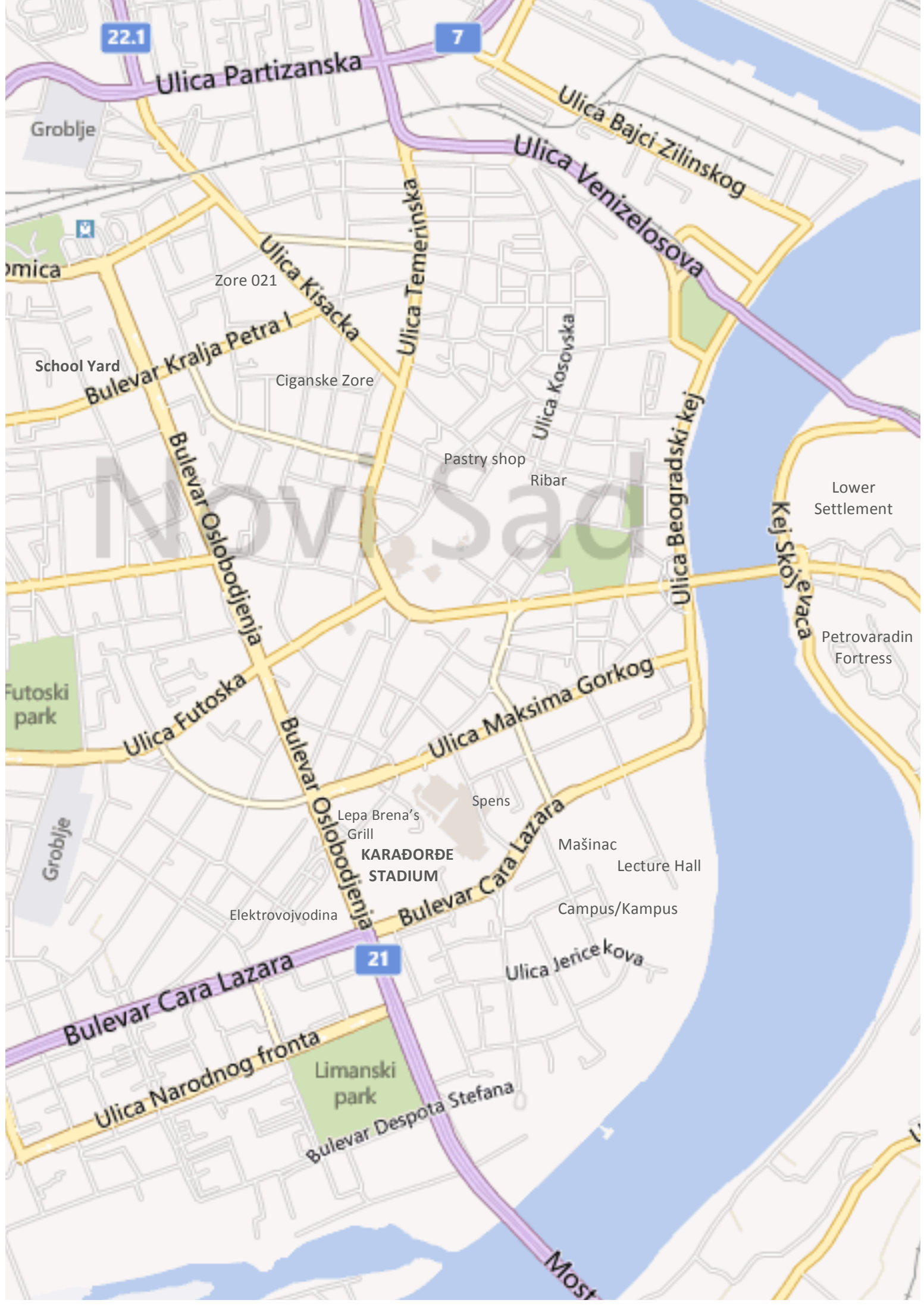
⁶³ Both cheap, subcompact cars built by the Yugoslav/Servian Zastava corporation, comparable with the East German Trabant and the Soviet Lada, Volga or Zil.

and ends that are sold on *Najlon Pijaca* (Nylon Market) during the weekends.⁶⁴ Gypsy neighbourhoods in the city or visible poverty in some villages on the countryside around Novi Sad contribute to this as well. On the other hand are stories about Novi Sad as a 'big Serbian city' being contested by the existence of 27 other ethnic groups, six official languages on public buildings and, for example, the Hungarian theatre or the big Catholic Church on *Trg Slobode*. Interpreting and explaining what happens in *kafanas*, Van de Port (1994) uses Victor Turner's (1988) concept of 'cultural performances,' the lens through which a culture sees itself, as a drawing board on which 'life designs' are being sketched. This makes the *kafana* a 'cultural haven', a tolerance zone where space is reserved for the imagination. Van de Port (1994) suggests this because the distance that normally characterizes the relation between the gypsy and the Serb is now replaced by closeness and intimacy. The latter sees the first as his companion on his road to *diligency*, where he can go beyond the false stories he always believed in: in *kafana* 'ferocity' and 'civility' come together, touch and mingle, just as this does in Serbian society. In *kafana* people do not have to choose between either the modern, democratic and European or the traditional, authoritarian and Balkan side of the coin, simply because they are both sides of the same coin: these different stories and ideologies keep each other under pressure, as much as they keep each other alive.

This is what Nikola meant when he told me: '*Without Serbia there would be no Vojvodina,*' meaning the same as what Van de Port (1994), Armbruster et al. (2004) and Todorova (2009) note when they claim that without the Balkans there would be no Europe (in terms of culture and identity) as we know it now. Matching Saïd's concept of *Orientalism* (1999), Balkan citizens are seen as Europe's Other *within* Europe. Today's Europe ends where politicians want it to end (Todorova 2009: 185-186). While during the 1990s 'Europe' re-united with its eastern other half, people from the Balkans tumbled deeper into their very own bloody, monstrous and barbarian category. Both young people that draw on Serbian nationalist stories as young people that dedicate themselves towards Europe and multiculturalism draw upon stories of tradition: it all depends on which stories you choose, stories that – due to numerous historical developments and events – nowadays seem to exclude each other, while this is anything but true.

The Karađorđe football stadium is a place where these stories coincide, overlap and mix. Throughout the next chapter, the relative and interpretable symbolic character of stories, as well as the importance of dichotomies, projections and frames of reference, will be central.

⁶⁴ Spontaneously arisen in the sixties, this *gypsy market* (as it often is referred to) consisted of two rows on the ground placed on nylon newspaper, where they sell (used) clothing and shoes, old and/or broken appliances and other used goods.



22.1

7

Ulica Partizanska

Ulica Bajci Zilinskog

Ulica Venizelosova

Ulica Temerinska

Ulica Kisacka

Ulica Kosovska

Ulica Beogradski kej

Kej Skopljevac

Groblje

Zore 021

School Yard

Bulevar Kralja Petra I

Ciganske Zore

Pastry shop

Ribar

Lower Settlement

Bulevar Oslobođenja

Ulica Futoska

Ulica Maksima Gorkog

Petrovaradin Fortress

Futoski park

Bulevar Oslobođenja

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Spens

Lepa Brena's Grill

KARADORĐE STADIUM

Mašinac

Lecture Hall

Elektrovojvodina

Campus/Kampus

Groblje

21

Bulevar Cara Lazara

Ulica Jerice kova

Ulica Narodnog fronta

Bulevar Despota Stefana

Limanski park

Most

На фудбалском стадиону / at the football stadium

The Karađorđe Stadium is situated next to Lepa Brena's Grill, sandwiched between Spens⁶⁵ and the electricity company *Elektrovojvodina* down on *Bulevar Oslobođenja*. With a total of 12,303 seats it is the home of FK Vojvodina, Football Club Vojvodina. Formerly, the stadium was known as 'Vojvodina Stadium,' but in 2007 it was renamed 'Karađorđe Stadion' after the leader of the First Serbian uprising (1804-1813) as was in fact the original name from its foundation in 1934 until the end of the Second World War, when the Communists deleted most national symbols.

After meeting Dragan, a 21 years old socially and politically active guy from Bosnia who is now studying in Novi Sad, he invites me to join him and his friend Nebojša to the semi-final match of the Serbian cup between FK Vojvodina and OFK Beograd (13th of March 2013). During the match between FK Vojvodina and Spartak ZV from Subotica one week before, my attention was caught by the fact that both supporter groups were shouting *Mađari* (Hungarians) at each other. Subotica is the second largest city of Vojvodina in the total north, bordering with Hungary and having a strongly multi-ethnic population in which Hungarians (35,65%) are the majority.⁶⁶ Dragan told me: '*I am a Partizan (Belgrade)*⁶⁷ fan, they are a true Serbian team.' Would that be the point? Is that why Subotica and Novi Sad were shouting 'Hungarians' at each other? I wonder what happens during a clash between a team from Belgrade and Novi Sad, since most Vojvodinians clearly distance themselves from Central-Serbia and Belgrade when they talk to me. Many do not like Belgrade: it is dirty, crowded and resembles an 'urban jungle.' Novi Sad, on the other hand, is clean, wide and calm. According to many research participants, 'Belgrade is Balkan' while 'Novi Sad is Europe.' But would this be the same in football, especially since many of FK Vojvodina's core supporters have some kind of relation with right-wing oriented youth organizations? (Perasović 2008: 98, 105-110) We take place at the third row of the second ring, where the atmosphere is calm and friendly. Left of us are Belgrade fans who face the North stand, where die-hard FK Vojvodina fans perform their ritual: they clap in the same rhythm, shout at the same moment, sing their songs and wave their flags simultaneously in the same direction. Immediately after the break, when the score is still 0:0, Belgrade fans provoke their Vojvodinian peers by shouting '*Mađarske pičke*' (Hungarian pussies) to them. They respond with the words '*Turski cigani*' (Turkish gypsies). Dragan seems to be right: it is all

⁶⁵ Official: *Sportski i poslovni centar 'Vojvodina'*, a multi-purpose venue built in the 1980s offering sports, shopping and concerts all under one roof.

⁶⁶ Next to Hungarians, Serbs 27,02%, Croats 10,00% and Bunjevci 9,67% are the other largest ethnic groups. See *Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia*, final results of the 2011 Census of Population, Household and Dwellings on www.stat.gov.rs and on vojvodina.gov.rs.

⁶⁷ Founded by the Yugoslav People's Army in 1945, holding records such as playing in the first European Champions cup match in 1955, as well as becoming the first Balkan and Eastern European football club to reach the European Champions Cup final, when it did so in 1966. They always fight *Crvena zvezda* (Red Star), also from Belgrade and the only Serbian and ex-Yugoslav club to have ever won the European Cup, having done so in 1991, the only team from the Balkans and Eastern Europe to have ever won the International Cup, also in 1991, and reached the semi-finals of the UEFA Champions League in the following season. According to 2008 polls, Red Star is the most popular football club in Serbia with nearly 48,2% of the population supporting them. However, the match between Red Star Belgrade and Dinamo Zagreb on May 13 1990 at the Maksimir Stadium in Zagreb, Croatia, is nowadays often seen as the beginning of the wars for independence in Yugoslavia. The riots that broke out between Serbs and Croats took place just weeks after Croatia's first multi-party elections in almost 50 years in which they voted for independence; started by some fights in the streets before the match, provoked by stones being thrown at Serbs by Croats during the match, answered with knives and singing Serbian nationalist chants like '*Zagreb is Serbian*' and '*We will kill Tudjman*', and resulting in over 60 people wounded, including stabbed, shot and poisoned by tear gas.

about who is the biggest Serb. The imagery in this does not stay limited to the words ‘Hungarian’ and ‘Turkish’ by which they refer to historical and cultural differences between Vojvodina and Central Serbia. Rather, the combinations they make with ‘pussies’ and ‘gypsies’ add something crucial: while people from Novi Sad consider people from Central-Serbia as less civilized, less educated and often describe them as ‘tempered’ and ‘hasty’, people from Belgrade describe Vojvodinians as weak, soft and slow. This greatly shows in a joke that Nebojša told me just after the match ended:

‘You know what they always say about us, Vojvodinians? That we are slow and that we are cowards. For example, there is this joke about a guy who is in a club in Belgrade with his friends. Already early during the night he notices this beautiful girl, but he doesn’t dare to do more than just looking at her. He sees that she’s looking back at him. While he thinks she’s interested, he still doesn’t dare to approach to her. Then, at the end of the night, this girl comes to him and says: “Tell me, are you gay or are from Novi Sad?”’

‘*People call us lala (tulips),*’ Nebojša continues.⁶⁸ You can recognize *lala* by their slow, characteristic speech that is a blend of Serbian origin with German and Hungarian influences, with stretched vowels and slowly pronounced words. This correlates with the fact that ‘*people from Belgrade who come here hate the fact that we walk slowly. But we just take our time, there is no need for rushing.*’ About *lala* they say that they are peaceful, but sometimes also not interested and stupid; they only thing they care about is living in harmony with family, friends and neighbours, no matter where they come from or what they believe in. Even though the last twenty decennia these characteristics were heavily tested, to many it still has big historical meaning: in Vojvodina, people are used to living with all different cultures, ethnicities, religions and nationalities already for centuries, and nobody ever was a real majority there. Neighbours and friends come over for *slava* (celebration)⁶⁹ or other religious holidays, even if they do not share the same religion. Since villages are usually multi-ethnically comprised, having different churches facing or standing next to each other, for many it is important to be religious – which religion is less important.

These are stories many Vojvodinians tell me about themselves, and these are the features that make them different from other Serbs, even though some disagree. Those who agree use them to make fun of themselves, but also as a tool or *weapon* against pressures aiming for greater homogeneity: ‘*Serbs are overdone, extrovert and loud. Lala are modest, introvert, calm, and because of that maybe a bit boring. Yes, I am Serbian,⁷⁰ but we are different and will always stay different,*’ Nebojša claims. As the son from a mixed family, he is a real *lala*.

Those who disagree deny these characteristics, like that night when I met a group of seven guys at night at a schoolyard, close to the train station. Eight guys introduced themselves in half

⁶⁸ See also: http://www.kodkicosa.com/o_banacanima_kao_lalama.htm

⁶⁹ Slava is a Serbian Orthodox church tradition of the ritual glorification of one’s family patron saint among Serbs, but also among Montenegrins and Macedonians. The family celebrates the Slava annually on the saint’s feast day. Serbs consider it as their national tradition, which is probably also the reason it is well preserved among its diaspora all around the world. Canonically introduced by Sveti Sava, there is a Serbian saying that goes as follows: *Gde je Slava, tu je Srbini* (Where there is a Slava, there is a Serb).

⁷⁰ Note that he uses ‘Serbian’ instead of ‘Serb’, thus referring to his civic nationality, not ethnic. This will be dealt with in the next chapter.

English-half Serbian, presenting themselves as *'pravi Srbi'* (real Serbs) and die-hard FK Vojvodina supporters. *'We live for the club,'* one of the guys told me. His friend added: *'We live on the streets, because there is nothing else to do.'* He wore an unbuttoned, black bomber jacket with the proud Serbian eagle and the national logo of the four Ss stitched on his chest (i.e. 'logoization' by Anderson 2006: 182-184).⁷¹ On his sweater was written in Cyrillic: Фирма (the Firm), the local supporters club that spreads their graffiti and stickers everywhere around the city. They told me about the West, that constantly betrays Serbia and wants to colonize it, and about the war. With 'war' these guys referred to the ethnic cleansing of the Serbian people of *Krajina* for which the Croatian generals Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markač were acquitted by the ICTY last autumn,⁷² the NATO-bombings in 1999 and the foreign occupation in Kosovo (Frucht 2004; Bideleux & Jeffries 2006; Emmert & Ingrao 2009; Judah 2009). What happened in Croatia and Bosnia was self-defence; Croats executed ethnic cleansings and Muslims were raping their women. They had to respond. At the end of the night one of them concluded: *'I really appreciate that you come here and want to show our story. But if you were a Serb I would have hit you in the face: you can't ask what's the difference between Vojvodina and the rest of Serbia, because there is no difference. Vojvodina does not exist. This is Serbia, the north of Serbia, and everything here is exactly the same as it is in the rest of Serbia, even in the south [Kosovo]. We are all Serbs that share the same history and therefore also the same future. And we will never allow being humiliated again as in the 1990s. Write that down! That's important for your research and everybody in your country!'*

Two guys with exactly the same age, going to the same university and supporting the same football team tell me precisely the opposite: while one of them explains that Vojvodinians *'are different and will always stay different,'* the other one tells me *'we are all Serbs that share the same history and therefore also the same future.'* This future-aspect is important in both views: it creates feelings of togetherness and coherence among people who would never identify themselves with each other. According to Benedict Anderson (2006), nationalism marks itself decisively from all previous forms of political consciousness by founding itself on a Future located firmly in this world, not the next. Even though Serbia's national story is built on the idea of Prince Lazar choosing the heavenly kingdom

⁷¹ The drawing of four Ss (written in Cyrillic as Cs) refers to the popular slogan *'samo sloga Srbina spasava,'* freely translated into 'only unity saves the Serbs'. This greatly resembles Anderson's (2006: 182) idea of 'logoization': in combination with massive, technically sophisticated archaeological reports, complete with dozen of photographs, and lavishly illustrated books for public consumption, including exemplary plates of all the major sites reconstructed within the colony, thanks to print-capitalism also a sort of pictorial census of the state's patrimony became available. This 'logoization' that is most obvious in for example national symbols, postage stamps or images on currency, should be seen in line with big censuses and mappings of the national territory, all leading to the same: 'the "warp" of thinking was a totalizing classificatory grid, which could be applied with endless flexibility to anything under the state's real or contemplated control. (...) The effect of the grid was always to be able to say of anything that it was this, not that; it belonged here, not there. It was bounded, determinate, and therefore – in principle – countable' (Anderson 2006: 184).

⁷² They first tell about *Operacija Blesak* (Operation Flash): A brief Croatian Army (HV) offensive conducted against forces of the self-declared Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK) from the 1st of May till the 3rd of May 1995, in the later stages of the Croatian War of Independence and the first major confrontation after ceasefire and economic agreements were signed between the Croatian state and the RSK. Around 15.000 Serbs were forced to leave, around 200 killed. Then they tell me about *Operacija Oluja* (Operation Storm): The last major battle of the Croatian War of Independence and the decisive victory for the Croatian Army (HV) against the Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK) from the 4th of August till the 7th of August 1995 in which they restored Croatian control over 10,400 square kilometres of territory, making it also a strategic victory in the Bosnian war as the siege of Bihac was lifted and the Bosnian army gained control over its Western territory again. In this operation around 200,000 Serbs were ethnically cleansed and around 1,000 were killed.

above the earthly one, the nation as such has no place in any heaven or hell. While European dynasties were haunted by decline and traditional religions could only foresee their followers of a hopeful future in the afterlife, compensatory optimism was found in the nation, which easily filled this *gap* of hope: together with new print-capitalism, secular languages-of-state and changing conceptions of time and space, nationalism quickly and widely prevailed (Anderson 2006). In less than 150 years nationalism ended up as the first genuinely worldwide universal (cf. Tsing 2005). Considering this, people who direct themselves to Vojvodina and its differences do exactly the same: not despite of, but rather backed by their mutual differences (for example in terms of origin, but also religion) ‘true *lale*’ and many young urban intellectuals unite themselves around the idea of a specific but shared future, that furthermore has a historical basis as well. Exactly because of this, Durkheim describes nationalism as a sort of ‘civil religion’ (in Cristi et al. 2009).

Due to free, unbound and unlimited conversations and storytelling that is at the basis of this thesis, important differences are revealed. By taking a narrative approach – including the notion that knowledge is storied rather than classificatory – all kinds of narratives open up opportunities to generate knowledge: storytelling is the intertwinement of narratives, since it is through and in this intertwinement that knowledge is produced and lives are shaped (Ingold 2011: 143). Narratives are inherently complex, fragmented and, as shown above, subjective. None of this I cover up. Whether true or not, those stories posed and experienced definitively produce a view of the world, a view of the social self living *in* and *on* the world. Both guys’ statements show that inhabitants of this world know as they go; as places are construed as containers for people, so do people come to be seen as containers for the elements of traditions that are passed on to them from their ancestors, and from them to their own children. That is why traditional knowledge, for example about the own nation, is often assumed to be local: it is knowledge in the heads of locals –hence *localized* (Ingold 2011: 155). Conventionally, this localized knowledge is named ‘culture.’ We acquire it by means of transmission; it is being ‘passed along’ the lines of descent linking successive generations and cultural reproduction is encoded in words and symbols. But instead of claiming that people apply their knowledge in practice, I follow Ingold and Kurttila (2000: 191: 192) in explaining that people know *by way of* their practice: far from being copied ready-made into the mind, knowledge is perpetually ‘under construction’ within the field of relations established through the immersion of the actor-perceiver in a certain environmental context (Ingold 2011: 159). Knowledge it is not replicated but produced. Like life itself, knowledge does not begin or end, but continually goes on.

Additionally, different valuations of the same social environment point to ambiguity, misunderstanding and confusion that run as central themes throughout this thesis. By telling me ‘*you can’t ask what is the difference between Vojvodina and the rest of Serbia, because there is no difference*’ this guy does not see differences where Nebojša and many others do or sometimes even

explain as the core of their identity. For instance, they tell me that Vojvodina is flat and the rest of Serbia is mountainous. They explain that in Vojvodina 28 different ethnic groups live, while in Central Serbia the big majority is Serb (see **Appendix II**). Geographically, Vojvodina belongs to the Pannonian Plain of Central Europe, while Central Serbia is part of the Balkan Peninsula. Vojvodina was under Habsburg rule and the rest of Serbia under Ottoman rule. According to many, this last difference resulted in numerous cultural deviations; according to others, these are irrelevant: *'We are all Serbs that share the same history and therefore also the same future.'*

Many young urban intellectuals point out that of the 1.93 million people living in Vojvodina only 66,76 per cent are ethnic Serbs. One thing every young person shares, regardless of background or political view, is that they know many stories about Others,⁷³ but in describing themselves as a people all were cautious and had no clue where to start. In social science, much has been written about this phenomenon that 'Other' often functions as the best way of demarcating 'Self' or 'Us' (e.g. Erkisen 2002: 19, 23-25; Parekh 2009: 268-272). Remarkably, ethnographers themselves do the same or justify these processes when writing all-encompassing ethnographies about distinct cultural groups (Crapanzano 1986; Abu-Lughod 2008). In Vojvodina, Others make up the remaining 33,24 per cent.⁷⁴ This makes that many young people especially value these characteristics that are *not* shared with the rest of Serbia, both before, now and in the future. But this does not mean that they do not see themselves as Serbian; they do, just as they see Vojvodina as Serbia. It would therefore be unfair to consider them as a different cultural or political group. Rather, I see them as individuals that value, internalize and use different stories about themselves and their environment.



In Serbia, different right-wing nationalist youth movements exist.⁷⁵ Many of them are closely linked to football supporter groups that display their messages in and around the football stadium (Perasavić 2008: 98, 105-110). The guys that I met at the schoolyard are all active members of *Srpski Narodni Pokret* (Serbian National Movement) 1389. Founded in 2004, its aims are 'to liberate and unite all of Serbian territory into a single Serbian state' and to fight the New World Order, i.e. the EU, the IMF and NATO (Bakić 2013: 3).⁷⁶ Other right-wing oriented people come together in the cleric-fascist *Otačastveni pokret Obraz* (Fatherland Movement Honour) or neo-Nazi organizations such as *Nacionalni stroj* (National machine), *Krv i Čast* (Blood and Honour) and *Srpska akcija* (Serbian action). A member of the latter explained me: *'Our goal is the awakening of the Serbian people from the*

⁷³ Especially neighbours that sometimes are also referred to as enemies, such as Croats, (Bosnian or Kosovar) Muslims or Albanians.

⁷⁴ Starting with 13 per cent of Hungarians, according to *Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia*, final results of the 2011 Census of Population, Household and Dwellings. See: www.stat.gov.rs. But also: vojvodina.gov.rs

⁷⁵ See: <http://www.transconflict.com/2012/11/confronting-instead-of-banning-extremism-in-serbia-271/>, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/09659.pdf>, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/obraz-young-face-of-rightwing-violence-in-serbia>, http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2013&mm=04&dd=06&nav_id=85562 and <http://www.hopenothate.org.uk/international/article/1131/serbias-right-wingers-dream-of-nationalist-re>.

⁷⁶ For a list of enemies, see their website: <http://www.snp1389.rs/> There, you can also buy Karadzic and Mladic merchandise.

current lethargy, apathy and false peace of spiritual marsh of the New Age (...) We want to restore an Orthodox monarchy based on the testamental vertical: God-King-Homekeeper.'

Most young people in Novi Sad do not think that nationalism⁷⁷ increased during the last years, but virtually all of them ensure me that popular nationalism became more *obvious*: it became louder and more visible. Clear proof of this is graffiti, with which many walls in Novi Sad are filled. Some graffiti are drawings or images, but most of it is written words that contain messages, express social and political tensions and raise a debate or present a solution to it all. Examples are exclamations such as *Srpska Vojvodina* (Serbian Vojvodina), *Srbija Srbima* (Serbia for Serbs), *Vojvodina Srbima* (Vojvodina for Serbs), but also *Stop separatizmu* (Stop separatism), *Kosovo je srce Srbije* (Kosovo is the heart of Serbia)⁷⁸ or *Srbija čeka Šešelja* (Serbia awaits Šešelj).⁷⁹

According to Ninković (2012),⁸⁰ 'right-wing extremism can exist and flourish without political participation and success of radical right-wing parties, yet it cannot exist without the unchallenged xenophobic and populist sentiments of the public.' The role of the media cannot be underestimated in this regard, as they hold the key to confronting extremist and populist sentiments. According to urban intellectuals, extremist sentiment is harmful since it does not only cause apathy, but also national division. This is an interesting paradox: while nationalism aims at unity and foreseeing the nation of coherence and future (Smith 1991; Anderson 2006; Gellner 2009) it thus divides as well. Another contradiction comes from the fact that intellectuals demand democracy in which everybody should have the opportunity to think and express how they want to, while it is exactly democracy itself that extreme nationalists reject: they despise parliamentarianism almost just as much as they hate NATO, the USA and the EU. According to them, 'real Serbs' still want a *Greater Serbia* (cf. Bakić 2009).⁸¹ People who agree with Serbia's partition – whether this is Kosovo's independence or Vojvodina's autonomy – are considered betrayers of the nation or non-Serbs, no matter how Serbian their ethnic background really is. According to many others, however, Vojvodina proves that unity and diversity can easily work together. This will be shown in the next chapter.

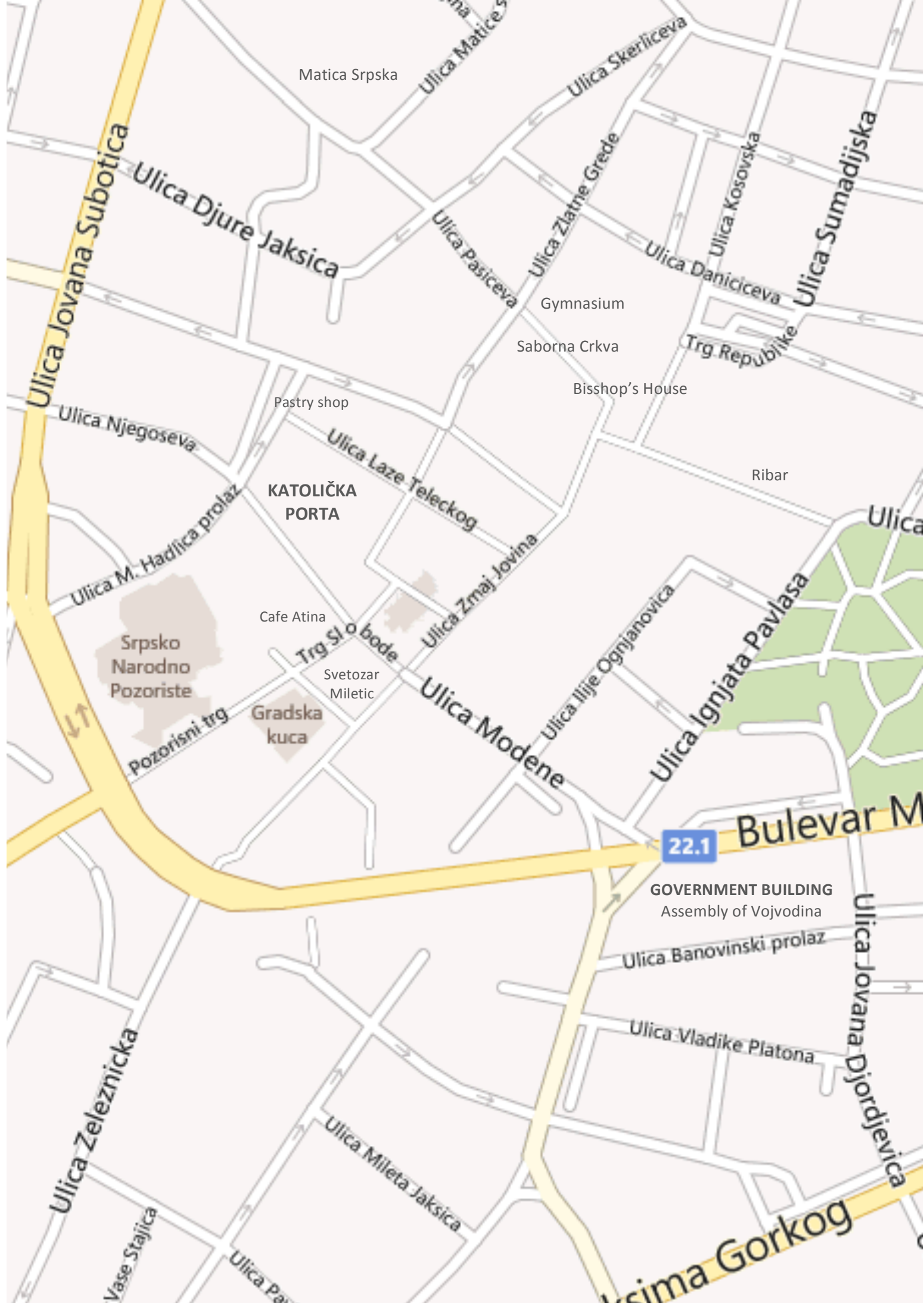
⁷⁷ Especially Serbian popular nationalism, but also other popular nationalisms. According to my research participants, they tend to reinforce each other.

⁷⁸ An already old phrase that is clearly used as a politic slogan, both here as it is in national politics, deriving from a speech by Milošević at Gazimestan on the 14th of November in 1989, serving the occasion of 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, situated about seven kilometres northeast of the actual battlefield. The speech by Milošević preceded the violent surge in nationalistic and ethnic tensions prior to the violence in Kosovo and the Breakup of Yugoslavia in general. Inscribed on the monument is the *Kosovo curse*, attributed to Prince Lazar (1370-1389, leader of the Serbs in the battle against the Ottomans) saying: *Whoever is a Serb and of Serb birth/And of Serb blood and heritage/And comes not to the Battle of Kosovo/May he never have the progeny his heart desires/Neither son nor daughter/May nothing grow that his hands sow/Neither dark wine nor white wheat/And let him be cursed from all ages to all ages*, originating from the 1845 edition of the collection of Serbian folk songs by Vuk Karadžić (1787-1864).

⁷⁹ Vojislav Šešelj (born 11 October 1954) is a Serbian politician, writer and lawyer. He is the founder and president of the Serbian Radical Party, and at the moment he is on trial for alleged war crimes, suspected of being involved in crimes against humanity by the ICTY. He surrendered voluntarily in 2003, but today the trial is still under way: this is partly due to a hunger strike, his decision to not appear for his opening statement and witness intimidation. October this year, a verdict will be delivered. See also: http://icty.org/x/cases/sezelj/cis/en/cis_seselj_en.pdf and http://www.b92.net/eng/news/crimes-article.php?yyyy=2013&mm=04&dd=12&nav_id=85675.

⁸⁰ <http://www.transconflict.com/2012/11/confronting-instead-of-banning-extremism-in-serbia-271/>, visited June 5th 2013.

⁸¹ Greater Serbia refers to the creation of a Serbian land that incorporates all regions of traditional significance to the Serbian nation, and regions outside of Serbia that are populated by Serbs, including territories of modern day Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo. Sometimes it also includes parts of Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania, referring to the 14th century Serbian Empire.



Matica Srpska

Ulica Jovana Subotica

Ulica Djure Jaksica

Ulica Matice

Ulica Skerliceva

Ulica Pasiceva

Ulica Zlatne Grede

Ulica Daniceva

Ulica Kosovska

Ulica Sumadijska

Gymnasium

Saborna Crkva

Bisshop's House

Trg Republike

Pastry shop

Ulica Njegoseva

Ulica Laze Teleckog

Ribar

KATOLIČKA PORTA

Ulica M. Hadžića prolaz

Cafe Atina

Ulica Zmaj Jovina

Srpsko Narodno Pozoriste

Trg Slobode

Svetozar Miletic

Gradska kuca

Ulica Modene

Ulica Ilije Ognjanovica

Ulica Ignjata Pavlasa

Pozoriski trg

22.1

Bulevar M

GOVERNMENT BUILDING
Assembly of Vojvodina

Ulica Banovinski prolaz

Ulica Vladike Platona

Ulica Jovana Djordjevica

Ulica Zeleznicka

Ulica Mileta Jaksica

Ulica Gorkog

Vase Stajica

Ulica Pa

У Католичкој порти / at the Catholic gate

‘Vojvodina shall be a region in which multiculturalism, multiconfessionalism and other European principles and values have been traditionally fostered.’

First part of Article 1 of the Statute of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina

As soon as the weather gets better, at nights the small, buildings-locked square *Katolička Porta* (Catholic Gate) fills itself with young people from all over town. The atmosphere is calm, nice and positive. Some people bring their guitars and sing; others play music from their phone, but never that loud in that they irritate others with it. About twenty people can sit on the low walls of the white-marble fountain. Most people stand around it, both in small and big groups. A bit further away people sit on the ground or settle themselves in the corners of the square, for example against the Catholic Church or at the stairs of the *cvećara* (flower shop).

As the population of Novi Sad and the rest of Vojvodina is really diverse (see **Appendix II**), so are the young people coming together at *Katolička Porta*. However, they have two strongly interrelated things in common. For one thing, they condemn nationalism and xenophobia, and are worried because of the ‘dangerous indifference’ that they see among many of their peers. For another, they identify themselves with Vojvodinian life, culture and a specific Vojvodinian identity that is built on notions of multiculturalism and *Europeanness* – something that also clearly shows in the first words of Vojvodina’s Statute presented above, which is the highest legal document of Vojvodina in accordance with the Constitution of Serbia. This chapter therefore explains young people’s identification with Vojvodina and provides insight into Vojvodina’s specific form of multiculturalism that young people at *Katolička Porta* feel comfortable with.



Models for multi-ethnic or multicultural living are premised on the recognition that societies are racially, ethnically and culturally diverse (Taylor 1994, 2002; Kymlicka 1995; Okin 1999; Modood 2007; Faist 2009). They articulate the need for a sense of ‘collective belonging’ at the state level (Pilkington & Popov 2008:7). As the debate about multiculturalism shows, this is far from simple. In Vojvodina, this leads to specific frictions (cf. Tsing 2005): the local, traditional (Socialist) version of multicultural living *rubs against* the Western model that the EU wants them to implement now, and according to many politicians and media Vojvodina’s multiculturalism undermines Serbia’s story of national unity. Another friction is the same as everywhere around the world: the search for authenticity is always complicated, especially regarding recognition and universalism (Taylor 1994).

As in other parts of Southeast-Europe, in Vojvodina Socialist conceptions of multi-ethnic societies prevailed class locations and solidarities over all others: *supra-ethnic* (and to a certain

extent also *super-ethnic*) ideology⁸² sought to supersede ethnic particularism. Yet, at the same time ethnic diversity was praised and promoted. In Aleksandar's words: *'Because in Yugoslavia everybody was equal and therefore the same, there was room for people to be different as well.'* Under the motto of 'Brotherhood and Unity', ethnicity was coupled to territory and institutionalized rights. This institutionalization of ethno-territorial federalism resulted in the redefinition of religious identities as ethnic and national (Pilkington & Popov 2008: 8). Thus, while Socialism liberated and modernized the ethnic diverse population of Yugoslavia and even encouraged mixed marriages, it simultaneously promoted the emergence of bounded identities based on essentialist notions of ethnicity and culture that could be used later to explain and even justify inter-group and inter-community tensions.⁸³

In contrast, the North-American model of multiculturalism (cf. Taylor 1994; Kymlicka 1996) is rooted in recognition of the embeddedness of human experience in distinct, culturally-structured worlds whilst recognizing that every cultural group is internally plural and that the dialogue between such 'cultures' is socially enriching (Parekh 2000, in Abbas 2005: 155). While many North- and West-European countries tried very hard to adopt this, they never really succeeded (Modood 2007). Interestingly enough, it is exactly this model that is the motto of the European Union – in the words of 'Unity in Diversity' – and the basis for European integration-measurements that have to be implemented by post-socialist countries that aspire EU-membership such as Serbia.

Another paradox stems from the fact that multicultural living in Western Europe is primarily talked about as different ethnic-religious groups that settled as migrants and are by the majority group expected to integrate (if not assimilate). But like in North-America, in Southeast-Europe there is more emphasis on recognition (Taylor 1994) of every group, which are furthermore seen as ethno-nations already living there for centuries. Young people are proud of this for the simple reason that *'[their] version of multiculturalism works.'* Some claim: *'We Vojvodinians are way ahead of you people in the West, because we already have multiculturalism for ages and you only recently.'* Or: *'You Western people teach us what multiculturalism is? We should better teach you!'* Kristina explains:

'It's in our blood, in our soul. It's our identity. We are raised in an atmosphere of diversity. This makes us open and tolerant, and *that* is Vojvodina. Living in Vojvodina means being multicultural and being European.'

To the question what being European means here, she answers:

'The idea of Europe is about multiple nations living together in peace and prosperity; and that's what Vojvodina is! It has always been the most peaceful and prosperous region of the country, both in Yugoslavia as in Serbia today. It is also a sort of substitute of Europe, because people from all over the country come here to live and work, because life is better here, like many migrants that go to the EU. But there is also one very simple reason that people overlook: do you know how many European nations live together in Vojvodina? Not only Serbs and Hungarians, but also Slovaks, Czechs, Germans, Croats, Romanians live here,

⁸² As found by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848 in the ideology of 'Workers of the world, unite!'

⁸³ I am referring to the wars for territory and ethnic cleansing during the 1990s.

all with EU-mother countries. Besides, we also have many people living here from other parts of Europe that are not or not yet part of the EU, such as Bosnians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Ukrainians and Russians. We used call Vojvodina “Yugoslavia in miniature,” but now it’s actually “Europe in miniature.”

Adrian Borca expresses another stance towards Vojvodina’s *Europeanness*. Looking out of his window on the second floor of Vojvodina’s Parliament Building, he claims: *‘Nobody knows about our scientists, while they have been important for Europe and the rest of the world. Without Mihajlo Pupin [1853-1935, Vojvodinian physicist and physical chemist] we would not be able to call or go to space, and without Nikola Tesla [1856-1943, Serbian inventor, electrical and mechanical engineer, physicist and futurist] there would not even be electricity. It seems as if Europe deleted us from something that became their history and their development, while we were part of that as well.’*

Elaborating on Vojvodina’s multiculturalism, Adrian continues: *‘In my life, my minority-background has been an advantage. Here, they always deliberately include you.’* This is why Adrian is ethnic Romanian, but explains that his civic nationality is Serbian: *‘Serbia is the country where I grew up and went to school, that paid for my studies and now gives me a job. In my identification with Serbia Vojvodina plays an important role. This is because I am not Srbin [Serb] but Srbijanac [Serbian citizen]. And Vojvodina is part of Serbia, just as the majority of Vojvodinians are Serbs as well.’* Since he is working for the Provincial Secretariat dealing with national communities, he explains:

*‘In Vojvodina, every minority group has its own National Minority Council. These are people’s identities: they function as identity-holders and protect their identities. They make sure their traditions remain in Vojvodina. I work with them. But I also do a lot with language, because in Vojvodina there are six official languages – Serbian, Hungarian, Slovakian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Croatian – and in some towns those languages are in official use. The Serbian language is predominant, sometimes in Latin and sometimes in Cyrillic, but in official documents and on government buildings there are always five languages, because every citizen in Vojvodina has the right to and can communicate with the government in his own language. Sometimes street names and other signs are in multiple languages as well. Those things are important to have in your own language, because is both practical and symbolic, so that everybody feels at home, free and respected. People feel that they *belong* here and that they can be themselves. Because of this, non-Serbs can feel at home in Serbia. Therefore, Vojvodina is the mediator between all those different non-Serb people and the Serbian state: Vojvodina with its institutions and its autonomy provides them with all of this.’*

However, in post-9/11 popular and academic context,⁸⁴ multiculturalism is increasingly interpreted as ‘part of the problem and not the solution’ to racism and ethnic discrimination (Kundnani 2004: 108). Many authors state that self-imposed cultural barriers between communities hinder full participation in society (Abbas & Akhtar 2005: 134). Turner (1993) describes this as ‘difference multiculturalism,’ in which culture is reduced to racial or ethnic identity, asserting essentialism. In order to escape from this, he advocates for ‘critical multiculturalism,’ which is based on the idea that new and diverse cultural assumptions (because they are not inextricably linked to any essential group identity) can profitably challenge and revitalize existing cultural assumptions of complex

⁸⁴ That is, especially in North-American and in (Western) European context.

societies (Turner 1993: 412). The aim is to create a moral vital of ‘common culture,’ something that young people at *Katolička Porta* advocate as well. But how to realise this?

Gerd Baumann (1999: vii) sees multiculturalism as a riddle that can only be solved in rethinking the terms in which it is posed: he rejects multiculturalism in which culture and identity are based on essentialist and unchangeable notions of nation, ethnicity and religion, and argues that people themselves shape their identities. Following him, Vojvodinian multiculturalism should no longer be seen as a culture multiplied by the number of groups in society, but as one common Vojvodinian culture. Accordingly, Ulrich Beck (2006: 67) states:

‘Multiculturalism [too often] presupposes collective notions of difference and takes its orientation from more or less homogenous groups conceived as either similar or different, but in any case clearly demarcated, from one another and as binding for individual members. (...) Well-meaning multiculturalists can easily ally themselves with cultural relativists, giving a free hand to despots who invoke the right to difference.’

Many academics accuse multiculturalism of failing to eliminate the implicit hierarchies of biologically rooted racial doctrines that replace uncomfortable notions of race with that of culture or identity (Lentin 2001: 98; Abbas 2005: 156). Because of this, they propose to replace multiculturalism with revised versions of earlier discourses of the ‘empowerment of individuals’ (Smootha 2005: 13; Pilkington & Popov: 2008: 9). This is not only what the EU tries to achieve in Serbia, but also the paradox of multiculturalism itself (cf. Baumann 1999).

While young people tell me that they feel good in an environment that is characterized by multiculturalism, they also point me to minority nationalism and folklorism that this type of multiculturalism brings with it. Following the collapse of Socialism and *ethnified* conflicts⁸⁵ that engulfed in the 1990s, new state-building projects initiated driven by ‘two conflicting organizing principles: democracy for all and ethno-national ascendancy of the majority group’ (Smootha 2005: 57; Pilkington & Popov 2008: 9). Consequently, in Vojvodina minority nationalisms developed to counter the emergent ethnocentric state. According to Dević (2006: 258), this only perpetuates ‘the nationalist, i.e. ethno-centered state-building agenda’ instead of strengthening multi-ethnic living. Sitting with Aleksandar and two of his Sociology professors in the café owned by foreigners, called ‘Culture Exchange’ in Jovana Subotica Street,⁸⁶ they agreed on this: ‘*People show their ethnicity or culture through dancing, food and clothing.*’ Dušan amplifies:

⁸⁵ I deliberately use the word ‘ethnified’ because the conflicts that occurred throughout the former Yugoslavia were not so much ethnic conflicts as they were political conflicts turned into ethnic conflicts (Van de Port 1995; Todorova 2009; Spasenić 2011).

⁸⁶ Although Culture Exchange is a very new and hot place in Novi Sad, in the last weeks of my stay rumours developed: the founders are not just hip youth from all over the world who wanted to start something new in Novi Sad and want to promote positive cultural exchanges, but also have a background of growing up in missionary families of a cult called ‘Family International’. People question how good their motives are. This is the article that published this: <http://teleprompter.weebly.com/sekta-okuplja-novosadsku-omladinu.html>. As a response, the founders of Culture Exchange responded: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/culture-exchange/response-to-danilo-redzepovic/540976825962473>. Elites in Novi Sad now take it personal and want to lynch the journalist, because he attacked one of the progressive initiatives in Novi Sad. Višnja, with whom I often went there, answers to all this: ‘*My opinion did change, in terms of ideals. Behind good initiatives such as these there is always something not good happening. I would still go there, but I would appreciate it way less than before: it is still new and original, but not positive anymore. The change they try to make in Novi Sad is good, but with what motives?*’

'Our multiculturalism isn't always real. For example, in Vojvodina six per cent of the population supports gay marriage while in the rest of Serbia this is only two per cent. Yes, acceptance here is three times higher, but it is still bullshit. This is the same with multiculturalism: we are more multicultural and European than the rest of the country for the simple reason that there are other nationalities living here; nowhere else in Serbia it is like that. But we live separated. A clear example of this is the Hungarian theatre just around the corner: it exists and it works, but you will never see non-Hungarians go there. (...) We are multicultural in a way that you always know somebody who has another cultural background and it always goes in peace, but there is no real co-existing. It is living *next to* each other instead of *with* each other. (...) But you *can* dance your own dance and eat your own food!'

Dušan refers to the many music and food festivals that take place throughout Vojvodina, where every ethnic group makes its own traditional food that Others taste or buy. This is close to what Baumann (1999: 122) calls 'organized representation of cultural differences,' or what Kobayashi (1993: 206) labels as 'red boots multiculturalism': it celebrates diversity but loses the individual out of sight. In accordance with my research participants I see no wrong in such ventures since visibility and recognition of diversity are useful tools of multiculturalism (Taylor 1994). Yet, it represents not so much a pluralist multiculturalism as 'a difference "multi"-culturalism that parades the distinctiveness of each so-called cultural group and remains in thrall to each reified understanding of culture' (Baumann 1999: 122). Instead of breaking down barriers, it maintains and reinforces them.

In order to escape from this, Based on Turner (1993), Epshtein (1995), Baumann (1999) and Beck (2006) I propose to challenge multiculturalism as the recognition of (respect for, celebration of) Others and their difference. I follow Žižek (1997) in his claim that the Other that is respected and celebrated in multiculturalism is all too often the 'folklorist Other,' which implies a Eurocentric patronising of the Other (cf. Saïd 1997) that is used to assert one's own superiority (Žižek 1997: 44). A possible way out I find presented by Amin (2004) who seeks to avoid reification of Other by seeing Self and Other as mutually constituting identities⁸⁷ by proposing an idea of 'hospitality' in the feeling of empathy between mutually dependent identities of 'host' and 'guest' (Amin 2004: 14-16).

Similar to what I see happening in Vojvodina, Elbakidze (2008) observes that peaceful co-existence in post-Soviet Georgia is often represented through narratives of hospitality that at the same time paper over the reality of discrimination against minorities and the inequality embedded in host-guest relationships. Yet, many people nevertheless draw strength from these narratives. In order to understanding this while following Ingold's (2011) and Nordstrom's (2007) claim for studying culture as knowledge, I argue to use Hall's (1997: 1-2) conceptualization of 'circuit of culture': culture is produced, transmitted, reproduced and resisted through the interactions between a range of social and cultural institutions, individual and collective cultural practices (Hall 1997; Pilkington & Popov 2008). By using 'circuit of culture', I attempt to address directly rather than restrict the challenge mentioned by Žižek (1997) that while it is wrong that ruling elites exploit a

⁸⁷ This is similar to almost every work of the Dutch anthropologist Francio Guadeloupe, who mainly conducts his studies in the Caribbeans.

popular desire for primordial identities, the expressions of such longing must not be denied, nor the substance, passion and pleasure that fill these collective identities. By focussing on ‘circuits of culture’, anthropologists furthermore do not have to discard important concepts of identity and culture: by using them in this way they do right to *reality* instead of to *politics* (cf. Castells 2004).⁸⁸



While young people hanging around at *Katolička Porta* notice many issues that have to be solved, they identify themselves positively with Vojvodina. Corresponding to the idea of ‘circuits of culture’ (Hall 1997), Sarašević (2012: i) claims that ‘in certain circumstances, regional identity distinguishes itself as a very important type of social identification which is able to compete with other powerful identities, such as national, ethnic and religious.’ In accordance with my findings, she observes that among young people in Vojvodina regional identity does take an important place, without excluding other identifications.⁸⁹ Like me, she also finds no striking differences between youth from different ethnic groups (Sarašević 2012).

As a variant of social identity, regional identity ‘integrates the material phenomena of the regions with the ideas of the regional community formed by the inhabitants, the images of the region and the structures of expectations’ (Knapp 2003; cf. Paasi 2003). This is mostly expressed in territorial sense, unrelated to ethnic or national identity. However, one should not only understand a region as a geographic space, but also as a lived space, ‘a place of memory and a place that represents more to its inhabitants than a mere *locus vivendi*’ (Sarašević 2012: 3). This becomes only extra interesting since Vojvodina’s population is so diverse (see **Appendix II**). In young urban intellectuals’ words, the strength and prominence of Vojvodinian identity is directly related to the relations between the region and the central government.⁹⁰ They tell me that Vojvodinian identity can and should be perceived as a possible increase in the levels of ethnic tolerance.

Yet, while many consider Vojvodinian identity as a ‘dam’ to separatism, irredentism and nationalism due to its unique value system (Sabić & Pavlović 2007), others use it as a political tool representing discord rather than concord, especially in opposition to the rest of Serbia. As will be shown in the next chapter, some consider Vojvodinian identity as a serious threat for national unity.

⁸⁸ By this I mean that while in politics politicians can rely on narratives about problems, unbridgeable difference or threat (something that is far from only characterizing Serbia or Vojvodina, but true for the whole of Europe, looking at the emergence and growing support for right-wing political parties), most young people I spoke do not recognize themselves in these at all: they address certain problems, but they emphasize positive sides of *their* multiculturality.

⁸⁹ For example national, ethnic or religious identifications.

⁹⁰ Consequently, the quest for autonomy in Vojvodina is also linked with the region’s budget allocations and other state policies regarding the province, such as those regarding infrastructure and culture.



Gymnasium

Saborna Crkva

Bisshop's House

Ribar

Bus stop

Bus stop

22.1

PROTEST

Government building
Assembly of Vojvodina

На улицу! / to the streets!

Let me first set something straight that has all too often been stated by far too many academics: ethnically based forms of association in the former Yugoslavia are neither a result of awakening ancient hatreds, nor purely instrumentally ‘whipped up’ among a unreflexive mass by ‘ethnic entrepreneurs’ (Tishkov 1997: 284). Like in the rest of the world, (ethnic) identification is a social construct that can be used strategically for establishing, maintaining and expanding social networks, managing economic resources and pursuing political interest (cf. Goffman 1959; Barth 1968; Bellier & Wilson 2000; Eriksen 2002; Armbruster et al. 2003; Balibar 2004; Sen 2006; Biserko 2008; Parekh 2009; Van der Pijl 2010). This is why Todorova (2004: 181) claims:

‘The real question is not that memory and identity can be manipulated (of course they can), but why does the person *hear* the message at a particular moment, so that he or she can then say that he or she learned what he or she as always known and (...) insist that this is part of collective memory and a collective identity.’

Using Lévi-Strauss’ notion of *bricolage*, Layton (2006: 134) suggests that primordialism can be explained by the fact that identities are shaped through ‘intellectual restructuring of existing cultural themes.’ Corresponds to my understanding of culture as ‘circuits of culture’, this means that social constructions of (ethnic) identities are not totally invented but rather creatively told, narrated, and therefore shaped and reshaped from existing ‘traditional’ forms of identity. According to Beller-Hann & Hann (2001: 32), they are often mediated and sometimes sponsored by the state. This is why Bourdieu (1981) speaks of ‘embodied history’ next to objectified history.

Rather than doing away important concepts such as ‘culture’ and ‘identity’, young urban intellectuals hanging out at *Katolička Porta* already showed that cultural boundaries are nowadays both blurred and impermeable. When changing conditions give way to ethno-nationalism, people are ready to accept their ethnicity as ‘primordial loyalty’ because they were always aware of ethnic differences (Appadurai 1996: 155; Pilkington & Popov 2008: 13).

This relates to my second point: in Vojvodina, like in other parts of the former Yugoslavia, racialized conceptions of ethnicity were imported with the process of modernization in the twentieth century brought to them by European empires (Gould 2007: 162). Before, community boundaries were vague (Van de Port 1995; Hayden 2002; Gould 2007; Todorova 2009). Thus, while Western media and academics often project images of violent, ethno-nationalistic people (Van de Port 1995; Todorova 2009) it is precisely western notions of nations and multiculturalism nowadays that substitute race with culture, without undermining the essentializing nature of the former (cf. Appiah 2005: 136). Having said this, let us dive deeper into the clash of narratives related to young people’s identifications with a multicultural, European Vojvodina and a unified Serbian nation.

‘The Autonomous Province of Vojvodina shall be an inseparable part of the Republic of Serbia.’

Second part of Article 1 of the Statute of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina



As both Anderson (2006) and Gellner (2009) explain, history is consciously decided by the state and its elites. Van de Port (1995), Judah (2009), Spasenić (2011) and Drakulić (2012) show that this is definitely true for Serbia. Wertsch (2008: 122) elaborates that historical narratives become ‘textual sources for collective memory’ and ‘collective memory emphasizes the power of a narrative to shape representations of the past.’ When speaking of this, we usually have in mind items from ‘a stock of stories’ (MacIntyre 1984). The items in this ‘cultural tool kit’ (Bruner 1990) typically are narratives about specific events, which means that they qualify specific narratives, uniquely situated in time and space, occurred during one’s own lifetime or in earlier periods. But the study of collective memory requires taking into account a second level or narrative organization as well; one concerned with general patterns rather than specific events of actors. This level of narrative organizations is grounded in narrative templates that produce replicas or blueprints which vary in detail but reflect a single general storyline. Perhaps more than other European nations, Serbia’s recurrent national storyline revolves around national unity of the Serbian people and the difficulties that withhold them from it (Van de Port 1995; Đurković 2004; Simić 2009; Merrill 1999; Judah 2009; Spasenić 2011).

Recurrent collective experiences can form a reservoir of images that are ‘already formed, or half-formed, so to speak, latent in the world of the popular imagination’ (Taussig 1987: 370). Thoden van Velzen and Van Wetering (1988: 7-8) explain collective fantasies as fairy-tales representing ‘the deep structure from which the imagination draws strength’ that ‘reveals itself in a fragmentary way, through seemingly isolated pronouncements on the nature of a hidden reality, and through covert culture.’ Building upon this, Van de Port (1994: 51) claims that people are utterly dependent on a story in that it gives sense, direction and meaning. I consider this in line with Geertz’s understanding of belief systems, which provide a ‘formulation, by means of symbols, of an image of such a genuine order of the world which will account for, and even celebrate, the perceived ambiguities, puzzles and paradoxes in human experience’ (Geertz 1973: 108). Rushdie (1992: 278) visualizes this as follows:

‘Walking as well as sleeping, our responses to the world are essentially imaginative, that is picture-making. We live in our pictures, our ideas. I mean this literally: we first construct pictures of the world and then we step inside the frames. We come to equate the picture with the world.’

As this thesis shows, the dream of a clear and signposted world, a story about the world that enables us to grasp our experiences, that makes us find our way in life and is able to give hold, is not only chased by academics (Van de Port 1994: 51). However, in late-modern social environments many

people are confused (Castells 2004; Bauman 2007; Heijne 2011). As I opened this thesis, Serbia's national story is under great existential pressure: now Kosovo is lost, only Vojvodina is left.

Regarding this, the importance of Vojvodina appears both in terms of identity as a self-ascribed characteristic (as explained in the last chapter) and in terms of politics regarding the autonomy of their province. Both relate to collective ideas and experiences (Taussig 1987; Thoden van Velzen and Van Wetering 1988). It thus shows important lessons about regionalists and separatists in other European regions such as Flanders, Bavaria, Scotland, Basques and Catalonia. On the one hand, many *Novosađani* speak of Belgrade's centralist policy that is taking their power, jobs and – above all – money. Many compare themselves with other regions in Europe and place themselves actively in global debates about the current financial, economic and political crises. Others also admit that it may be related to Yugo-nostalgia: *'We had the most economical prosperity when we had the biggest autonomy.'* Many young people tend to equate autonomy with prosperity.

Then there is this 'cultural thing,' as Mihajla, Aleksandar and Dušan mention. *'Political parties and NGOs,'* they say, *'use Vojvodina's identity.'* According to them it exists, but it is more political than rooted in science or reality: *'The idea is more real than the state on the ground. The autonomy we want to regain⁹¹ is purely pragmatic and against centralization and nationalism.'* That is the other important stance that most of my research informants share – by identifying themselves with Vojvodina they give counterweight to Serbian nationalism:

'I identify myself with Vojvodina: not because of all the romantic and folklorist images that are woven around it, but more because I simply cannot identify myself fully with the Serbian identity. I am a Serb, both in civil and in ethnic terms, but I am a Serb from Vojvodina, which means that I feel connected with other people besides Serbs and other nations besides the Serbian one. I feel European, and I feel open-minded and tolerant. And I direct myself to the future instead of to the past. Therefore I identify myself with Vojvodina. That is what Vojvodina means to me. I want Serbia to go forward, to become part of Europe again. So for me it is both emotional and functional, but probably especially functional.'

They claim that it is important to defend Vojvodina's identity, whether it is real or not. They describe it as romantic, folklorist and old-fashioned, but also as a tool to protect individual and collective rights; not only for themselves, but also for Others for whom 'there is often no place in Serbia.'

Important frictions (cf. Tsing 2005) arise here. Linked to the situation in Kosovo there is a huge taboo on talking about Vojvodina in general. This is frustrating: while for many Vojvodinians Vojvodina's identity and sovereignty is important, Serbian politicians and popular media mostly ignore it. When they do, in line with Anderson's conceptualization of 'fratricide' (2006: 1999-203),

⁹¹ With 'regaining' they refer to the period before Milošević came to power. In 1974, SFR Yugoslavia ratified a new federal constitution that gave more autonomy to individual republics, fulfilling the goals of the Croatian Spring (1971). Most controversial in this was the internal division of Serbia, since its to autonomous provinces – Kosovo and Vojvodina – now functioned as almost separate republics. These reforms satisfied every state but Serbia: while all the Serbs were finally united in one federal republic, they were now again separated. Tensions between the republics and nations intensified, especially after Tito died. After Milošević came to power, he made sure he had only his men in power, both in Vojvodina and in Kosovo, as well as in Montenegro, and abolished the autonomy altogether. Gradually, now, Vojvodina is regaining parts of this autonomy, but according to most young urban individuals it is going too slow.

they portray people them as separatists and national traitors: *'Pro-autonomists are presented as criminals and rebels; as if this is going to be the next Kosovo, as if we will betray them.'*

At the ceremony marking the 94th anniversary of the unification of Vojvodina with the Kingdom of Serbia (November 2012) the then newly elected president Nikolić expressed: 'There is no border between Vojvodina and other parts of Serbia, because it is determined by the Constitution and because Serbian citizens want it that way.'⁹² Young *Novosađani* agree. But when at the beginning of April Vojvodina's parliament signs a declaration to remind Belgrade of Vojvodina's rights according to the Serbian Constitution, this leads to an explosion. What Mihajla and Aleksandar explained indeed happened: Serbian media attack Bojan Pajtić (leader of the Democratic Party in Vojvodina and President of the Government of Vojvodina) and accuse him of separatism and bad timing because Belgrade had only just re-opened negotiations with Kosovo. What actually happened was a clash of different stories; collective narratives that exclude each other nevertheless met in public discourse. Stories of multiculturalism and self-determination rub with stories of concord and national unity.



*'We may have lost our heart [Kosovo], but we will not lose our head [Vojvodina] too.'*⁹³

Friday the 12th of April 2013 is a turbulent day in Novi Sad. Following the declaration, during the previous days Serbian media announced huge protests. With great fanfare Vojvodina's opposition spoke of an uprising compared to the anti-bureaucratic revolutions in the 1980s⁹⁴ and a defence of Serbian territory and integrity. Posters were spread with the image of the provincial parliament building covered in darkness and lifted by a grey hand, saying: 'Fly away, Pajtić!' When I left my house in the morning, I found the same flyer in my mailbox that it is being distributed throughout the whole city. On the fortress there is a banner screaming in red letters: *'Protest! Stop separatizmu!'* (Protest! Stop separatism!). At two o'clock, riot police appear everywhere. Next to the Danube hundreds of buses arrive packed with people who get out and wave with banners and flags. Alongside the access routes to the the parliament building people sell merchandise like flags, caps, T-shirts and whistles, but also images of saints and stickers saying *'Srpsko Kosovo'* (Serbian Kosovo), *'Nikad granica!'* (Never a border!) and *'Kosovo je srce Srbije'* (Kosovo is the heart of Serbia).

I join Boris, Nebojša and Dragan. We agree that the overall atmosphere is more like a pre-party for the Exit Festival – only the people present do not support this image: *'You can see they all come from villages,'* Nebojša tells. *'Did you see those buses? They all came with them.'* Dragan adds:

⁹² See: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2012&mm=11&dd=24&nav_id=83324.

⁹³ Expressed by a 21-year old guy that wanted to remain anonymous during the protest that this chapter is now going to describe. This heart/head-distinction is by the way how many people explained it to me: while Kosovo is the heart, Vojvodina is the head, meaning that Kosovo is where the national story started, but Vojvodina where the national story will continue: Vojvodina will take Serbia into Europe, and Central-Serbia will follow.

⁹⁴ Referring to a series of rallies in which Slobodan Milošević's supporters succeeded in overthrowing local governments of Vojvodina, Kosovo and Montenegro. Similar actions in Croatia and Slovenia led to the call for independence. In Vojvodina, this is called the Yogurt Revolution: the Vojvodina government gave bread and yogurt to the protesters, on which they responded with throwing thousands of yogurt packages at the parliament building. October 6, 1988 Milošević managed to replace the entire collective leadership of Vojvodina with his men of trust.

'I think many protesters have Bosnian, Croatian or Kosovar background and are afraid of more separatism.' When I ask Nebojša what he thinks about all of this, he answers: *'I don't care, I'm a lala remember?'* Then Dragan interrupts; he found someone that wanted to lend us his Serbian flag, so that we could take a picture with it: *'For my grandchildren, so that they can see that I was fighting for a united Serbia!'* He laughs.

Exactly at five o'clock the ceremony starts: *'Dear friends, Serbs and Vojvodinians. (...) What is Vojvodina? Who is Vojvodina? This is Vojvodina and we are Vojvodina! (...) We are here to determine our future and stop separatism and further dividing of the Serbian lands.'* These lines are copied from Koštunica's speech on Kosovo ten years earlier on the Parliament Square in Belgrade. After *Bože Pravde* (God of Justice, Serbia's national anthem) is sung, the next speaker skilfully uses feelings of national pride to mention that it is now exactly one hundred years ago that it was decided that *'this territory is part of Serbia! We won't allow any more separatism!'*

Then, out of the blue an airplane appears above the crowd, causing confusion among us all: What is this? Who is doing this? What is the message? In the next few minutes it keeps circling low above the crowd and the parliament building. Initially people around me think it belongs to the organizers of the protest to show off, but when we cannot hear the speaker that is trying really hard to be heard and to calm the crowd, Dragan opts: *'It is probably a trick by the Vojvodinian government, to show their power and to confuse the protesters.'* When the airplane leaves, we can only hear the last words of the speaker who is not referring to hundred years ago when Vojvodina joined Serbia, but to twenty years ago: *'On exactly this day Yugoslavia fell apart because Croatia declared its independence. Now, this day again, Vojvodina does the same. This is pure provocation!'* Serbian national flags are held high, but I notice several flags of multiple youth organizations and right-wing extremist movements, including the huge, black Četnik one.⁹⁵ Nebojša does not like this: *'This is a peaceful protest, but those people turn it into war.'* He laughs when he sees a Russian flag behind it: *'People really think that Russia can be a substitute for the EU. But then we will become isolated again, surrounded by EU-countries.'*

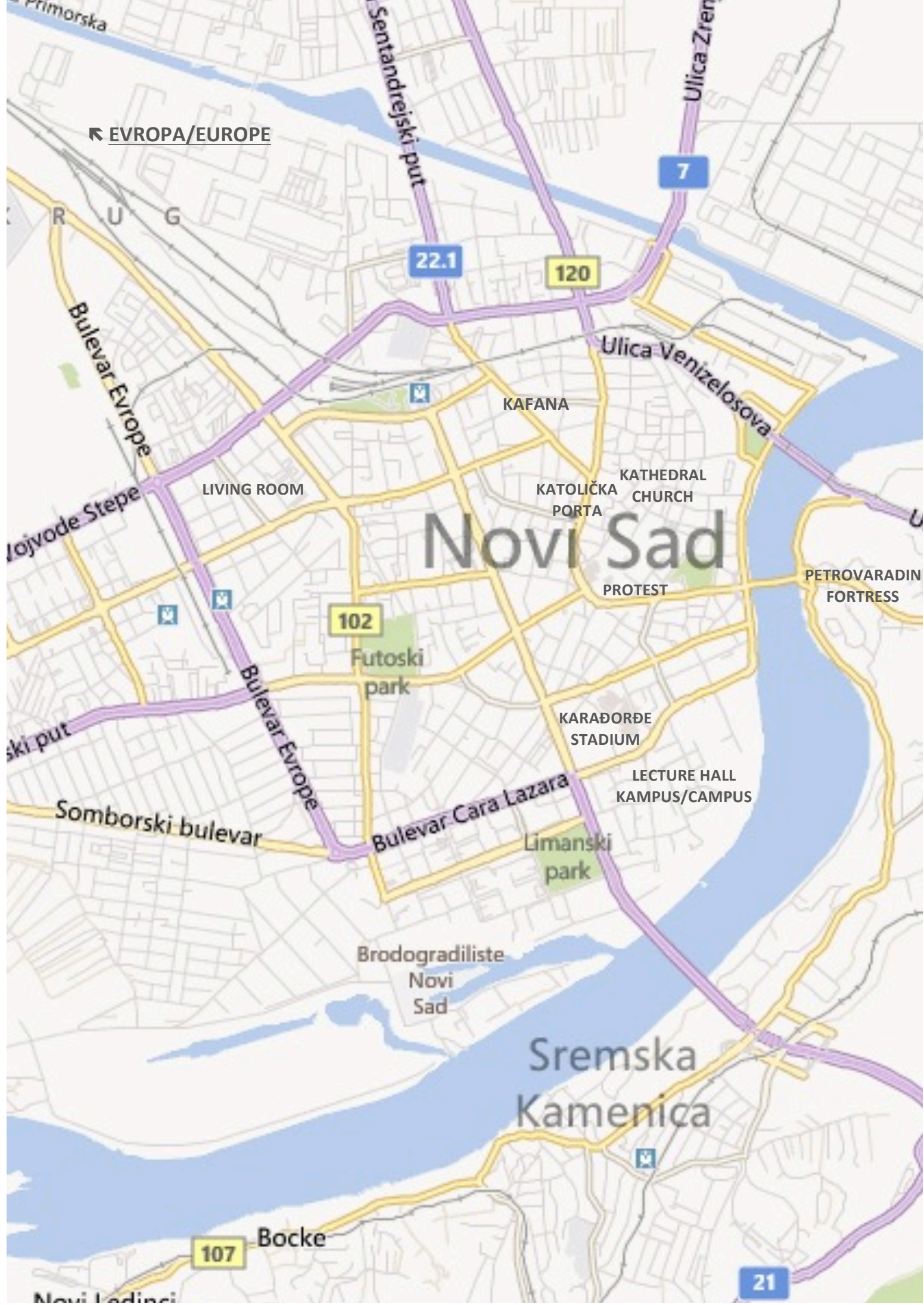
The last speaker is Novi Sad's mayor, who proudly shares: *'As mayor of Novi Sad, I am mayor of the Serbian Athens. (...) We don't need a new language, history or government, and we don't need independence, because this is Serbia!'* He concludes with the poetic words *'Vojvodina je bila, Vojvodina jeste i Vojvodina će biti uvek u Srbiji!'* (Vojvodina was, Vojvodina is and Vojvodina will always remain part of Serbia!), copied from a speech by Milošević in Kosovo.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Četniks were Serb nationalist and monarchist paramilitary organizations formed as a resistance against the Ottoman Empire in 1904, and participating in the two Balkan Wars (1912-1918), World War I (1914-1918), World War II (1940-1945) and the recent Yugoslav wars (1991-1999). Now they are de-militarized and officially prohibited. Nonetheless you can sometimes see people proudly wear a Četnik t-shirt.

⁹⁶ From a speech on June 28, 1989 by Slobodan Milošević which was the centrepiece of a day-long event to mark the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. The speech was delivered to a huge crowd that gathered around the Gazimestan monument. It came against a backdrop of intense ethnic tension between ethnic Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo and increasing political tensions between Serbia and other republics of SFR Yugoslavia caused by the so called anti-bureaucratic revolutions explained before. The mayor of Novi Sad clearly recalls this feeling.

The fear for separatism and Serbia's position vis-à-vis 'the West' are strongly related, both in history as in today's popular discourses: separatists use their *Europeanness* to distance themselves from *Serbdom*, while nationalists use the fear for separatism to emphasize the importance of *Serbdom*. Additionally, while nationalists see European integration as yet another way of losing their national identity, advocates for Vojvodina's multiculturalism depict European integration as a way of securing Vojvodina's specific historical and cultural identity. In the end, it all boils down to the question: do we belong to Europe? And if yes, how? (Armbruster et al. 2003; Balibar 2004). Many Serbs do not see themselves becoming 'real Europeans,' since it is Europe that bombed them, isolated them for more than ten years and immediately recognized Kosovo's independence. Moreover, they think it takes way too long before EU-candidacy is agreed upon. They feel kept 'on the threshold of in and out' (Khosravi 2007) and they do not see when and how this will change.

At a quarter to seven the protest comes to an end. With the sun still shining, all of a sudden rain starts pouring. When a rainbow appears above the parliament building I cannot help myself thinking that this is a response to right-wing nationalist rhetoric. Most stories describe Vojvodina as a place of different people who all live in peaceful coexistence for centuries. Opposite to what passing-by banners are telling me, according to Novi Sad's young intellectuals Vojvodina is not only a place for Serbs but rather a place where every individual should feel at home. Many of them also place themselves in line with what is happening in the rest of Europe: throughout the whole continent, currently citizens challenge their political leaders with protests and resistance, and are people afraid of Others and newcomers that threaten their (national) identity (cf. Castells 2004).



↖ EVROPA/EUROPE

Novi Sad

LIVING ROOM

KAFANA

KATOLIČKA PORTA
KATHEDRAL CHURCH

PROTEST

PETROVARADIN FORTRESS

102
Futoski park

KARADORĐE STADIUM

LECTURE HALL
KAMPUS/CAMPUS

Limanski park

Brodogradiliste
Novi Sad

Sremska
Kamenica

107 Bocke

21

On the way to Europe, as a road to normalcy

We have now reached our final destination, but this is not the end. Starting from the fortress, where Vojvodina's Serbian story started too (Malcolm 2002; Anscombe 2006), we reached the campus, where young people form their identities (cf. Mead 1939; Spasenić 2011) and outings of cultural wars are visible. Urban/rural, modern/traditionally and European/Balkan are the most important ones (Denich 1969; Simić 1973, 1984; Spangler 1984; Van de Port 1994; Đurković 2004; Simić 2009). We visited the lecture hall, the living room and the church, where young *Novosađani* explained many different aspects of de- and re-traditionalization (Heelas et al. 1996; Mihailović 2003; Vujović 2003). We experienced the highly storied reality of the *kafana* (cf. Van de Port 1994) and during a football match we saw two important narratives that exclude each other coming together. At *Katolička Porta* we saw that young urban intellectuals have no difficulties in negotiating and combining these stories (cf. Tsing 2005) and got to know their devotion for multiculturalism and their identifications with Vojvodina. The protest showed that some people consider this a serious threat, afraid for national disintegration (cf. Van de Port 1995; Hayden 2002; Anderson 2006; Gould 2007; Todorova 2009). In all these different settings, gatherings and negotiations I showed that culture should be studied as habits of knowledge. I conceptualized life as movement, as lived along lines. Where inhabitants meet, trails entwine, as the life of each becomes bound up with the other (Ingold 2011: 148). The places this thesis describes should thus be seen as knots, and the threads from which they are tied as lines of wayfaring. We now end on the way to Europe, for this implicates an open end. The reason for this is that ethnography can never be complete: like knowledge, life always goes on.

During the protest, the rest of Novi Sad is its calm and peaceful self. Parks and terraces are packed, and people stroll down the streets. The old man plays Hungarian folk music in his usual place at *Trg Slobode*, just as (even) the man playing Serbian traditional music on his *gusle* in *Zmaj Jovina*.⁹⁷ Ice cream and popcorn sellers are doing great business, and none of my other friends joined or even considered joining the protest. They see it as 'nothing more than cheap, populist politics.' '*Parties that are nationally in power just can't stand that they don't have full power here, that's all,*' Nikola explains. '*Which doesn't mean that all those people screaming about Serbia's disintegration don't mean it; they are really afraid. But it's only a small part of Vojvodina's population.*' Separatism or another war is not a real issue, but Dušana claims: '*Up till now, Vojvodina's elites and intellectuals remained silent, but it is a matter of time until they open their mouths as well. We Vojvodinians are calm and silent people, but if they keep disturbing our peace, I cannot deny the possibility of people wanting to become a separate republic in the future.*' Young urban intellectuals don't understand: Why these protests? More unrest and insecurity? Dividing us once again? According to them,

⁹⁷ A typical Serbian instrument with only one string bound at the top of the neck and a tuning peg; *Zmaj Jovina* is the street leading to *Trg Slobode*.

Vojvodina is an *example* for the rest of Serbia, but nonetheless *part* of it: they see in Vojvodina Serbia's blueprint for the future and the road to 'Europe' and normalcy.



"I am Vojvodinian – I am what I am. I do not want a path to Europe, but a return to it."

Message presented on numerous billboards and posters throughout Novi Sad during the 2011 census.⁹⁸

December 19, 2009 marks a turning point in Serbia's history: after twenty years of isolation, Serbia was finally added to the list of countries whose citizens can travel freely without visas throughout the European Union. This date was greatly anticipated as the culmination of Serbia's painful transformation from an authoritarian pariah state to a democracy on the verge of European integration (Van de Port 1994; Todorova 2009; Drakulić 2012). Politicians from both sides⁹⁹ agreed that this was the beginning of Serbia's 'return to Europe.' For young Vojvodinians this meant that they finally became part again of what they have always felt to *belong* to (Hedetoft & Hjort 2002). They furthermore saw in this '*the possibility to leave the past behind and direct [themselves] towards the future.*' But the importance is even greater: the Serbian daily *Blic* headlined 'The situation in Serbia is becoming normal.' They claimed that this day 'symbolically marked the end of a decade which we might call the decade-long-restoration of normalcy.'

This thesis argued that young *Novosađani* often consider their lives as decided by others, finding themselves caught between multiple frames and narratives about self, society and the world around them. Bitterly and disappointed some of them told me that I chose a good place to conduct my research. Doing so, they already understood themselves to be characters in somebody else's story, a narrative representation that they themselves could not control. This made working together on this study and the creation of this thesis more exciting but also more relevant and urgent: together we decided that this thesis should include stories of the past while its focus should be on the future. Young people's quest for Europe and 'normalcy' plays a crucial role in this.

In stories I collected, 'normal lives' are defined not only by living standards, order and social welfare, but also the dignity of having 'a place in the world' (Jansen 2009: 14). For young people I spoke with, returning to Europe means returning to normalcy combined with international respect and a functioning state. Many of them struggle with nationalism, interethnic exclusion and outsider judgements of Serbia as barbaric, violent and backward (cf. Van de Port 1995; Todorova 2009). They hate it that although they feel European, they are still not fully-fledged part of the European community (Bellier & Wilson 2000; Armbruster et al. 2003; Balibar 2004; Todorova 2009). This exacerbates feelings of being 'out of control.' According to Ahearn (2001) this points to a loss of a

⁹⁸ The authors were firstly anonymous, but later identified as the NGO League of Social Equality. See also:

http://www.slobodnavojvodina.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=190:izjasni-se-kao-vojvoanin-ili-vojvoanka&catid=3:akcija&Itemid=16

⁹⁹ Prva Srbija and Druga Srbija, nationalists and anti-nationalists, anti-Europeans and pro-Europeans.

particular understanding of agency in which one's desires, the effects of one's actions and the acknowledgement of those actions by others are strongly interrelated. The intersection of forms of state sovereignty and the experience of citizen agency make important contributions to how young people decide about and organize their lives. I therefore follow Greenberg (2011) in that 'normal' thus points to the gap between how people see themselves and how they must conform to conditions and realities they did not chose themselves.

Recent shifts in Serbia's (geo)political position and changing social dynamics, both intra-nationally and internationally, reveal intimate links between people's sense of self as moral and agentic subjects and the conditions that structure power-relations. In this, Vojvodina constitutes an ambiguous position: it is both the place they come from that provides them with feelings of home and *belonging* (cf. Hedetoft & Hjort 2000), and the political body they are subjected to. It mediates between the local society of Novi Sad and the national community of Serbia. Because of this, young people who identify themselves with Vojvodina base their identifications on both emotional and functional arguments: they use it as a *weapon* against discourse about people, nation, victimization and superiority, but also feel better in a diverse and tolerant society such as Vojvodina. In narratives of *Europeanness* and multiculturalism, they direct themselves to the city, the West and global subcultures and trends. While nationalists constantly refer to Serbia's past, they focus on the future.

Considering this, it is important to note that even though Novi Sad's young intellectuals experience to live in a society without rules, a state without (working) institutions and laws, and a national community without moral compass or a moral compass that is based on traditions that most of them don't feel comfortable with, re-traditionalization (cf. Heelas et al. 1996) is not simply a resurgence of old values. In coexistence with de-traditionalization I showed how people (whether 'traditional', 'modern' or 'postmodern') always live in terms of conflicting demands 'associated, on the one hand, with voices of authority emanating from realms transcending the self *qua* self, and, on the other, with those voices emanating from the desires, expectations, and competitive or idiosyncratic aspirations of the individual' (Heelas et al. 1996: 7).

The point is that all forms of identity are inherently unstable precisely because they emerge from a mix of social roles, perspectives and registers that we can never fully inhabit (Goffman 1956; Bakhtin 1981; Irvine 1996). They are constantly changing and negotiated (Saïd 1999; Eriksen 2002; Armbruster et al. 2003; Sen 2006). This creates tension and friction. Yet, negotiation (cf. Ghorashi 2003) and collaboration (cf. Tsing 2005) leads to creative outcomes. Young people's identification with Vojvodina and Europe are examples of this. However, in current late-modern, liquid times when everything seems temporary and changeable (Castells 2004; Bauman 2007) consistency and unity of

the self (Giddens 1991) becomes of great value. Hereby, the importance of narrative discourse (Ricoeur 1974; Genette 1980; Nordstrom 2007; Ingold 2011) should not be underestimated.

Anderson (2006: 187) explains that *new* and *old* are aligned diachronically, and the former appears always to invoke an ambiguous blessing from the dead. In this sense, not only national biographies but also personal life stories must be read genealogically: they are shaped in a way that they answer people's longing for continuity (Anderson 2006: 195). As Serbia's history has proven, all profound changes in consciousness bring with them characteristic amnesias. But precisely out of such oblivion, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives (Anderson 2006: 204). Out of alienation comes a conception of personhood (identity) that, exactly because it cannot be *remembered*, must be *narrated*. Based on Anderson (2006: 204-205) I argue that this is true for nations as well. Therefore, when different nations live together like in Vojvodina different stories come together and, eventually, sometimes clash.

The general 'information blackout' about the 1990s and the absence of films, lectures and public dialogue that would raise awareness of the events while history books avoid discussion of the wars almost entirely (Obradović 2008: 22) is important to bear in mind when considering young people's identity formation, not least because the conflicts themselves were intrinsically connected to ideas of belonging and identity (Kaldor 1999). The current post-war context means that identities of Others remain highly politicized and memories of ethnic conflict are still vivid (Obradović 2008). While the general trend in narratives by Novi Sad's young urban intellectuals is one of tolerance, this basic tolerance was therefore often underscored by prejudices and misconceptions regarding others. According to Obradović (2008: 24), this indicates that they take themselves to be the norm against which other groups are judged. But this is what every human being does (cf. Eriksen 2002; Parekh 2009). As classification is inherent to human social life (Barth 1969; Eriksen 2002; Castells 2004; Bauman 1998, 2007, 2011) it would not only be incorrect but also unfair to consider young inhabitants of Novi Sad to be different than their peers in Western Europe, something which has already been done too often (cf. Todorova 2009). Exactly because of this I argue that 'it is in the art of storytelling, not in the power of classification, that the key to knowledgeability – and therefore culture – ultimately resides' (Ingold 2011: 164). Because young *Novosađani* always narrated Vojvodina's multicultural and European identity, I will focus on that in my concluding words.



European identity and tradition on the one hand and the European Union on the other is not the same thing (cf. Coles 2000; Arbruster et al. 2003; Balibar 2004; Biserko et al. 2008: 28; Todorova 2009). The EU is in the first place an economic and geopolitical entity. European identity is far more complex; piles of books have been written about this and libraries are brimming with such titles.

Hence, I can only touch on the subject of this session. Indeed, someone might say – and would be right to a certain extent – that there is no gap between the European Union and European traditions. However, the European Union cannot appropriate European identity as a whole, since individual, collective, national and transnational identities are instable: they are not made once and forever, but are changeable. Similarly, European identity permanently calls for new interpretations as well.

It is true that Serbia's movement towards Europe is snail-paced. But bearing in mind Vojvodina's traditional capacities and other traits, they could be a driving force of Serbia's modernization (i.e. the fulfilment of modernization, as explained by Ćosić) that preconditions European integration that most young people and increasingly more politicians want.¹⁰⁰ If all Vojvodinians together are able to find a way to leave behind them a society characterized by 'difference multiculturalism' in which culture is reduced to ethnic belonging, and direct themselves to what Turner (1993) describes as 'critical multiculturalism', Vojvodina will be able to escape its notions of 'folklorist Others' (Kobayashi 1993; Žižek 1996; Baumann 1999) and remain its position as an example for other modern multicultural societies, not only in the Balkans but throughout the whole of Europe. Together with other Europeans it is now time to find a pattern of collective (European) identity made up of all differences (cf. Epshtein 1995; Baumann 1999; Beck 2006).

As I have shown, Novi Sad's young intellectuals already set a good example. They showed that a shared Vojvodina's identity does exist, though not as a ready-made pattern. This provides them with a great preparation for the future, since ethnically homogeneous states are almost non-existent or currently under great pressures (cf. Castells 2004) inherently to our late-modern, liquid world (Bauman 2007). By combining diversity and homogeneity, young people narrate themselves in line with Ingold's (2011: 164) conceptualization that knowledge, and therefore culture, resides in the act of storytelling and not in the power of classification. Like every human being they do classify, but, as shown in each chapter, it is precisely by its context and relations that every element is identified and positioned: stories always and inevitably draw together what classifications split apart (Ingold 2011: 160). This is what storytelling has to offer anthropology: as an approach and method for ethnographic research it allows us to reassemble differences back together, just as people 'in the field' do. It offers us a way to finally really practice our constructionist approach, without losing track of power relations (i.e. Bourdieu's habitus). Rediscovering the crucial relation between story and life forces us to see that life is not a movement towards terminal closure (cf. Geertz 1973: 45) but rather a movement of opening (cf. Ingold 2011: 4). It brings anthropology back to life.

¹⁰⁰ Including the nationalist oriented current government, who is now even negotiating with Priština because the EU demanded them to.

'In Novi Sad, until the end I stayed with you
Oh Jelena, oh Jelice, hug me, stay with me
After tamburaši and good wine Novi Sad, I stayed because of you
As soon as dawn breaks and the sun rises in Novi Sad, I send you kisses
In Novi Sad I'll stay with you, my sweet angels'

Lyrics from the 1972 cult song *U Novom Sadu* (In Novi Sad) by Zoran Gajić that is still often played in Vojvodinian tamburaši kafanas today.

Tamburaši is traditional music from Vojvodina.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Tamburaši refers to traditional music made on a long-necked lute that is popular in Eastern and Central Europe, particularly in the south of Hungary, the north of Serbia (Vojvodina) and the Northeast of Croatia (Slavonia). The name and some characteristics come from the Persian tambur, but it also resembles the mandolin. Tamburaši is known for its light and easy sounds, making it completely different from Serbian traditional music.

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Appendix I: Vidovdan

Vidovdan (St. Vitus Day) is a 1989 patriotic Serb folk song by the famous Serbian singer Gordana Lazarević, but recorded by many different artists after.¹⁰²

U nebo gledam prolaze vekovi,
Sećanja davnih jedini lekovi.

I am looking at the sky while centuries pass by
The only remedy for old memories.

Kud god da krenem
Tebi se vraćam ponovo.
Ko da mi otme iz moje duše Kosovo

Wherever I may go
I will always return to you
Who can tear Kosovo away from my soul¹⁰³

Vidovdan
K'o večni plamen u našim srcima
Kosovskog boja ostaje istina.

St. Vitus' Day
Like an eternal flame burning in our hearts
The battle of Kosovo remains the truth.

Vidovdan
Oprosti Bože sve naše grehove
Junaštvom daruj kćeri i sinove.

St. Vitus' Day
Lord, forgive us of all our sins
Give courage to our daughters and sons.

At the moment, the song is still being covered by many bands and often sung at gatherings and parties. I heard the song when groups of friends met and got drunk, at night at the student home square at the university campus, but also in the Serbian variant of Idols/X-Factor.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² See video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhqrJsJf3g>. Tip: take a look at the comments too!

¹⁰³ Rhetoric question, meant negative as in: nobody can.

¹⁰⁴ See video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhtF6cxkfQI>.

Appendix II: Demographic ethnic structure of the population of Vojvodina

Recent trends in Vojvodina's population according to ethnic groups in the period of 1981-2011:

Ethnic group ¹⁰⁵	1981		1991		2002		2011 (2)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Serbs	1,107,375	54,4	1,143,723	56,8	1,321,807	65,05	-	-
Hungarians	385,356	18,9	339,491	16,9	290,207	14,28	-	-
Slovaks	69,549	3,4	63,546	3,1	56,637	2,79	-	-
Croats	109,203	5,4	74,808	3,7	56,546	2,78	-	-
Yugoslavs	167,215	8,2	174,295	8,7	49,881	2,45	-	-
Montenegrins	43,304	2,1	44,838	2,2	35,513	1,75	-	-
Romanians	47,289	2,3	38,809	1,9	30,419	1,50	-	-
Roma (1)	-	-	-	-	29,057	1,43	-	-
Total	2,034,772		2,013,889		2,031,992		1,916,889	

- (1) Only from the 2002 census Roma are being considered and measured as a separate ethnic group.
- (2) The official *Demographic Yearbook of the Republic of Serbia* mentions the following on top of page 25:¹⁰⁶

'National and ethnic affiliation. In line with the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, which guarantees citizens the freedom of expression of national affiliation, the citizen may not declare her/his national affiliation. The data on national affiliation is provided by free will of the person (when marrying, divorcing or migrating), while that of the mother and father (in case of births) and of the deceased person is provided by the declarant of births, i.e. death. Data on population natural and mechanical changes for this characteristic are aggregated according to the classification of national affiliation, which was applied in the 2002 Population Census.'

Discussion

Based on the 2002 census,¹⁰⁷ there are more interesting demographic characteristics that I want to point out. As is clear from the data, Serbs constitute an absolute majority of people in Vojvodina, constituting more than 65 per cent of the total population. They also make up an absolute majority in most of the municipalities and large cities in Vojvodina, except in the northern city of Subotica – which is the second largest city in Vojvodina – which has a more mixed population with no absolute majority of any nation, even though the Serbian language is dominant in Subotica as well. In the city of Novi Sad, Serbs constitute a 75,50 per cent majority.

The second largest ethnic group and the biggest ethnic minority are Hungarians. They mostly live in northern Vojvodina and constitute an absolute majority in six municipalities, while there are also two ethnically mixed municipalities in which ethnic Hungarians constitute the largest per cent of the population. Hungarian is one of the six official languages of Vojvodina.

¹⁰⁵ Based on the book *Razvoj etničke i verske strukture Vojvodine* (The development of ethnic and religious structures of Vojvodina) by Saša Kicošev and Drago Njegovan (2010, Novi Sad). But also on , and: <http://webzr.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/>

¹⁰⁶ Available at: <http://webzr.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Public/PageView.aspx?pKey=164> under the heading *Special publications*, fourth document, called 'Demography Statistics, 2010'.

¹⁰⁷ Available at the same place, but then choose 'Demographic Statistics, 2002'.

The third largest ethnic group is ethnic Slovaks, only constituting an absolute majority in one municipality and constituting the largest per cent of the population in another municipality. Also Slovakian is one of the six official languages of Vojvodina.

Croatian is also one of the six official languages in Vojvodina, although it does not differ much from Serbian. Most Croats live in the north and in the West, close to Croatia. In census, some Bunjevci and most of Sokci of Vojvodina also declare themselves as Croats or as Yugoslavs.

Of the total population, most Yugoslavs live in Vojvodina. This is partly due to ethnic mixing and mixed marriages, which are still and have been frequent especially in Vojvodina. They do not clearly identify themselves with any other group. Also, there are people that do not consider ethnicity or nationality as an important factor in their lives; Yugoslav is considered neutral.

Montenegrins started settling in Vojvodina during the twentieth century, mostly after World War II. They mostly speak Serbian. There are, however, four settlements in which Montenegrins are the majority. Also, today Montenegrins can go to Serbia to study and work without needing any special documents. They then have the same right as official Serbian citizens.

Romanians settled in Vojvodina during the great migrations of Balcanic people caused by the Ottoman Conquest (1552-1716), but also during later Austro-Hungarian administration (1716-1776). Also Romanian is one of the six official languages of Vojvodina. Especially in the east there are ethnic clear Romanian settlements and settlements in which Romanians are a majority.

Roma, or Gypsies as they are still more often called, do not have an official language in Vojvodina. There are, however, TV programs and other publications in Roma language. The largest concentration of Roma people can be found in the east, but far from all Roma people are officially registered or have personal documents, so they are not always well documented. Besides, many Roma people still move a lot, so it is not easy to keep track of them.

Then there are many other small ethnic groups. One of them is *Bunjevci* (19,766), a South Slavic community originating from Western Herzegovina and now only living in northern Vojvodina and southern Hungary. They speak a specific dialect of the former Serbo-Croatian language. In census, they declare their language as Bunjevac or Serbian, just as Croats sometimes do. Mostly they are considered as “other languages”. As noted before, they often declare themselves as Croats or Yugoslavs. This nationality division also divides some Bunjevac families, which makes it sometimes unclear how big and vital their group actually is.

A second group is *Rusyns* (15,626), a specific Slavic minority in Serbia and Croatia that are considered to be part of the northern Ruthenians, who live mostly in Ukraine and in Slovakia, Poland, Romania, Czech Republic and Hungary, but this fact keeps their own group very divided. The main difference between those two groups is language, since *Rusyns* in Vojvodina have more Slavic features than the language of northern *Rusyns*.

Just as Montenegrins, Macedonians (11,785) settled in Vojvodina during the 20th century, mostly after World War II. Just as Montenegrins, they mainly came due to economic reasons, since Vojvodina was one of the richest parts of the former Yugoslavia (Bogdanović 1998; Dimitrijević et al. 2000; Damjanović et al. 2005). They speak Macedonian, which is, again, closely linked to Serbian but has Bulgarian and Turkish influences.

Ukrainians (4,635) mainly live in the east and speak Ukrainian.

Then there are also Muslims (3,634) by nationality who mostly speak the Serbian language. However, the number of Muslims in the sense of followers of Islam is significantly higher.

Germans (3,154) or *Danube Swabians*, came in a couple of waves mostly in the 18th century. The older ones speak a form of Swabian German while their children speak fluent Serbian, but also often know High German, mostly due to economic reasons. The German population was far more numerous in the past (at about 350,000 before World War II, making it one of the three largest groups in Vojvodina, next to Serbs and Hungarians) but around 250,000 of them left during the withdrawal of Nazi forces, after which the Yugoslav Communist government took a reprisals on ethnic citizens of German origin: they had their citizenship revoked and their belongings and houses were nationalized and taken from them, or they were put in prison camps. Later, many of them fled to Germany or Austria.

Then there are also Slovenes (2,005), again due to Yugoslavian times, who mostly speak Slovene, a language that is close to Serbian but not like Croatian, Bosnian or Montenegrin which is more or less the same language.

Albanians (1,685; 2,251 according to the 2011 census) mostly speak Albanian. Like Montenegrins, Macedonians and Slovenes, they also mostly came during Yugoslav times, in which they often started small businesses in other parts of Yugoslavia: Albanians are known for their bakeries and ice cream shops.

Bulgarians (1,658; mostly from Banat, eastern Vojvodina, and not from Bulgaria) in general speak Bulgarian but understand and often speak Serbian very well too.

Czechs (1,648) mostly speak Czech and can be found mostly in the far east of Vojvodina.

Next to these ethnic groups, also Russians (940), Gorani (606), Bosniaks (417), Vlachs (101), Sokci (according to the 1991 census, there were 1,866 Soksi in Vojvodina; today they are mostly registered as Croats), ethnic Jews (206), Ashkali (287; previously often regarded as part of Roma nationality), Egyptians (201), Greeks (191), Poles (103), and Chinese (officially there were only 27 Chinese in Novi Sad city according to the 2002 census, but the actual number is much higher). Because of recent migrations to Vojvodina, there are many Chinese shops and restaurants in Novi Sad and other Vojvodinian cities.

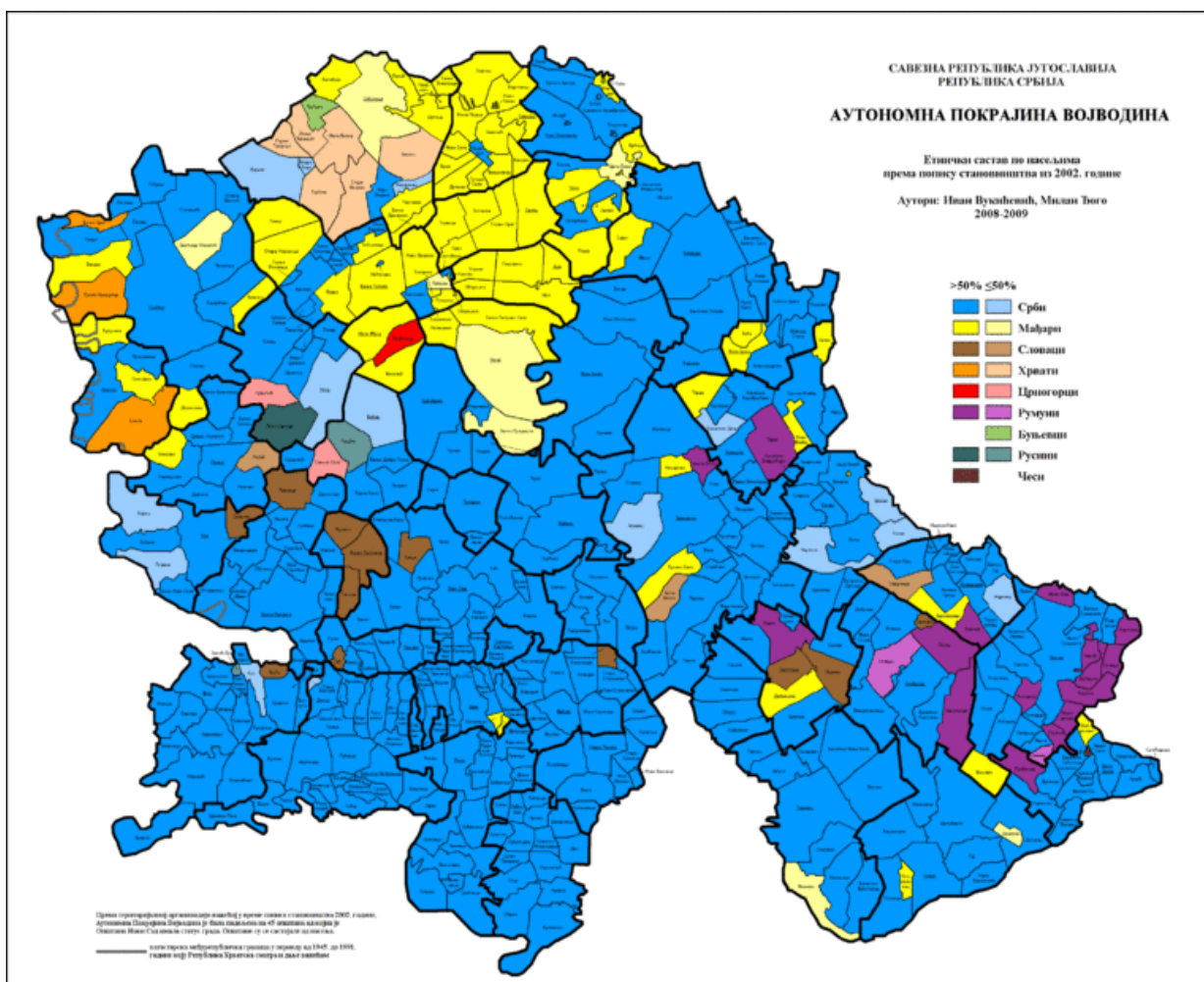
Refugees

While Serbs constitute an absolute majority, many of these ethnic Serbs have non-Serbian backgrounds. They originally came from Bosnia, Croatia or other Yugoslav republics already during Yugoslavia (mainly because of economic reasons), but also during the wars in the 1990s (Dragojević 2008: 300) that brought 259,719 refugees to Vojvodina, which is 42,0 per cent of their total number in Serbia (Bubalo 2005: 112). They all have a Serbian nationality and are from Serbian ethnic origin, but territorially and culturally they come from different backgrounds.

Therefore, also strong multiculturalism exists *within* the ethnic Serbian majority. As pointed out before, many of these refugees are also often still seen as migrants or minorities – both by themselves, as by the Serbian ethnic Serb majority.

Mapping these ethnic groups

According to the 2002 census, the ethnic map of Vojvodina based on municipality and settlements¹⁰⁸ is as follows:



¹⁰⁸ Available at: <http://www.balkanum.com/forum/showthread.php/7213-Demographic-Maps-of-Vojvodina>. Translation out of Serbian in Cyrillic: blue is for Serbs, yellow for Hungarians, brown is for Slovaks, orange for Croats, red for Montenegrins, purple Rusyns, Green Bulgarians, turquoise Russians and dark brown Czech.

Appendix III: Research participants and contributing organizations

- Adrian Borka Superior expert associate in Human and Minority Rights, *Provincial Secretariat for Education, Administration and National Communities*, Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.
- Alisa 23, studying acting at the Academy of Art of the University of Novi Sad, currently playing in multiple plays and teaching children acting in Pancevo (South-Vojvodina).
- Ankica Dragin PR and Collaboration Programmes Advisor for the *Provincial Ombudsman of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina*, specialized in gender, ethnicity and oral history.
- Aleksa 20, studying at the Faculty of Technical Science of the University of Novi Sad. Working for the Exit Festival and *Happy Novi Sad*.
- Aleksandar 19, studying Sociology at the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Novi Sad. Working for the Exit Festival and *Happy Novi Sad*.
- Aleksandar 21, studied Economics at the University of Novi Sad and now working for VIP mobile as business sales representative.
- Aleksandar 24, studying Medicine at the University of Novi Sad.
- Bojan 23, stopped his study in economics last year and not works for a bus company.
- Bojan 28, PR representative for *Youth Centre Crna Kuca 13*, an educational alternative space for stimulation and development of social engagement and political activism, particularly among young people. They also stand up for gay rights.
- Boris 24, working for the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad.
- Boris 20, studying at the Faculty of Law of the University of Novi Sad and working for AIESEC Novi Sad.
- Boris 19, currently 'taking a break.'
- Boris Varga Journalist and publicist.
- Branka 28, studied English Language and Literature at the University of Novi Sad. Now working as an independent private teacher and translator.
- Democratic Party* Department of Vojvodina and Novi Sad. Social liberal and social democratic political, centre-left party. Currently the second largest party in the National Assembly and the official opposition party, but the largest party in the Assembly of Vojvodina and therefore also in power.
- Democratic Party of Serbia* Department of Vojvodina and Novi Sad. National conservative and Christian democratic political party. Right-wing and strongly Eurosceptic.

- Dragan 21, student International Business and Trade, and active in the field of youth and student organizations in Bosnia and Serbia. For example, he has been a member of the *Young European Federalists* and is now a member of *Youth for Youth Novi Sad* and *Youth Movement Perspective Derвента* (Bosnia), that both work on youth issues, youth activism and strengthen multicultural awareness.
- Dragana 28, social and political activist.
- Dražen 26, social and political activist. Member of *Social Democratic Youth*.
- Dunja 20, studying at the Faculty of Technical Science of the University of Novi Sad and working for the Exit festival.
- Dušan Sociology Professor on the University of Novi Sad.
- Dušan 35, director of *Happy Novi Sad*, a collective of young, creative people (12 on permanent contract and more than 200 temporarily or hired, not including volunteers) that organizes events and festivals throughout the whole Balkans and organizes the second biggest electronic stage on the Exit Festival. For years they have organized the Share Conference in Belgrade that is dedicated to protecting the rights of internet citizens and promoting positive values of openness, decentralization, free access and exchange of knowledge, information and technology.
- Dušana 34, now working for the biggest Serbian, (counter) cultural theatre festival *Sterijo Pozorije* and before for many other cultural projects and organizations.
- Đorđe 27, studied at the Economical Faculty of the University of Novi Sad and worked for Novi Sad's film festival Cinema City, for the Exit Festival and in Equatorial Guinea.
- Đorđe 22, student Political Science at the University of Novi Sad.
- Greens of Serbia* Department of Vojvodina and Novi Sad. Green political party, advocating environmental and ecological wisdom, social justice and solidarity, direct democracy, green economics, sustainability, respect for diversity and human rights, and prevention of all forms of violence.
- Humanitarian Centre of Integration and Tolerance* NGO founded in Novi Sad in 1997 with the aim to provide assistance and support permanent solutions for problems that refugees and other displaced persons have. Implementing partner of the UNHCR in the legal protection and assistance of refugees. Also, they promote and protect human rights and freedoms, and affirm democratic values and the rule of law. Next, they promote interethnic and interreligious tolerance and promote openness and communication between different cultural groups, culture of peace and dialogue and non-violent conflict resolution.
- Ivana Vukašević Legal Advisor for the *Humanitarian Centre of Integration and Tolerance*.

- Jovan 26, studying Medicine at the University of Novi Sad.
- Kristina Vuljaj 21, Student at the Faculty of Law at the University of Novi Sad and youth president of the *League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina* (political party).
- League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina* Regionalist and social-democratic political party, founded in Novi Sad. Advocate the right of autonomous decisions. Before they proclaimed its political goal establishing a Republic of Vojvodina within a federalized Vojvodina.
- Liberal Democratic Party* Department of Vojvodina and Novi Sad. Liberal political party. Centre and Pro-Europe. One of the few political parties in Serbia to actively support Serbia's NATO membership and Kosovo-Albania independence from Serbia. The only party that openly supports LGBT rights.
- Lidija Piroški Leading Candidate for the *Liberal Democratic Party* in Novi Sad and Vojvodina, publisher and cofounder of *Vrele Gume* (magazine) and *Nava Boats* (company).
- Marko 22, student of Political Science at the University of Novi Sad.
- Marko 24, social and political activist. Member of *Social Democratic Youth*.
- Matica Srpska* Oldest cultural-scientific institution of Serbia (and all Slavic maticas), founded in 1826 in Budapest and moved to Novi Sad in 1864, at the time of Serb national and cultural awakening while under Habsburg and Ottoman thraldom. In the national awakening, Serbs of Vojvodina played an important role as they formed at this period the core of Serb intellectual life. Besides, *Matica Srpska* was one half of a joint project (with *Matica Hrvatska*) to develop a common Serbo-Croatian dictionary (1954-1967). Nowadays it is mostly active in publishing the *Letopis Matice srpske* magazine (one of the oldest of the world, continuously published since 1842), law and legacy, and having a library with over 3.500.000 books and other documents.
- Mihajla Teaching assistant Sociology on the University of Novi Sad.
- Milan Milutin Chairman of *Democratic Party of Serbia* Youth Novi Sad, Member of the *ODSS* Presidency and Vice-President of the *Democrat Youth Community of Europe*.
- Milena 25, student Political Science at the University of Novi Sad.
- Milena 20, going to college in Economy.
- Miodrag 32, doing his PhD at the Faculty of Technical Sciences of the University of Novi Sad.
- Nebojša 25, student International Business and Trade at the University of Novi Sad.
- Nedim Sejdinović President of the Executive Board of *Independent Journalist' Association of Vojvodina*. Promoting civil society and open, critical and independent journalism.
- Nemanja Starović Former professor in History and member of council at the University of Novi Sad, worked for several companies and *Radio Televizija Vojvodine* as project manager in

- charge of cross-border co-operations, and now head of *Serbian Renewal Party* in Vojvodina and Vice-President of the Novi Sad Municipal Board.
- Nemanja 39, studied Tourism at the University of Novi Sad, has been active for the Exit Festival from 2003 until 2010 and now works for an alternative and urban magazine in Belgrade and Novi Sad.
- Nikola Burić 31, currently project manager for a software development company as well as for the *Novi Sad Education Centre*. Besides, he is a social activist in multiple fields and has been running office for the *Social Democratic Union* (political party).
- Olja 33, journalist and activist, finished studying political science, worked for many civil society organizations, among them the Agora Stage on the Exit Festival.
- Pokret Dveri* Social conservative and clerical social and political movement. Even though they failed (close call) to pass the 5% minimum threshold to enter parliament, they are the only nationalist organization that is able to organize itself politically. At the moment, Dveri's support seems to be growing.
- Ratko Bubalo President of the Managing Board of the *Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance* in Novi Sad. Academic and publicist.
- Rastko 26, studied Entrepreneurial Management. Now working for Happy Novi Sad. *Serbian Renewal Party* Department of Vojvodina and Novi Sad. Nationalist, monarchist, liberal-conservative but pro-European party.
- Slađana 22, finished her studies at the University of Novi Sad and currently has a job. Has also worked for the Exit Festival and *Happy Novi Sad*.
- Stanislava 22, studied Economics at the University of Novi Sad. Now working for the Exit festival and Vice-President of the Global Internship Program of AIESEC Novi Sad.
- Social Democratic Union* Social Democratic party, currently relatively unimportant in size.
- Srpski Narodni Pokret 1389* A political and social patriotic and nationalistic organization, opposing the national regime and many opposition parties, stating to provide the true way for the revival of Serbian state and society. They loudly oppose gay rights, the USA, the EU and Kosovo's independence, and just as loudly do they support Ratko Mladic, the late Slobodan Milosevic and adhere the Serbian Orthodox Church.
- Stefan Koprivica 21, Youth Coordinator of *Liberal Democratic Party* in Novi Sad and Vojvodina, and student at the Economical Faculty of the University of Novi Sad.
- Tamaš 26, social and political activist. Member of *Social Democratic Youth*.
- Treća Srbija* Department of Vojvodina and Novi Sad. Political party that refers to the national division of Prva (First) and Druga (Second) Serbia, which they see as the most important reason that Serbia is not making any political progress. As Treca (Third)

Serbia, they aim to reconcile First and Second Serbia in which they consider the construction of a national identity as top priority. Interestingly, while they claim to see this national identity as inclusive and not exclusive, most politicians recently joined coming from Pokret Dveri, when that nationalistic organization failed to meet the 5% census.

Vojvodina's Party Department of Vojvodina and Novi Sad. Its main goal is the economical and cultural development of Vojvodina, which is seen as a specific, historically confirmed, autonomous community of all its citizens. They advocate a decentralized regional political system of the Republic of Vojvodina, integration of Vojvodina into Europe, as well as human rights and social injustice.

Višnja 25, finished her bachelor in European economics and business at the University of Novi Sad, did media relations for CES music centre and worked for the Exit Festival and Happy Novi Sad. Currently working as an English teacher.

Vladimir 32, social and political activist.

Zoran 24, studies at the Economical Faculty of the University of Novi Sad.

Željko Stanetić Director of the *Vojvodinian Civic Centre* that works for open civil society values with priorities in promoting and protecting human rights, developing critical dialogue, particularly about what happened during the 1990s, and involving young people in social and political process through youth activism. Has studied Journalism at the University of Novi Sad and did PR for *Crna Kuca* (mentioned above).

Appendix IV: Abbreviations and foreign words and names

- Alternativci* People who themselves often deliberately do not want to be ‘fancy’ or ‘turbo-folk’, but are also addressed like this by others.
- Atina* Athens, a café overlooking both the central square *Trg Slobode* as the small square *Katolička Porta*. Referring to Novi Sad’s nickname of ‘Serbian Athens’.
- Beograd* Belgrade or ‘white city.’ Capital of Serbia, situated between Vojvodina and Central-Serbia in the confluence of the Sava and the Danube.
- Beogradski Kej* Belgrade Key, part of the bigger Key that is a 10 km foot- and bike path next to the Danube on the side of the city of Novi Sad. Many cafés, sport facilities and Strand (Beach) are situated along this path.
- Blic* Flash, Serbian middle-market daily tabloid newspaper, founded in 1996.
- Bože Pravde* God of Justice, national anthem of Serbia, written in 1872 with music from Davorin Jenko (Slovenian composer, 1835-1914) and lyrics from Jovan Đorđević (1826–1900), co-founder of the Novi Sad Serbian National Theatre (1861) and the National Theatre in Belgrade (1968).
- Braće Popović ulica* Street of Brother Popović, a Serbian military commander in two major uprisings against the Ottoman Empire.
- Bulevar Cara Lazara* Boulevard of Tsar Lazar. Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović was a medieval Serbian ruler, who was able to create the largest and most powerful state on the territory of the disintegrated Serbian Empire, gaining full support from the Serbian church. He found his death on *Kosovo Polje*, the field of the Blackbirds confronting a massive invading army of the Ottoman Empire on the 15th of June 1389. Although the battle was tactically inconclusive, the mutual heavy losses were devastating only for the Serbs. After a short stop, the Ottoman army invaded Serbia (and Bosnia) anyway. Prince Lazar is seen as an important figure for Serbian history and culture, and his coat of arms, the white bird on a red shield, is displayed on Serbia’s current national flag.
- Bulevar Oslobođenja* Boulevard of Liberation, the biggest and most central boulevard in the city, connecting the train station Northwest of the centre with the South, leading all the way to the Danube and the Liberation Bridge, connecting Novi Sad with Sremska Kamenica, a separate village on the other side of the river that nowadays is considered one of the suburbs of Novi Sad.

- Bulevar Kralja Petra* Boulevard of King Peter, the last King of Serbia from 1903 till 1918 and first ruler of the newly created Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes until his death in 1921.
- Cigani* Serbian word for gypsies, often also used jokingly, mockingly or negative.
- Ciganske Zore* Gypsie Sunrise, a traditional gypsy kafana in Kisačka street.
- Cvečara* Flower shop, or florist.
- Ćosić, Dobrica* One of Serbia's greatest novelist and intellectuals in the previous century who in the most critical period, at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, among other intellectuals became a prominent authoritative figure in the political life of Serbia and its national movement.
- Četnik* Serb nationalist and monarchist paramilitary organizations formed as a resistance against the Ottoman Empire in 1904, and participating in the two Balkan Wars (1912-1918), World War I (1914-1918), World War II (1940-1945) and the recent Yugoslav wars (1991-1999) as paramilitary groups.
- Detelinara* Predominantly socialist neighbourhood in the northeast of Novi Sad.
- Dođoši* Newcomers. Vojvodinians not fond of newcomers often use *dođoši*, which has a slightly insulting connotation.
- Došljaci* Newcomers. Neutral Serbian word for newcomers, in Novi Sad often used for people who recently moved to the city of Novi Sad.
- Druga Srbija* Referring to people who refuse Serbian populist nationalism. Opposite of *Prva Srbija*, originating from 1992, when mainly Belgrade's intellectuals openly protested against dictatorship, media-madness, nationalism and war.
- Dunavska Ulica* Danube Street, next to *Zmaj Jovina* one of the two important, old streets of Novi Sad, connecting *Zmaj Jovina* and the Bishop's Palace with *Dunavski Park*.
- Đinđić, Zoran* Serbian politician of the Democratic Party who was the Prime Minister of Serbia from 2001 (following the first democratic elections after the fall of Milošević) until his assassination in front of the government building. Before, he was mayor of Belgrade, opposition politician and doctor in philosophy.
- Đoković, Novak* Serbian tennis player, ranked world no. 1
- Elektrovojdina* Electricity company of Novi Sad, providing in the whole of Vojvodina.
- EU* European Union, the economic and political union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe and operates through a system of supranational independent institutions and intergovernmental negotiated decisions.
- Exit festival* The annual summer music festival on the Petrovaradin fortress of Novi Sad. It is staged annually since 2000, when it started as a 100 days student protest against the

Milošević regime, organized by three students from the University of Novi Sad. It always lasted four days, but since this year five.

Fenseri From the English word fancy, people who dress and behave 'fancy.' In the colloquial way of use, it however just as often refers to those people who are the opposite of fancy or try too hard to be fancy.

Firma The Firm, organized supporters of the Serbian professional sports club Vojvodina, Novi Sad. The members of Firma call themselves *Firmaši* and consists mainly of groups from the neighbourhoods and suburbs of Novi Sad who all have their own additional name.

FK Vojvodina *Fudbalski Klub Vojvodina*, Football Club Vojvodina.

Fruška Gora Mountainous area in Vojvodina. Most part of it is located within Serbia but a smaller part on its western side overlaps the territory of Croatia. Sometimes, it is referred to as 'jewel of Serbia,' due to its beautiful landscape protection area, nature and its picturesque countryside. Next, it also has a big historical and cultural meaning as well, because in the hills of Fruška Gora sixteen different 16th century Orthodox Monasteries are situated. Legends, however, trace them back to the 12th century.

Gotovina, Ante Croatian retired lieutenant general who served in the Croatian War for Independence. In 2001, the ICTY indicted him on a number of war crimes and crimes against humanity charges for crimes committed in 1995 during and in the aftermath of Operation Storm. In April 2011, he was found guilty on eight of the nine counts and sentenced for 24 years of imprisonment, but November 2012 he was found not guilty on all charges by the appeals panel at the ICTY and immediately set free.

ICTY The International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, more commonly referred to as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia is a body of the United Nations established to prosecute serious crimes committed during the wars in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, located in The Hague.

Jovanović, Jovan (Zmaj) One of the best-known Serbian poets, living from 1833 until 1904. He was physician by profession, but is best known for his children's poetry. His nickname *zmaj* (dragon) derives from the May Assembly on May 3rd 1848, during which the Serbs proclaimed autonomous Serbian Vojvodina.

Kafana Literally to be translated into café, but used to refer to local, traditional variant of cafés where they always play folk and sometimes gypsy music. For other cafés and bars, the word kafić or kafe is used.

Kafana je moja sudbina Popular 1990s song by the popular Serbian folk singer Toma Zdravković.

Kajmak Turkish and Balkan traditional dairy cow milk product, similar to clotted cream.

Karađorđe Black George (1768-1817) founded modern Serbia as the elected leader of the First Serbian Uprising that aimed at liberating Serbia from the Ottoman Empire (1804-1813) and personally led armies in several battles, which resulted in a short-lived state that he led alongside the newly founded People's Assembly and the Governing Council, simulating a wholly functional state government in war-time.

Karadžić, Radovan Bosnian Serb politician, born 1945 in Montenegro. As President of the *Republika Srpska* during the Bosnian War for Independence he sought direct unification of that entity with Serbia. Now he is detained in the United Nations Detention Unit of Scheveningen, accused of war crimes committed against Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats during the Siege of Sarajevo (1992-1996), as well as ordering the Srebrenica Massacre in 1995.

Katolička Porta Catholic Gate, a small street in between *Laze Telečkog*, the Catholic Church and *Trg Slobode*, overlooking many cafés and dominated by a white-marble fountain. During hot nights, here many (mostly alternative) young people hang around.

Kolači Cakes or cookies.

Kosovo Polje Field of the Blackbirds, situated in the West of today's Kosovo, an important historical and cultural site for the Serbian nation since it is here that they lost the decisive battle against the Ottomans in 1389, a year that remains important to the Serbian nation and the Serbian Orthodox community today, not only because of this battle but also because of the old monasteries and churches that are situated there.

Koštunica, Vojislav Born 1944, he is a Serbian politician and president of the Democratic Party of Serbia. He was president of Yugoslavia from 2000-2003 and prime-minister of Serbia from 2004-2008. Political centre-figure with nationalistic tendencies, aims at moderating Serbia's reforms and maintaining strong national union.

Krajina Literally border area, referring to the northern region of Croatia and the northwest region of Bosnia, where before the wars many Serb Croats and Bosnians lived.

Krempita (voćni) Typical Yugoslavian cream pie dessert (with fruits)

Krv i Čast Blood and Honour, nationalist movement in Serbia.

Lale Tulips, colloquial nickname for Vojvodinians, connoting characteristics of calmness and laziness, but also openness and tolerance.

Ulica Laze Telečkog Street of the Serbian theatre actor and prominent member of the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad Laza Telečki (1841-1873). Nowadays, this street is the nightlife street in Novi Sad, with numerous bars and discotheques.

- Lepa Brena* Pretty Brena. Born in 1960 in Tuzla (nowadays Bosnia) as Fahreta Jahić, she became a pop-folk singer and actress, commonly considered to be the most popular singer of the Balkans and top-selling female recording artist.
- Lepinja* Round pocket bread widely consumed in many Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan cuisines, originally coming to Serbia under Ottoman times. Lepinja – or somun or pita bread – is created by steam, which puffs up the dough. As the bread cools and flattens, a pocket is left in the middle.
- Mađari* Serbian word for Hungarians.
- Markač, Mladen* Croatian retired general and commander of the Croatian Special Police during Operation Storm (explained above, Ante Gotovina) and indicted by the ICTY for war crimes, found guilty and sentenced in April 2011, but found not guilty and released in November 2012.
- Mašinac* Student café in the cellar of the building of the Faculty of Science
- Matica Srpska* Serbian Queen Bee, the oldest Serbian cultural-scientific institution and now library of Serbia, situated in the old town of Novi Sad
- Miletić, Svetozar* Advocate, journalist, author, politician, mayor of Novi Sad and the political leader of the Serbs in Vojvodina (1826-1901). When in 1848-1849 the Hungarians began their wars against Austria, the Serbs in turn rose against the Hungarians for their national and civil liberties, but on the conclusion of peace they were incorporated as part of the Habsburg Empire without any of their rights recognized. However, during the May Assembly in Sremski Karlovci the Serbs eventually gained a sovereign status within the Empire.
- Milošević, Slobodan* Born in 1941, he was a Yugoslav and Serbian politician who was the President of Serbia (originally the Socialist Republic of Serbia within the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia) from 1989 to 1997 and the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1997 to 2000. He also led the Socialist Party from its foundation in 1990. His presidency was marked by the breakup of Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav Wars. In the midst of the 1999 NATO bombings of Yugoslavia, he was charged with war crimes including genocide and crimes against humanity. Milošević conducted his own defence in the five-year long trial, which ended without a verdict when he died in his prison cell in The Hague on 11 March 2006.
- Mučkalica* A traditional Serbian stew of minced meat and vegetables with herbs and oil, that has to be on the stove for several hours.
- Nacionalni stroj* National machine, nationalist movement in Serbia.
- Najlon Pijaca* Nylon Market or *gypsy market*, where they sell used goods.

- Narod* Serbian word for a people, nowadays often referring to ‘common people.’
- NATO** North Atlantic Treaty Organization, that after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 the organization became drawn into the breakup of Yugoslavia and conducted its first military interventions in Bosnia from 1992 to 1995 and later Yugoslavia in 1999. Its latest members are Croatia and Albania (2009), but in Serbia this is still a highly painful topic, since it is NATO that bombed Serbia in 1999 but an (unofficial) precondition for entering the EU.
- Nikolić, Tomislav Current President of Serbia, since 31 May 2012, and founder of the Serbian *Progressive Party* (split from the *Radical Party*, led by Vojislav Seselj who is currently already for twelve years in The Hague for war crimes) as Nikolić became in favour of Serbia’s accession to the EU. However, Nikolić is known for highly nationalist statements during the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s and journalists found out that he bought his university diplomas. At the same time, his government is doing well regarding EU-integration and negotiations with Kosovo, that the former Democratic government led by Boris Tadić did not succeed in.
- Novi Sad** New Settlement, the place this research is conducted.
- Novosađani* Inhabitants of Novi Sad, but also often used to demarcate the difference between “real” Novosađani and people who settled here later.
- OFK Beograd** Serbian football club from Belgrade. Literally translated OFK stands for youth football club. In comparison with Belgrade’s other football clubs (Partizan and Red Star) OFK is really small and unimportant.
- Otačastveni pokret Obraz* Fatherland Movement Honour, nationalist movement in Serbia.
- Otpor!* Civiv youth movement that existed from 1998 until 2003, employing a nonviolent struggle against the regime of Milošević as their course of action, gradually attracting more than 70,000 supporters. They were credited for their role in the successful overthrow of Milošević on 5 October 2000, but fell apart quite soon after Milošević was deposited due to a lack of mutual goals and means.
- Pajtić, Bojan** Vice-President of the Democratic Party and President of the Government of Vojvodina, holding an advanced degree from the Novi Sad Law School.
- Partizan* Officially Yugoslavian sports association Partizan, is a club from Belgrade, being the most awarded company in sports worldwide.
- Perović, Latinka** Serbian historian and former liberal politician, having to her name president of the Women’s Antifascist Front of Serbia from 1986-1972, but removed from her position because Josip Broz Tito considered her views too liberal. After that, she never returned to politics but devoted herself to historical research and become

known as one of the most prominent experts on Serbian history from the 19th century onwards.

- Peščanik* Hourglass. A web portal and radio broadcast that is very civic-oriented and calls for a complete break with the legacy of Serbian nationalism in the 1990s that they still see widespread and wide-accepted throughout Serbia.
- Petrovaradin The old settlement on the other side of the Danube, dominated by the view on the Petrovaradin fortress, part of the municipality of Novi Sad and also known as the 'Gibraltar of the Danube.'
- Pink TV Or Radio Televizija Pink, a popular privately owned, leading commercial, national TV network in Serbia. It has gained a strong reputation for its entertainment programming, but also critics for its superficiality and kitsch.
- Pljeskavica* A traditional Serbian patty dish made from a mixture of ground meats, often served as a hamburger in thick *lepinja* with lots of *kajmak* and onion.
- Podbara* Old neighbourhood of Novi Sad, located East of the Centre.
- Postlastičarnica* Sweetshop with cakes and pies.
- Prince Lazar See *Bulevar Cara Lazara*.
- Priština Capital of the Republic of Vojvodina, or according to Serbia's republic government capital of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija.
- Prva Srbija* First Serbia. Counterpart of *Druga Srbija* (Other Serbia) and seen as that part of the Serbian people that approves nationalism (and interethnic crimes).
- Pupin, Mihajlo Vojvodinian physicist and physical chemist (1853-1935), best known for his numerous patents, including a means of greatly extending the range of long-distance telephone communication, but also because of him being a founding member of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics on March 3 1915, which later became NASA.
- Ribar* Fisherman, a popular kafana in Dunavska Ulica.
- Samo sloga Srbina spasava* Literally translated into 'only concord saves a Serb,' or more freely into 'only unity saves the Serbs', this phrase is an interpretation of what is taken to be four Cyrillic letters for "S" (written "C") on the Serbian orthodox cross. It nowadays serves as an unofficial motto in Serbia and a popular slogan among Serbs, also in other countries, often used as a rallying cry against foreign domination and during times of national crisis. The symbol of the Serbian cross has been frequently used in Serb heraldry and the motto goes all the way back to the twelfth century, where Saint Sava, the first Archbishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church, called for the creation of an independent church that would remain Orthodox and uttered the

phrase to urge the Serbian people to declare national autonomy and resist domination by the Roman Catholic Church (Merrill 1999).

- Satelit* Suburban socialist settlement, but nowadays integrated neighbourhood of the city of Novi Sad in the northeast of town.
- Seljaci* Literally to be translated into peasants or farm persons, but more often referring to somebody with a bad taste of style or manners. This is interesting, since everybody values different manners important: according to young urban intellectuals seljaci are people who look, dress and behave as if they are from the countryside *or* people who dress too fancy that it is far from fancy anymore, wearing a polo shirt, shiny shoes, necklaces and always waving with their iPhone, who according to them deliberately want to make clear that they are *not* from the countryside.
- Slava* Celebration, a Serbian Orthodox church tradition of the ritual glorification of one's family patron saint among Serbs, but also among Montenegrins and Macedonians. Families celebrate Slava annually on the saint's feast day.
- Sombor* City in the northeast of Novi Sad.
- Spartak ZV* Football club from Subotica, second-most successful club in northern Serbia.
- Srbi* Serbs. But this is a difficult one: it officially only refers to ethnic Serbs. Serbian citizens who are not ethnic Serbs are called Srbijanci. Like this, people also speak of Bosanac (Bosnian citizen) while that country is inhabited by Bošnjaci (Muslim Bosnians), Hrvati (Croats) and Srbi; so Srbi iz Bosne (Serbs from Bosnia).
- Srbin* A Serb.
- Srbska akcija* Serbian action, nationalist movement in Serbia.
- Sremski Karlovci Town and municipality 8 km from Novi Sad, traditionally known as the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Habsburg Monarchy, as well as the political and cultural capital of Serbian Vojvodina after the May Assembly, 1848.
- Srpski Narodni Pokret 1389* Serbian National Movement 1389, nationalist movement in Serbia.
- Srpski Vojvod* Serbian Duchy or Serbian Vojvodina was a short-lived self-proclaimed Serbian autonomous region within the Austrian Empire during 1848-1849 when it was transformed in the new Austrian province named Voivodeship of Serbia and Banat.
- Sveti Sava* Saint Sava, the first Archbishop of the independent Serbian Orthodox Church (1169/1174-1236) who called for resistance against the domination of the Roman Catholic Church and patron of the Serbian education system. He is widely considered as one of the most important figures of Serbian history and is canonized and venerated by the Serbian Orthodox church as its founder. Besides, he heavily influenced Serbian literature and education.

- Subotica* City in the north of Vojvodina, bordering Hungary.
- Sunčani Kej* Sunny Key, part of the bigger Key that is a 10 km foot- and bike path next to the Danube on the side of the city of Novi Sad. Many cafés, sport facilities and Strand (Beach) are situated along this path
- Tamo daleko* Traditional Serbian song referring to ‘there, far away.’ The song is sung by a soldier on the island of Corfu, where the Serbian army retreated during the First World War.
- Tamo dole* Down there, used by Vojvođani when talking about the rest of Serbia under the big rivers Sava and Danube. Both practical and symbolical, often used in a joking or negative way, having many cultural and historical connotations.
- Tesla, Nikola* Serbian inventor, electrical and mechanical engineer, physicist and futurist (1856-1943), best known for his contributions to the design of the modern electricity supply and telephony system. Emigrated to the United States and worked for Edison.
- Trafike* Plural form of singular trafika, small newsstands where they also sell sodas, snacks and cigarettes, that are spread throughout the whole city and sometimes totally dominate the street view.
- Trg Dositeja Obradovića* Square of Dositej Obradović, a Serbian 18th century author, philosopher, linguist. Language reformer and the first minister of education of Serbia.
- Trg Mladenaca* Newlyweds Square, in the centre of town
- Trg Slobode* Square of Liberty. The central square of the city overlooked by the town hall, the Catholic Church and many other old baroque buildings. It functions as a meeting point and is also the place where many markets, fairs, promotions, performances and small protests or actions are held.
- Turbo-folk* Musical sub-genre originating in the Balkans, having mainstream popularity in Serbia and although closely associated with Serbian performers, its sound is also popular in Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Montenegro. Its style is a sub-genre of folk music with dance, Eurodance and/or pop elements, with similar styles in Greece and Romania. Its popularity rose immensely during the 1990s during which it got linked to political and national views.
- Ulica Jovana Subotića* Street of Jovan Subotić, co-founder of *Matica Srpska*.
- Varadinski Most* Varadin Bridge, connecting Novi Sad with Petrovaradin
- Vidovdan* Saint Vitus’ Day, an important Serbian Orthodox Religious holiday on June 28 (also designed as a memorial day to Saint Prince Lazar and the Serbian holy martyrs who gave their lives to defend their faith during the epic Battle of Kosovo against the Ottoman Empire on June 28, 1389.
- Vladičanski Dvor* The Bishop’s Palace, located in the old centre of Novi Sad.

- Vojvođani* Residents of Vojvodina, but also often used to demarcate the difference between “real” Vojvođani and people who settled here later.
- Yugo* Also known as the *Zastava*, it was a subcompact car built by the Yugoslav/Serbian Zastava corporation. The first Yugo 45 was handmade on 2 October 1978 as a Fiat 127, under license from Fiat, with a modified body style. Until 11 November 2008, when production stopped, a final number of 794,428 cars had been produced.
- Zdravković, Toma Famous Yugoslav folk singer from Serbia (1938-1991). Most of his songs are about love-suffering while drinking and singing in omnipresent kafanas. He grew up in poverty and married four times, settling only during his last years.
- Zore 021* Sunrise 021, a small traditional kafana up on Kisačka street.
- Zrenjanin City located in the eastern part of Vojvodina, being the third largest (after Novi Sad and Subotica) of Vojvodina and the sixth largest of Serbia.
- Zvezde Granda* Televised singing contest in Serbia organized by the Grand Production record label and broadcasted by Pink TV. Now already for the 13th year in a row singers sing folk, pop-folk and turbo-folk songs with a voting system similar to the Idol series.