

More than one Serbia? The nationalisation of cultural space on the example of the Guča trumpet festival

by

Ralf Grabuschnig

submitted to

Central European University

Nationalism Studies Program

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Advisors: Professor Anton Pelinka

and

Professor Florian Bieber

Budapest, Hungary

2015

Abstract

This thesis investigates the prominence of the Guča festival, an assembly of trumpet players and biggest music festival in South-Eastern Europe, in Serbian public discourse. It gives an answer to why so many people in Serbia strongly connect this festival with Serbian nationalism. Using qualitative research methods, I investigate the issue from two perspectives: top-down and bottom-up. The first part presents discourse analyses of newspaper articles and forum posts to isolate the discursive concept of ‘Two Serbias’, the division of the country into a ‘First’, traditional-nationalist and a ‘Second’, modern-European part (representing two visions of what Serbia means as a state and nation), which has taken place in Serbian public discussions over the past two decades. I will show how self-explaining this concept is, and how it is routinely applied to the trumpet festival in Guča, attaching to the event national connotations based on perceptions of the ‘First Serbia’. In the second part of this thesis, these findings are then contrasted with the experience of the festival’s visitors, to see in how far these notions resonate in their accounts. The results point at a taken-for-granted nationalist reputation of the festival. Besides showing the influence of the discourse, this national colouring has additional potential implications in the sense that the event is also a place where national belonging and ‘Serbness’ get reinterpreted and possibly reinforced.

Table of contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Theoretical framework and methodology.....	7
Discursive construction of the nation	7
Festivals, (World) Music and ethno-marketing.....	11
Everyday ethnicity	14
Methodological framework.....	17
Chapter 2: Two or more Serbias.....	23
The emergence of a Second Serbia	25
Orientalism and Balkanism.....	27
The discursive construction of two Serbias.....	29
Newspaper discourse	30
Areas of the Two Serbias discourse.....	35
Discourse in web forums	37
Chapter summary	40
Chapter 3: The national colouring of the Guča trumpet festival	43
Music, festivals and national meaning	44
Music and identity.....	45
Festivals, public events and identity	46
Guča as a form of pilgrimage.....	47
Serbian brass music and the festival in Guča	49
Nationalisation of the festival	51
Folklorisation	54
Commercialisation and the logic of World Music	56
Perceptions of the participants	58
Chapter summary	64
Conclusion	66
Bibliography	70

Introduction

In the early 1990s, a discourse about a so-called ‘Second Serbia’ (*Druga Srbija*) appeared in Serbian intellectual debate. While originally used to refer to the part of Serbian society in opposition to the Milošević regime, the wars in Yugoslavia and nationalism in general, it soon developed into a broader category. After the regime change of 2000, the distinction hardened, describing two more or less clearly defined visions for a future Serbia, one (the ‘First Serbia’) rooted in tradition and nationalism, the other in Europeanisation, modernisation and democracy. While such a black and white differentiation between the more liberal and more conservative parts of a society is of course not a phenomenon quite unique to Serbia, the immense influence and omnipresence of this discursive distinction and its generalisations is very much specific to the Serbian context. This can also be seen in the fact that today this widely shared distinction is not at all limited to politics any more, but extends into many other areas of Serbian public life, most notably also the cultural sphere.

One manifestation of this discursive distinction often coming up in discussions both in intellectual circles as well as in the broader public is the trumpet festival in Guča. Over the past two decades, this originally small regional festival grew into one of the biggest folk music events in Europe, drawing more than half a million visitors to the tiny town of Guča (population 2,000) in the south-west-Serbian region of Dragačevo each year. These visitors furthermore do not come only from Serbia and the neighbouring countries any more but increasingly also from Western Europe and elsewhere. Today the Guča trumpet festival is therefore known all over the region and beyond, while it is far from being uncontroversial domestically.

Quite on the contrary, it faces immense opposition from diverse groups in society, claiming it is a backward, traditionalist and nationalist happening, unworthy of a modern European Serbia. It seems that the differing opinions on the Guča festival (and especially its frequently mentioned opposition to the EXIT rock and pop festival in Novi Sad) follow the lines of the Two Serbias discourse, while it is unclear why this is the case, and one cannot take for granted that the festival in itself just happens to be a nationalistic event, leaving the reasons for this unquestioned.¹

Yet, when visiting the festival, it is difficult not to agree with the accusations against it at first glance, as nationalistic symbols such as flags, military costumes and even T-Shirts showing the counterfeits of Serbian war criminals are omnipresent on the streets of the town. On the other hand, the crowd consists to a significant part of young Serbs and other Europeans who by the majority clearly did not come for such reasons. How does this fit together? Is this festival indeed a nationalist happening or rather an event like many others that just happens to attract some nationalistically minded people? And if so: why then is this minority so influential when it comes to the overall reputation of the event? To give an answer to these questions, in this thesis I seek to analyse why and how the festival is coloured in national terms and how this reflects in the experiences made by its participants.

I will argue that the perception of the festival as a nationalist event for a major part derives from the broader Two Serbias discourse – the festival being only one of the arenas in this discursive battle. The music played at the event on the other hand, while naturally being the

¹ As has been done in much literature this far e.g.: Marina Simić, "EXIT U Evropu: Popularna Muzika I Politike Identiteta U Savremenoj Srbiji," *Kultura*, no. 116–117 (2007): 98–122; Waldemar Kuligowski, "Nacionalizam Običnih Ljudi: Etnicizacija Muzičke Tradicije Na Primeru Sabora U Guči.," *Anthropology Magazine* 11, no. 1 (2011); Miroslava Lukić-Krstanović, "The Festival Order: Music Stages of Power and Pleasure?," *Etnoantropološki Problemi* 3, no. 3 (2008): 129–43.

main motivation for most visitors to attend the festival, does not play a significant role in this, which is why musicological methods are not going to be applied in this thesis. Instead, by analysing the discourse in Serbia's main newspapers and web portals over the past few years, I am going to consolidate my claim that the nationalist colouring is mainly discursively established (by adherents of a Second Serbia), while also not neglecting other perspectives such as economic logic and political as well as historical circumstances. Taking these considerations about the top-down construction of national colouring as a starting point, I will then turn to the micro level and analyse how this nationalisation reflects in people's experience to answer whether or not Guča can be seen also as a place where notions of national belonging are reinforced.

While scholarly works both on the discursive construction of national meaning² and the everyday nature of national belonging³ exist, this thesis adds a different approach to the existing research, combining two perspectives commonly separated in the existing literature: a top-down and a bottom-up approach. By doing this, the present thesis aims to explain why and how exactly, a seemingly banal cultural event like a trumpet festival takes on nationalist colouring in its reputation and appearance and what further implications this may have.

Chapter 1 will set out to introduce the theoretical and methodological framework for this undertaking. My theoretical basis consists of three big clusters of literature. Firstly, works on the discursive construction of the nation play a crucial role for my research. Using them as a

² E.g. : Jon E. Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idriss, "Everyday Nationhood," *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (2008): 536–63; Ruth Wodak, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

³ E.g.: Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE, 1995); Tim Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (Oxford; New York: Berg Publishers, 2002); Michael Skey, "'Carnivals of Surplus Emotion?'. Towards an Understanding of the Significance of Ecstatic Nationalism in a Globalising World," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 6, no. 2 (2006): 143–61.

basis, I am going to analyse the Two Serbias discourse, identify the most important areas of this discourse and show how this is finally applied to music and festivals. The second cluster comprises literature on other dynamics guiding music festivals and cultural events. While these dynamics are manifold, economic interests clearly play a dominating role in this respect, as has been well established by scholars dealing with the logic of World Music and the commercialisation of culture.⁴ The last cluster of literature finally, contains works on the mundane construction of identity and everyday ethnicity. The remainder of chapter 1 will be devoted to an overview of the methods used throughout this thesis.

Chapter 2 presents the top-down analysis of the issues concerned – the discursive construction of (national) meaning and its role in the colouring of cultural space. The main discourse in question is the notion of Two Serbias, which is very much present in Serbia, both in intellectual circles and amongst the general public, while, as has been mentioned already, not entirely being a unique Serbian phenomenon. While the original idea of a Second Serbia as pronounced by a group of opposition intellectuals in the early 1990s was first and foremost a political statement, used to distance this group from the policies of the Milošević regime and marking the space of another, non-nationalist, open-minded Serbia, this was to shift later on. Starting from the regime change in October 2000, the idea of a Two Serbias developed into a broad set of ideological positions concerning Serbia's place in the world, whereas the First Serbia came to signify nationalism, isolationism and overall backwardness, while the Second stands for modernisation, cosmopolitanism and Europeanisation. As it must be obvious to the

⁴ Such as: Simon Frith, "The Discourse of World Music," in *Western Music and Its Others* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Jo Haynes, "World Music and the Search for Difference," *Ethnicities* 5, no. 3 (2005): 365–85; Jocelyne Guilbault, "On Redefining the 'Local' through World Music," in *Ethnomusicology: A Contemporary Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Jelena Gligorijević, "World Music Festivals and Tourism: A Case Study of Serbia's Guča Trumpet Festival," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 20, no. 2 (2012): 139–54.

reader by now, both these visions were defined by adherents of a Second Serbia, as can be seen in the exclusively negative terms connected with the first one.

Yet even though these ideal types are overtly biased and no politician would ever have openly sympathised with the ideas of a First Serbia, it is along these exact fault lines that much of the political debates of the noughties were fought: European integration vs. holding on to Kosovo, closer cooperation with the EU vs. stronger ties with Russia, or the discussions concerning cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, to name only the more important ones. Throughout that period, the discourse also broadened further, stretching to the cultural realm, especially music, where the Serbian folk-pop variety *Turbofolk* started to be clearly identified as belonging to the First Serbia and Western-style rock and pop as belonging to the Second. This distinction was then extended to two specific festivals representing these two Serbias: Guča and EXIT.

In order to exemplify the discourse in question, analyse the positions taken by different actors and finally show the wide acceptance of the concept of Two Serbias, the analytical part of chapter 2 will be based on a discourse analysis of newspaper articles and internet discussion over the past 15 years on this topic. Thereby, I will make clear how this peculiar discourse developed in the first place, was then applied to music and festivals, and how this process finally contributed to the colouring of Guča in national terms.

Chapter 3 and its subchapters then take these considerations to the micro level, the case study of Guča, to answer why this particular event is so clearly nationalised both in reputation and in appearance and how this reflects in the experiences made by its participants. To put these questions into perspective, the chapter opens with some theoretical considerations and a

historical overview from the early 1960s to today. A period of special interest here is the 1990s, since, while this was the time of the Yugoslav wars when nationalist rhetoric was strongest, it was also in that period that the festival in Guča became associated with nationalism and, to a certain extent, with the Milošević-regime. Another important factor this chapter deals with is the process of commercialisation taking place at approximately the same time and more strongly after 2000. Driven by the economic logic of World Music and ethno-marketing, which are, broadly speaking, characterised by a search for authenticity, the festival changed significantly in the last two decades, opening up to an international audience on the one hand, while becoming more traditional and nation-related in its appearance on the other.

The final part of chapter 3 will then deal with the perception of this nationalised event by its visitors as well as organisers and musicians. Based on interview data and observation notes, I will show how and to which extent participants mirror this nationalisation and how they relate it to questions of ethnicity, authenticity and music. Using the theoretical framework of everyday ethnicity, I will finally also discuss if and how the festival in Guča can be seen as a place where the national community gets created and reinforced and in what way exactly this is happening.

Chapter 1

Theoretical framework and methodology

According to the clusters and perspectives discussed in the introduction, this chapter is structured into four parts. The first part consists of the theoretical background for the top-down perspective provided in the second chapter of the thesis, that is, literature on the discursive construction of the nation. The second cluster subsumes literature on additional factors in the national colouring of the Guča festival, most crucially theories on the economic logic of World Music and ethno-marketing, and of festivals as social gatherings. The third part then consists of literature on everyday ethnicity and will serve as the backbone of the bottom-up analysis provided in chapter three, followed by a final part on the methodology used throughout this thesis.

I. Discursive construction of the nation

It is a well-accepted notion in contemporary scholarship that the nation, much like ethnic or other identities, is not a fixed unit in the social world but instead constructed on a daily basis in manifold ways. Very broadly speaking, these ways can be categorised into two major groups: a bottom-up process through everyday experience, encounters, choices and so forth, and a top-down one, through state policies, nation building attempts by elites, and public discourse. As for the top-down process, there are therefore multiple ways in which a national community can get invoked. While I will focus on discursive construction in this thesis, it goes without saying that other means can be just as important and influential.

In ‘Everyday nationhood’,⁵ John Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idriss touch upon many of the ways in which the nation is constructed on an everyday basis, both top-down and bottom-up. The four distinct ways analysed in their paper are ‘talking about the nation’, ‘choosing the nation’, ‘performing the nation’ and ‘consuming the nation’. Many of these apply directly to this thesis. Talking about the nation, possibly both a top-down and bottom-up action, describes the discursive processes involved in the everyday (re-)construction of national identity, which I will apply to the construction of competing versions of national identity in the case of Serbia. The remaining three categories discussed by Fox and Miller-Idriss describe bottom-up processes. Choosing the nation can directly be applied to the Guča festival, since visiting it can be analysed as a nationally coloured choice. Performing and consuming the nation, on the other hand, play a role in the experiences made by participants at the festival, as both the musical programme and the setting (food, drinks, or merchandise) are, as I will show, nationalised in their meaning and marketing.

The *discursive* top-down construction of the nation in particular has been discussed in great detail by Ruth Wodak et al. in their widely cited book ‘The discursive construction of national identity’.⁶ Therein, the authors apply the method of Critical Discourse Analysis on a wide range of sources (such as political speeches, the media as well as focus groups and interviews) in order to analyse the discursive construction of modern Austrian national identity in the 1990s. This framework will be crucial to the present research since many of the research questions are similar and I also aim to identify the discursive processes behind the construction of divergent notions of national identity in Serbia. Moreover, I have, similarly to Wodak et al., analysed media discussions and conducted interviews in order to investigate the reception of such a discourse on the micro level.

⁵ Fox and Miller-Idriss, “Everyday Nationhood.”

⁶ Wodak, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*.

As for the specific discourse in question, the notion of Two Serbias, a number of scholars and scholarly works from Serbia are relevant to this undertaking. First and foremost, Ivan Čolović's collection of essays '*Bordel ratnika*' (Warrior's Brothel)⁷ is of outmost significance. Čolović was amongst the most influential Serbian intellectuals involved in the creation of the so-called Second Serbia as a form of political opposition in the early 1990s,⁸ which marks the beginning of the discursive distinction into two and more Serbias. In *Bordel Ratnika*, he gives valuable insight into the national discourses present in Serbia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, pointing at the trend of what he calls 'Folklorisation'. He exemplifies this trend with the fact that political speeches and all sorts of other events were framed in mythological contexts at that time in order to create unity and authenticity. Besides using Čolović's thoughts as an illustration and background to the discourses in question, I will also apply the notion of folklorisation to the Guča festival itself to unveil some of the dynamics behind its present national colouring.

Another important article touching upon the discursive construction of Two Serbias is provided by Marina Simić.⁹ In her paper '*EXIT u Evropu*' (EXIT to Europe), she follows the discourse on Two Serbias from politics down to the cultural sphere, discussing the nationalisation of Newly Composed Folk Music (NCFM) in the 1990s as opposed to Western style pop and rock. She shows that the discourse reaches down not only to music but also corresponding manifestations, such as Guča for folk music and the Exit festival for rock, pop and electronic music. This article overlaps for a good part with the aims of this thesis, while Simić is more concerned with the music itself and related phenomena, rather than questioning

⁷ Ivan Čolović, *Bordell der Krieger: Folklore, Politik und Krieg*, vol. 78 (Osnabrück: fibre, 1994).

⁸ First introduced in: Ivan Čolović and Mimica Aljoša, *Druga Srbija, Zbornik Tekstova* (Belgrade: Beogradski krug, Plato, Borba, 1992).

⁹ Simić, "EXIT u Evropu."

how and why public space such as the Guča festival gets framed in national terms as a result of the discourse described so accurately in her paper.

A final contribution to the analysis of the specific Serbian discourse is provided in a recent article by Tamara Petrović and Ivana Spasić. In ‘*Varijante treće Srbije*’ (Variants of a Third Serbia),¹⁰ they give an overview on a discourse concerning a ‘Third Serbia’ as observed in Serbia’s main newspapers and a radio station over the past fifteen years. This idea generally refers to some sort of third way between the First (nationalist-traditionalist) and Second (modern-European) Serbia and is today similarly widely shared as the former two. The overview given in their article is denotative in several ways. It shows many of the discussions that have been around in Serbian intellectual circles recently and also points to the people active in these discussions. Moreover, it will also serve as a crucial guideline and primary source to the development of the discourse itself in recent years.

Building on this framework of theoretical literature on the discursive construction of the nation and national identity as well as background to the specific Serbian discourse to be analysed in this thesis, I will show a crucial top-down process in modern Serbian identity construction, namely the creation of divergent notions of national identity (routinely called the First, Second or Third Serbia). On this basis I will be able to argue why music and in turn the Guča festival specifically, took on a national colouring, following the conceptions provided by this discourse. However, to give a full picture of the processes involved in the colouring of the Guča festival, it is also important to keep other, non-discursive, perspectives in mind. These will be introduced in the following section.

¹⁰ Tamara Petrović and Ivana Spasić, “Varijante Treće Srbije,” *Filozofija i Društvo* 23, no. 3 (2012): 23–44.

II. Festivals, (World) Music and ethno-marketing

While it is intriguing to ascribe the nationalist look and reputation of the festival to discursive construction only, there are other important aspects and dynamics to consider. Amongst the many possible dynamics in play, clearly the festival's historical setting and economic interests play a crucial role in this respect. In the specific case of Guča, as a folk music festival in the broadest sense, it is the dynamics of World Music and ethno-marketing, which guide much of its internal logic.

The overall process of ethno-marketing, the selling of ethnicity or 'ethnic commodification', how the authors call it, has been described in great detail in 'Ethnicity, Inc.' by John L. and Jane Comaroff.¹¹ In their book, they analyse many dynamics initiated by the logic of neoliberalism that motivated diverse 'ethno'-agents such as tribal leaders, minority organisations and whole countries to 'sell' their ethnic identity. This selling can take place in many different fields - the most prominent examples being ethno-tourism in Africa and other places and native-American-run Casinos in the USA but it also extends to the broader tourism industry and the marketing of souvenirs. In this process, all participants in the market put heavy emphasis on authenticity and difference, while the 'authentic' traditions presented to the paying public are many times heavily adjusted to the market and thereby often lose much of their original meaning.

This broader phenomenon of ethno-marketing is naturally present in the field of music as well and its guiding notions of authenticity and difference are crucial to most musical genres. One genre that is particularly strongly connected to these notions however, is clearly World Music. An especially significant account on this subject is Simon Frith's 'The discourse of World

¹¹ Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*

music'.¹² The main argument put forward by Frith is that the key word, the unique selling proposition of World Music so to say, can essentially be nailed down to *authenticity*, very similarly to ethno-marketing as a broader phenomenon. Frith argues that in order to stay relevant on the market, every artist, producer, event organiser etc. has to constantly work on the authenticity of his product, which often goes hand in hand with a search for difference and exoticness. This dynamic is definitely visible in Guča as well. Much emphasis is put on the preservation of 'authentic Serbian' (or regional) culture and much internal discourse refers to this authenticity or a perceived lack of it. Starting from this observation, I will argue that it is specifically this search for authenticity, the logic behind World Music marketing, which made the Guča festival an easy target for opponents of what they perceived as the First Serbia, a process that in the end contributed significantly to the festival's national colouring.

However, marketing logic is not the only dynamic at work in Guča. The aforementioned folklorisation as described by Ivan Čolović definitely had an influence on the festival as well, especially at the time of its rapid expansion in the 1990s. This process is further described by Waldemar Kuligowski in '*Nacionalizam običnih ljudi*' (Nationalism of the common people),¹³ where he applies this dynamic specifically to the Guča festival. Kuligowski, after discussing the history of the festival, argues that in the 1990s a process of ethnicisation took place, turning the event from a pro-Yugoslavian festival to a Serbian nationalist one, a conclusion he seems to draw from the festival's appearance and reputation, without however providing further explanations for this.

¹² Frith, "The Discourse of World Music."

¹³ Kuligowski, "Nacionalizam Običnih Ljudi: Etnicizacija Muzičke Tradicije na Primeru Sabora u Guči."

A research very similar to Kuligowski's gives some more concrete perspectives on this question. Aleksandra Marković,¹⁴ identifies several distinct discourses present at the festival: a Serbian one (which was also identified by Kuligowski), that portrays the event as authentic and traditional, an oriental one, branding it as Eastern and backward, and an occidental one, critically highlighting the festival's commercialisation. One particularly interesting aspect of Marković's argument is that it is largely congruent with the notions created within the discourse of Two Serbias. The Serbian discourse as described by Marković concurs with that of the First Serbia (or rather the self-perception of those described as standing for a First Serbia), and the oriental one with how supporters of the Second Serbia see the first one. More generally, all those three discourses follow the logic of ethno- and World Music marketing.

Lastly, there are also a number of other publications giving additional insight to the connections between national feeling, commercialisation and the Guča festival. Jelena Gligorijević¹⁵ elaborates on the links between commercialisation and authenticity while trying to give reasons for the importance of the festival for Serbian national feeling, which she in the end does not convincingly provide. Miroslava Lukić-Krstanović's study 'The festival order'¹⁶ similarly to Marina Simić's paper discussed before, highlights the dichotomy between the EXIT and Guča festivals in Serbia, also hinting at a connection to national feeling, again without dipping fully into the question. In another article,¹⁷ Lukić-Krstanović also discusses trumpet music in Serbia as such, providing some important input for explaining the dominance of this musical style in today's Serbian ('traditional', non-newly-composed) folk

¹⁴ Aleksandra Marković, "'Guča is Guča': Ideological Transformations of a Music Festival," in *Feste, Feiern, Rituale im Östlichen Europa: Studien zur Sozialistischen und Post-Sozialistischen Festkultur* (Vienna, Zurich, Berlin, Münster: LIT, 2009).

¹⁵ Gligorijević, "World Music Festivals and Tourism."

¹⁶ Lukić-Krstanović, "The Festival Order."

¹⁷ Miroslava Lukić-Krstanović, "Politika Trubaštva - Folklor u Prostoru Nacionalne Moći," *Zbornik Radova Etnografskog Instituta SANU* 22 (2006): 169–87.

scene. This account can be seen in the light of Čolović's notion of folklorisation and can therefore provide a valuable starting point for analysing the internal logic behind trumpet music, in addition to that of the festival, to give an answer to how and why nationalisation of the festival and music could occur.

Taking these perspectives on World Music, marketing logic and historical circumstances (especially folklorisation) into account, I will be able to explain why the Guča festival offered itself to be nationally coloured by participants of the discourse described before. Historical circumstances as well as a necessary focus on authenticity out of marketing logic on the organiser's side, worked together in making the event a welcome target in the interpretive battle over the notion of the modern Serbian state and nation. Following this analysis of the top-down discursive processes and other dynamics underlying trumpet music and the festival in Guča, we can now move on to the final cluster of literature in order to also analyse the perception of festival visitors and the consequences of an event's nationalisation on a micro level. The relevant literature in this area is in the field of ethnic (or national) identity and everyday ethnicity.

III. Everyday ethnicity

One of the most significant pieces in the corpus of literature on ethnic identity is clearly Rogers Brubaker's 'Beyond Identity'.¹⁸ In this article, Brubaker argues for alternative analytical tools for the term 'identity', since according to him, this expression loses its analytical value when constantly overused. For the present research specifically, the alternative notions of (self-) categorisation and identification are particularly important to

¹⁸ Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'identity,'" in *Ethnicity without Groups* (Harvard University Press, 2004).

keep in mind, as these tools can serve as a basis for asking how participants of the festival see themselves and others and how they connect this with national identity, if they do. For Brubaker, a consequence of rethinking the term identity as a category of analysis is also the rethinking of the ethnic or other kinds of groups.

In ‘Ethnicity without groups’,¹⁹ he therefore elaborates on the concept of ‘groupism’, a label he gives to the taken-for-granted nature of ethnic groups in the accounts of many scholars. Instead of seeing groups as a given unit in the social world, Brubaker proposes to treat them as dynamic and process dependent – ethnicity therefore does not simply exist, it is rather performed or just ‘happens’. These thoughts on ethnic groups are particularly relevant to this research since it is exactly the crucial point of the Two Serbias discourse that ‘the Serbs’ are not seen as one homogeneous group but as two or more different ones by the very members of the group, that outsiders (and unfortunately scholars) often collectively refer to as ‘the Serbs’. The meaning of a group is different for everyone, and also every participant of the Guča festival has a different perception of what it means to be Serbian and of who is and who is not part of this group.

In the field of everyday ethnicity, one of the ground breaking works is Michael Billig’s ‘Banal Nationalism’,²⁰ who was the first to explicitly point at nationalism’s hidden, everyday nature. Billig’s main argument is that in the world of nation states that we live in, nationalism becomes the norm and is therefore often hidden, unquestioned and thereby made invisible. However, people are constantly reminded of their nationality in everyday life through seemingly banal things like anthems, flags or national holidays. Billig’s argument can clearly be widened from national holidays to other events like a music festival and therefore shed

¹⁹ Rogers Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups,” in *Ethnicity without Groups* (Harvard University Press, 2004).

²⁰ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

light on the question, how an event that has been coloured nationally both by public discourse and other dynamics, can be experienced as a ‘reminder of nationhood’ by its visitors and therefore reinforce feelings of national belonging.

Building on the ideas proposed by Billig, Tim Edensor²¹ further develops the notion that national identity is mundanely shaped in everyday activities, while insisting that no national symbol is ever stable and uncontested. He gives numerous examples for ostensibly ‘banal’ things that can play a role in identity formation, such as rituals, celebrations, sports and films. His model of a dynamic, multi-faceted process of identity formation can easily be applied to music festivals and the notion that symbols are never uncontested is also reflected in the fact that a festival and the music played there mean different things to different people and that the nationalisation of the event through public discourse does not necessarily have to reflect in the accounts given by visitors.

One last paper worth mentioning, also deriving from Billig’s everyday nationalism, is finally Michael Skey’s ‘Carnivals of surplus emotion’.²² Skey analyses a part of everyday life that has been largely left untouched by Billig: ecstatic nationalism, those moments when nationness in Western democratic countries comes to the fore and thereby becomes visible. He contends that such special moments like carnivals, festivals and holidays can give great insight into the importance of nationality in a globalising world. Skey’s main argument is that it is in such special circumstances that ‘solidarities that are otherwise only presumed’ get materialised and that ‘evidence [is provided] that the nation is a knowable community’.²³ This idea of materialised solidarities and evidence for the community definitely play a role in Guča

²¹ Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*.

²² Skey, “‘Carnivals of Surplus Emotion?’”

²³ Ibid., 146–147.

as well, and these notions are very important for answering how a national appearance may influence the perception of the participants.

Departing from the literature discussed in this section, the present thesis contributes to the corpus by combining perspectives that have so far mainly been separated: a top-down discursive approach and a bottom-up societal one, while not underestimating other dynamics in between, such as economic and historical factors. The above cited scholarly works have all in one way or the other described processes of identity formation and have given valuable insights and a strong basis for this thesis. However, while it has been argued (e.g. by Marina Simić) that the Two Serbias discourse stretches from politics into culture and also created the strong dichotomy between the Guča and Exit festivals, the logic behind this process has not been further examined. By giving a full account on both, the creation of national space as well as the consumption thereof, I intend to fill this gap and answer why and how a seemingly banal event like a trumpet festival gets so strongly identified with nationalism and how its participants experience this national colouring.

Methodological framework

As this thesis is based on two separate yet connected analytical chapters, one dealing with public discourse, the other with personal experiences collected in interviews, the methodology ought to be outlined in two parts as well. While the main method described here, Critical Discourse Analysis, will be applied both to media and interview data, some questions and approaches will obviously differ.

Analysis of the public discourse in newspapers and web forums

In *chapter 2*, the top-down construction of national meaning will be discussed through the analysis of public discourse in newspapers and web forums. As already mentioned, the scientific method used here will be that of Critical Discourse Analysis as outlined by Wodak et al. in their book ‘The discursive construction of national identity’.²⁴ This method is, as the adjective ‘critical’ suggests, a modification of more traditional discourse analysis. This conventional discourse analysis is strongly focused on language and it is linguistic realisations that lie at its core – *how* something is said is more important than *what* is said, and the aim of most analyses is to isolate repeating patterns and social interactions in different texts. *Critical Discourse Analysis* as described by Wodak et al. introduces other perspectives to this framework. It derives from a perceived overemphasis on language in classical discourse analysis and therefore aims to introduce other, interdisciplinary, approaches to it. Discourse is viewed as a result of social interactions and power relations and it is these hidden factors that are to be identified by the analysis. Of crucial importance in this process is the identification of discursive strategies used by the author of a given text, aimed at convincing the audience of his or her thoughts. Wodak’s book names a number of such strategies:

1. *Strategies of Justification and Relativisation*
e.g.: downplaying, blaming, legitimising and delegitimising
2. *Constructive strategies*
e.g.: assimilation and inclusion, exclusion, singularisation, use of the collective ‘we’
3. *Strategies of Perpetuation*
e.g.: positive self-portrayal, black & white colouring, creating continuity
4. *Strategies of Transformation*
e.g.: calming down, warning, positive connotation of the self, negative connotation of the other

²⁴ Wodak, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*.

5. *Strategies of Demontage and Destruction*
e.g.: discrediting others and exclusion ²⁵

The media analysis presented in *chapter 2* of this thesis will largely be based on these perspectives. The aim of the analysis is to show how competing versions of Serbia as a state and national community are created in newspaper articles and web forums and how this separation developed into a taken-for-granted notion in Serbian public discourse. This can be done by using any of the discursive strategies mentioned; however, some are clearly more important than others. Different strategies of perpetuation play a crucial role here, especially black and white colouring, dividing Serbia into two, implying the necessity to choose one's side in this conflict. Other topoi one has to especially look out for in this respect are symbolic inclusion and exclusion, the use of 'we', legitimising and delegitimising.

Other questions to be answered by the newspaper and forum material require the methods of more traditional discourse analysis. Obviously, every direct mention of some sort of divided Serbia (be it a first and second, or in another way) is relevant to the research question, so are descriptions of what Serbia means to a specific person. Another important topic to look out for is finally the application of the Two Serbias discourse to different areas. Music and festivals are obvious expectations in this respect, while other connections are just as important and worth noting.

Analysis of the interview and observation data

The micro level analysis provided in *chapter 3* will partly, though not entirely, be based on the same methods. In order to describe the bottom-up processes involved in the reception or consumption of national meaning at the festival, I attended it last summer. Since I have visited

²⁵ Ibid., 36–42.

the event twice before in 2011 and 2012, I had some idea of what to expect and organised my research accordingly. Having in mind my pre-existing knowledge and the research questions of this thesis, I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with participants, organisers and musicians as well as to include a participant observation of the festivity.

It was clear from the start that an observation in itself will not prove sufficient to answer how participants of the festival perceive its national colouring. Therefore, instead of being the main source of analysis, the photos and field notes taken at the festival will be used throughout *chapter 3* to add to or contrast with the interview data. The photos will furthermore prove useful to exemplify the nationalistic appearance of the festival (the mentioned T-shirts and other merchandise) and to give the reader a general idea of what the event looks like. Other observation notes will highlight points not derivable from interview data or photos, such as social actions, rituals and songs sung on the streets.

As for the interviews, one of the main questions was how to decide on the sample of interviewees. There were some criteria imaginable: nationality (Serbs and non-Serbs who can again be divided into ex-Yugoslavs and others), age, gender, demographic background (rural, urban), and social class, to name just a few. In the end, I decided to not select interviewees according to any of those criteria but rather according to their roles in the festival – I chose to give an overview of these actors by including visitors, organisers and musicians. The final sample therefore included:

- Two visitors, one in his mid-40s and one in his 60s, from Novi Sad, and Belgrade respectively

- A former organiser in his 80s. He was a professor of Serbian language and literature at the local school, lives in Guča and was one of the ‘founding fathers’ of the event in 1961
- A local resident in his early 60s, working for the regional agricultural society and very active in the village community
- A musician and multiple champion at Guča, in his late 20s from the region

The imbalances of this selection are apparent: my sample does not include a single woman and not a single non-Serb. However, having in mind my research questions, this pool is not problematic. In order to analyse the reception of national colouring, a self-identification as a Serb is likely to even be a precondition, in this sense having only Serbs may prove an advantage. Having no woman in the sample does not constitute a major problem either, as gender aspects do not play a crucial role in this research. What this mode of sampling does provide, however, is coverage of all major groups involved in the festival, excluding only journalists, who I could not get hold of unfortunately. Having both locals and ‘outsiders’ is another advantage of this selection.

The interviews conducted were semi-structured and problem-centred. Each of them lasted for around one hour and consisted of seven broad questions from my side, while I was letting my interviewees talk about whatever they considered relevant as long as it did not move too far from my research focus. The result is close to six hours of interview material to interpret, in order to answer the question how the national colouring of the Guča festival resonates with its visitors. For analysing the interviews, I again used (Critical) Discourse Analysis. The key terms and notions I was looking out for in this case are direct mentioning of nationalism (how the interviewee perceives the presence of Serbian nationalism at the festival, for instance),

constructive strategies (inclusion and exclusion as a means of creating the ‘in’-group) and reflections on anything related to a division within Serbian society. Finally, I gave special attention to expressions of (national) feeling, in the sense how people express their emotions at the festival, as opposed to clearly defined experiences.

Using this methodological framework, I will be able to first explain how the discourse on Two Serbias unveils in the media and on web forums, and then how the national colouring of Guča reflects in people’s experiences made there. Combining this framework with the theoretical literature introduced before, I will provide a full picture of the dynamics behind the colouring of national space in the case of the trumpet festival in Guča and therefore explain why a seemingly banal event like this one took on such strong national connotations in Serbian society.

Chapter 2

Two or more Serbias

It is widely agreed by the scholarly community by now that nations, just like other groups are not fixed entities in the social world but artificial or in a certain way imagined. Amongst the fundamental theoretical works on this topic is Benedict Anderson's 'Imagined Communities',²⁶ in which he lays out the idea of an imagined collective belonging, established through a variety of different means. Amongst others, Anderson also included the media, that is, media *discourse*, as an important factor in this process since it is for a major part through a shared set of media channels (nationwide television, radio and newspapers) that inhabitants of a country experience each other as sharing a common belonging.

This notion of a discursive construction of national feeling and national belonging has been repeatedly taken up by other scholars²⁷ and it is increasingly accepted that discursive action indeed plays a crucial role in the process of identity formation. What follows from this realisation, however, is that discursive action may not only create and reinforce *national* belonging but any sort of belonging. Moreover, this can also result in diverging interpretations of what a specific national belonging means both because of differing notions on the level of discursive construction as well as on the level of individual reception.²⁸ National belonging is therefore never uncontested. At all times and in all places, there exist diverging interpretations

²⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 3rd ed. (London: Verso, 2006).

²⁷ E.g., Fox and Miller-Idriss, "Everyday Nationhood"; Wodak, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*;

Anthony P. Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Routledge, 1995).

²⁸ David Harnish, "New Lines, Shifting Identities: Interpreting Change at the Lingsar Festival in Lombok, Indonesia," *Ethnomusicology* 49 (2005): 19.

of what it means and takes to be part of a certain group, each shared by a part of a given population but never by every single individual.

Serbia is in many ways an instructive example for this. As a post-socialist country that only started its transition from authoritarian rule 15 years ago, the meaning of ‘Serbness’ and indeed the very nature of the state are still far from undisputed. A good part of Serbia’s population would not even agree on the borders of the present Serbian state, depending on whether or not one considers Kosovo a part of it. Additionally, there are other significant fault lines in Serbian society such as the strong rural-urban divide or the dramatic north-south slope in wealth. It is therefore not surprising that the notion of Serbia and Serbness started being openly contested when socialist Yugoslavia drew to an end. While Slobodan Milošević managed at first to unite a major part of the Serbian population behind him, dissenting voices arose in the late 1980s and grew stronger towards the end of the 1990s. While these were first only targeted against the government’s policies, nationalism and the wars, they were soon to turn into fully developed alternative visions of what it means to be Serbian and what Serbia means as a state.

In this chapter, I will introduce the concept of Two Serbias, a discourse that over the last two decades evolved into a powerful dynamic that still guides much of Serbian public discussion today. After giving a historical overview on the emergence of the discourse in the 1990s and some theoretical framework, this will be followed by a discourse analysis of Serbian media and of discussions on Serbian web forums. The aim of this chapter is to show how self-explaining and taken for granted the discursive division into two Serbias really is and how this finally relates to my case study, the trumpet festival in Guča.

Throughout this, it must be kept in mind that the notion of Two Serbias is an inherently simplifying concept, unable to really describe the heterogeneity of the social world, which is for a good part also what makes it so popular, as it is a remarkably adjustable concept which can be charged with different meanings by different actors. It is also important to point out that the divergent interpretation of a nation as a country and a group is not a phenomenon limited to Serbia. While Serbia, due to its relatively short history both as a state and a democracy, does constitute a very good example of such a case, there are of course many other countries coming to mind where notions of national identity and belonging are far from undisputed. Extreme cases would be the so-called ‘failed states’ like Somalia or Afghanistan, but also more developed and less war-ridden countries experience such divergences. While one therefore could just as well talk about the concepts of ‘Two Croatias’ or ‘Two Hungaries,’ the difference to Serbia lies in the fact that there, these interpretational differences turned into a well developed system of meaning which has been applied to many areas of public life and is shared by a significant part of the population.

The emergence of a Second Serbia

As it has repeatedly been mentioned by now, the notion of a Second Serbia dates back to late Yugoslav times and the years of the Yugoslav wars of secession, and was originally coined by the intellectual opposition to the Milošević regime. The first time the term and notion of a Second Serbia were widely discussed was after the publication of a collection of texts by opposition scholars simply named ‘*Druga Srbija*’ (‘Second’ or also ‘Other’ Serbia) in 1992.²⁹ As the scholars involved in this publication, especially Ivan Čolović and Mimica Aljoša, were well-known and respected in the Serbian intellectual scene of that time, the thoughts put forward in their collection were widely discussed and the term Second Serbia soon was

²⁹ Čolović and Aljoša, *Druga Srbija, Zbornik Tekstova*.

established in intellectual discourse. From the very start, these scholars connected some critical, yet remarkably vague notions with the First and Second Serbia. They described the First Serbia as nationalistic, rural and overall backward, while the Second Serbia is open-minded, European and democratic. The two versions of Serbia are therefore polar opposites, representing the two main paths imaginable during and after the decline of communism in Eastern Europe.

But the emergence of this antithesis to the existing regime and its politics in Serbia also has to be viewed in the light of the dominant nationalist discourse at that time, that the movement was opposed to just as much as to the regime's policies. The late 1980s and early 1990s were characterised by a comeback of old myths and stories about the Serbian nation that were to a varying degree also supported by the regime. These myths mostly revolved around well-established historical themes such as Kosovo, Ottoman suppression, World War I, World War II and the Croatian fascist Ustaša state³⁰ and were spread not only by nationalist intellectuals (the most prominent being Dobrica Ćosić) but increasingly also by politicians and other public figures, leading to a wave of 'folklorisation'³¹ in public life. The result of this trend was that those actors applied ideals of nativeness, originality and ruralness, as derived from folklore and myth, to "the totality of the Serbian entity".³² The Second Serbia movement understood itself as an answer to this totalisation of certain characteristics to the whole nation, in an attempt to make space for different conceptions of what it really means to be Serbian.

As a consequence of the wide reception of the notion of a Second Serbia the term's meaning increasingly broadened. Starting from a political, ideological and intellectual opposition to the

³⁰ Marko Živković, "Stories Serbs Tell Themselves: Discourses on Identity and Destiny in Serbia since the Mid-1980s," *Problems of Post-Communism* 44, no. 4 (1997): 22–29.

³¹ As introduced by: Čolović, *Bordell Der Krieger*.

³² Lukić-Krstanović, "Politika Trubaštva - Folklor u Prostoru Nacionalne Moći," 204.

regime, it evolved into an exhaustive set of conceptions after the end of Milošević's rule in 2000. The widely shared perception that politics after Milošević's fall indeed followed the lines of a First and Second Serbia (in questions like Kosovo's independence, EU rapprochement or cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal most prominently) then even led to the idea of a third way, a 'Third Serbia', which is also not a fixed notion and can take many different forms.³³

The exact nature of this discourse on Two or even Three Serbias will be further developed in the remainder of this chapter, when I turn to analysing newspapers and internet media. Before doing this, however, it is necessary to introduce one final concept, crucial for the understanding of the discursive construction of several Serbias and for grasping how the opposition between those supporting either of them came into existence: Orientalism or its regional variation Balkanism.

Orientalism and Balkanism

The main characteristic of Balkanism as a theoretical tool is the emphasis on an absolute opposition between 'Europe' and 'The Balkan' as metaphors for 'the West' and 'the East'. The term and understanding of Balkanism's fundamental theory Orientalism of course goes back to the groundbreaking book of the same name by Edward Said in the 1970s, in which he elaborated how the East (in his work meaning first and foremost the Middle East) is viewed by scholars, politicians and commentators from Europe and the United States through a lens of historically framed prejudices and expectations.³⁴ In 'Orientalism', Said follows this lens back through history and manages to show that there exists a well-defined set of ideas about

³³ Petrović and Spasić, "Varijante Treće Srbije," 24.

³⁴ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).

what the orient *is supposed to* look like, which influences how western commentators claim the orient *does* indeed look like.

These ideas about Orientalism have been applied to many other regions, notably also the Balkans.³⁵ One of the most important books in this respect is ‘Imagining the Balkans’ by Maria Todorova, which in great depth applies the Orientalist framework to South-Eastern Europe.³⁶ Todorova claims that Balkanism cannot merely be considered a sub-unit of Orientalism, but is a phenomenon in its own right with a history dating back similarly as far in history as Said’s Orientalism.³⁷ However, different from Said’s account, Todorova does not describe the Balkan as the *absolute* ‘Other’ of Western Europe, but rather as an “*incomplete self*”,³⁸ [emphasis added] which, however, does not mean that Western European intellectuals throughout history did not also partly derive their self-understanding through distancing themselves from the ‘wild’ Ottoman Balkans.³⁹

A particularly interesting aspect of this discussion on Orientalism and Balkanism has been described in an article by Milica Bakić-Hayden⁴⁰ already before the publishing of Todorova’s book. In ‘Nesting Orientalisms’, she describes how the Orientalist-Balkanist discourse was internalised in the Balkan region, and how writers in every Balkan country tend to consider the next neighbouring state to the south and east as always a bit more backward, more ‘Balkan’, than themselves.

³⁵ See: K. E. Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha’s Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999);

Sarah F. Green, *Notes from the Balkans: Locating Marginality and Ambiguity on the Greek-Albanian Border* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

³⁶ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

³⁷ Ibid., 8.

³⁸ Ibid., 18.

³⁹ Ibid., 188.

⁴⁰ Milica Bakić-Hayden, “Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia,” *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995).

This, one can easily argue, is not limited to distinctions between states but can also be applied within the borders of one state and much of the cleavages described as being created by the Two Serbias discourse follow this Orientalist-Balkanist logic. The rural-urban divide in Serbian society, for instance, is discursively often intertwined with notions of civilisational differences, whereas rural Serbs (and especially neo-urban ones) are described by urbanites as backward and uncivilised, distancing their own group from these characteristics. The same logic also applies to music, which generally tends to follow the rural-urban divide, as musical preferences often coincide with demographic background.⁴¹ Rock music is in this respect strongly connected with modernity, is Western-oriented, urban and democratic, while Neo-Folk is associated with backwardness, ruralness and a certain Balkan mentality. Also the strong opposition between the trumpet festival in Guča and the EXIT festival in Novi Sad is based on the same civilisationally framed distinctions.

The discursive construction of two Serbias

The discourse of Two Serbias then, has, as we have seen, a notable history, dating back at least 25 years and over the course of this time, it was established and expanded through many different means. Throughout the 1990s and the time of the Yugoslav wars it was mainly carried by opposition intellectuals, publishing scholarly articles on the topic. The most crucial amongst these publications, '*Druga Srbija*',⁴² has already been mentioned, so has another important book by Ivan Čolović, '*Bordel Ratnika*'.⁴³ But since these early publications were mainly political in nature, targeted at the politics of the regime, nationalism and the wars, they

⁴¹ Eric Gordy, *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999); Collin Matthew, *This Is Serbia Calling: Rock'n'Roll Radio and Belgrade's Underground Resistance*, 2nd ed. (London: Serpent's tail, 2004).

⁴² Čolović and Aljoša, *Druga Srbija, Zbornik Tekstova*.

⁴³ Čolović, *Bordell der Krieger*.

are not yet directly applicable to and therefore cannot explain my case study of Guča. For this, the discourse had to take on cultural meaning as well.

This broadening of the concept took place only after the fall of Milošević in October 2000. The fifteen years since then have seen a growing number of publications on the topic of two or more Serbias, as a result of both the more liberal political circumstances and the widely shared perception that politics indeed have followed these lines of division throughout that period. The following media analysis will therefore focus on the post-2000 years. To show the ‘higher’ ‘professional’, and also the more public discourse, the analysis is furthermore divided in two parts, working with two sets of data. The first set consists of newspaper articles and comments, the second of discussions in web forums. Moreover, the analysis will be moving from more general discussions about a Second (or Third) Serbia in newspapers down to its applications to the cultural sphere and to Guča specifically in web forums.

Newspaper discourse

When typing ‘*Druga Srbija*’ into a search engine, it quickly becomes apparent just how widely discussed this term really is. In the past years, an immense number of scholarly texts, journalistic articles, reactions, comments and forum posts have been written on the topic, rendering it simply impossible to conduct a full analysis here. I therefore opted for a more limited approach, including only the more recent years and more important platforms and newspapers. The websites of Serbia’s major newspapers are an obvious source, but there exist also other, less frequented websites, where some of the discussions took place. After pre-viewing the content of these websites, I decided to include two of Serbia’s biggest dailies with a well-developed web presence: *Politika.rs* and *Vreme.rs*. Furthermore, I chose to further limit the analysis to articles published after 2010.

The years from 2000 to 2011 have already extensively been covered by the aforementioned article on the discursive construction of a Third Serbia⁴⁴ and I can largely depend on this source to also include samples from the years before 2010. In this article, Tamara Petrović and Ivana Spasić give a compelling overview on the debates taking place in all major Serbian media outlets. Their article starts with the assertion that “talking about two Serbias is already common place”⁴⁵ and there are very clear ideas behind each of the two, known to almost everyone. Interestingly though, this idea of a Third Serbia, is often based on taken-for-granted and ill-defined understandings of the first and second.

This ill-definition can be very nicely exemplified with a frequent protagonist in the discourse: the tennis player Novak Đoković and his relation to Serbian nationhood. Petrović and Spasić, without further elaboration state that Đoković stands for a Third Serbia because he embraces “modernity and tradition, the national and the global, patriotism and cosmopolitanism, Cyrillic and Wimbledon”.⁴⁶ In their account, the antagonisms between the First and Second Serbia are thereby reduced all the way down to scripts and sporting competitions. Also another commentator drew this direct connection from Đoković to notions of Serbian nationhood, stating that he is “the national Serbia, which is not the ‘First’ but is not the ‘Second’ either. [...] He is, if you want, a ‘third’ Serbia”.⁴⁷

While for the major part, no clear definition is given of what is meant by a First or Second Serbia, it is generally supposed that they stand in diagonal opposition to each other. Whenever

⁴⁴ Petrović and Spasić, “Varijante Treće Srbije’.”

⁴⁵ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁷ Bogdana Koljević, “Zašto je Novak Đoković Danas Srbija,” *Nedeljnik Vreme*, May 26, 2011, <http://www.vreme.rs/cms/view.php?id=992499>.

an important decision has to be made in politics or society and two opinions form, commentators seldom fail to point out that it is the First versus the Second Serbia we are dealing with.⁴⁸ There are numerous examples coming to mind, the most prominent and long-lasting amongst them being questions of European integration, Kosovo and relations to Russia. It is therefore apparent that for the participants in the discourse, clear definitions of what the First and Second Serbia stand for are largely unnecessary, as these notions are taken for granted. Writers for the most part use very simplified terms to refer to them and they are more visible when specific issues appear (and adherents of each site quickly choose their standpoint) than in objective criteria.

We need to go further back in time to actually find direct mentioning of what each of the Serbias in question might indeed stand for. In an article from 2003 for instance, the First Serbia in its 1990-form is described as belonging to the old ruling class (of the Milošević regime) and is “authoritarian, militaristic and xenophobic”, while the Second Serbia is connected to the opposition and described as “democratic, pacifistic and pro-European”.⁴⁹ However, even back then already, the author acknowledges that these clear-cut definitions started to shift and are hard to define.

One denotative consequence of this lack of clear definitions is the perceived convergence of the two Serbias that many commentators attest to it. In an interview for *Politika* in 2012,⁵⁰ for example, two intellectuals debate this frequently discussed issue of convergence, agreeing that it was not so much the two Serbias that converged but the politicians that stand for them.

⁴⁸ Petrović and Spasić, “Varijante Treće Srbije,” 28.

⁴⁹ Slobodan Antonić, “Odgovor Popovu i Dereti,” *Vreme*, October 4, 2003.

⁵⁰ Biljana Čpajak, “Srbija Razgovara: Koliko su se približile Nacionalna i Građanska Opcija,” *Politika*, December 24, 2012, <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Politika/Srbija-razgovara-koliko-su-se-priblizile-nacionalna-i-gradjanska-opcija.lt.html>.

They especially point at nationalistic politicians like the current Serbian president Tomislav Nikolić, who adopted many positions ascribed to the Second Serbia in recent years. His party SNS (Serbian Progressive Party), while deriving from the ultranationalist Radical Party, turned pro-European and pragmatic with respects to Kosovo, thereby seemingly mixing the notions of the Two Serbias. What is really interesting in this, however, is less the strategies of Tomislav Nikolić than how the two interviewees frame their arguments. It is not the two Serbias that changed, it is the human agents representing them (or formerly representing them). Thereby, the notions of different Serbias do not get altered, it is rather the agents giving up their beliefs – the First and Second Serbia remain the way they are.

In a similar vein, one of *Politika*'s journalists in 2014 asked why so many leading intellectuals of the Second Serbia movement now embrace politicians like Nikolić, who are clearly identified with the regime of the 1990s and Serbian nationalism.⁵¹ He cites one specific liberal intellectual, talking positively and hopefully about Nikolić's presidency, to claim that he has betrayed his ideals or that 'the Second Serbia became the first'. A similar point is taken up also in an article published in *Vreme* two years before, dealing with the popularity of Nikolić in traditional Second Serbia-circles at the time of presidential elections in Serbia⁵² and almost identical opinions are also voiced concerning Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić, also belonging to Nikolić's Progressive Party.⁵³ Comments on this topic even go as far as stating that the Second Serbia is losing the battle and the First is taking over again.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Zoran Ćirjaković, "Kako je Druga Srbija postala Prva," *Politika.rs*, November 21, 2014, <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Komentari/Kako-je-Druga-Srbija-postala-prva.lt.html>.

⁵² Jelena Gligorijević, "Boris Tadić i Klub Neodgovornih Intelektualaca," *Nedeljnik Vreme*, July 6, 2012, <http://www.vreme.rs/cms/view.php?id=1056445>.

⁵³ Todor Kuljić, "Negrađanski Rat u Građanskoj Srbiji," *Politika.rs*, August 15, 2013, <http://www.politika.rs/pogledi/Todor-Kuljich/Negradjanski-rat-u-gradjanskoj-Srbiji.lt.html>.

⁵⁴ Muharem Bazdulj, "Hronika Najavljene Praznine," *Nedeljnik Vreme*, June 11, 2014, <http://www.vreme.rs/cms/view.php?id=1241918>.

While it seems very clear that it is general discrepancies in the application of the Two Serbias notion (which was never well defined to start with) to current politics that lie at the heart of this dynamic, they are not identified as such by those active in the discourse. Instead, the writers cited above collectively turn to the agents and explain political events with a shift in the personal preferences of a given intellectual, politician or journalist, rather than questioning an ill-fitting paradigm. Even though there are some voices seeing an end, or at least a break, in the constant struggle between the First and Second Serbia, they, while acknowledging that current politics in Serbia cannot be readily explained by using these two old categories, do not depart from the camp-rhetoric either. One article in *Politika*, for instance, broadly sums up the conflict between the two Serbias, plainly concluding that “while the two Serbias argue with each other, the country is run by some third”.⁵⁵

What we see in newspaper discussions on the notion of Two Serbias in the past years is therefore a widespread implicitness of the division into two or also three Serbias amongst journalists and intellectuals. However, the exact nature of a First and Second Serbia are seldom defined and largely taken for granted, while there seems to be a strong discrepancy between this model and the current political scene in Serbia. Especially after the victories of the SNS and its shift from the far right to the political centre, from ultra-nationalism to some sort of pragmatic pro-Europeanism, the division of the Serbian political scene into two camps does not seem to hold any longer. Interestingly though, this does not lead journalists and commentators to give up the model. Instead, they use several discursive strategies to hold on to it, despite these obvious discrepancies. They ‘blame’ the agents and argue that it was them who gave up their original point of view and switched camps, while this does not have any impact on the existence of the camps as such. Other writers attempt to solve the discrepancy

⁵⁵ Jelena Lengold, “Plemenska Pitanja,” *Politika.rs*, May 21, 2013, <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Pogledi-sa-strane/Plemenska-pitanja.lt.html>.

by simply introducing a Third Serbia, capable of explaining and analysing current Serbian politics while not touching the well-established former two camps either.

After pointing out that the notion of Two Serbias is well established and even better accepted in intellectual circles and the media community (even to the point of holding on to it in face of obvious discrepancies), let us now turn to other areas, where this discursive division took hold in the past years.

Areas of the Two Serbias discourse

As noted several times this far, the overall discourse still today applies first and foremost to politics. In this respect, there are some recurring themes and topics that were partly discussed as early as the 1990s and are still very much present, like the already mentioned questions whether Serbia should align more strongly with the EU or with Russia, or what should be done about Kosovo. These are classic examples on which Serbian public opinion and political scene are divided until today, and where this split follows the rough fault lines of the Two Serbias.⁵⁶ These questions are also still very much important for understanding Serbian foreign policies, for instance vis-à-vis the conflict in Ukraine, where Serbia did not join European sanctions against Russia in 2014.⁵⁷

Another main arena of the division lies in demography and geography. As a recurring theme, supporters of a First Serbia tend to be situated (by their opponents) in the poorer classes in the

⁵⁶ See for instance: Mladen Lazić, "Serbia: A Part of Both the East and the West?," *Sociologija* 45, no. 3 (2003): 193–216;

Nikola Božilović, "Tradicija I Modernizacija (evropske Perspektive Kulture Na Balkanu)," *Sociologija* 52, no. 2 (2010): 113–26.

⁵⁷ And Deputy Prime Minister Dačić even felt compelled to re-assure the public that Serbia will not give up its good relations with Russia. See: "Dačić: Srbija će čuvati Prijateljstvo s Rusijom," *Politika.rs*, July 10, 2014, <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Ekonomija/Dacic-Udeo-u-Petrohemiji-na-ime-duga-Gaspromu.lt.html>.

suburbs, the countryside and in the country's south in particular, while those of a Second Serbia are pictured as middle-class urbanites from central and northern Serbia.⁵⁸ This opposition between the cities and the countryside also plays a crucial role in the establishment of a division in musical taste. While Western musical genres, most importantly Rock music, which is particularly popular in the cities, is related to Second Serbia, folk music and especially its dance-pop variant *Turbofolk* are seen as rural or semi-rural and as belonging to the First Serbia.⁵⁹

Like many other aspects of the discourse, this description fits more or less to the situation in Serbia in the 1990s, though not necessarily so much today. As Eric Gordy has brilliantly described, the population of Serbia was at the time of the Yugoslav wars indeed strongly divided not only in political but also in cultural and demographic terms. He describes this division in music in particular, whereas listening to Rock and Roll became a symbol for opposing the regime, while listening to Neo-folk signified a certain pro-regime stance. Moreover, musical choice was also clearly connected to demographic background. Listening to folk was associated with rural or semi-rural people, while Rock was considered an urban phenomenon.⁶⁰

This combination of demographic-geographic background and musical taste is also applied to corresponding manifestations. In this respect, a clear dichotomy has developed between the trumpet festival in Guča and the pop-rock EXIT festival in Novi Sad, which is even reproduced in the academia. For instance, Marija Krstić writes: "The Guča festival has an

⁵⁸ Simić, "EXIT U Evropu," 109.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 109–113.

⁶⁰ Gordy, *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives*, 107; Eric D. Gordy, "Reflecting on 'The Culture of Power', Ten Years On," *Facta Universitatis - Series Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology and History*, no. 1 (2005): 11–19; Simić, "EXIT U Evropu," 109.

important role in the imagining of the Serbian nation by giving it a specific folk-rural identity, while on the other hand EXIT presents Serbia as modern and urban”.⁶¹ Recently even a full dissertation on Guča appeared, defending the event against accusations coming from the other side of the discourse.⁶² Also Petrović and Spasić name the festivals several times when discussing the discourse on a Third Serbia, for instance as an example for such a third way they name “Guča *and* Exit, nation *and* democracy” [Emphasis added].⁶³ In newspaper articles, this dichotomy is repeatedly coming up as well, for instance: “A postmodern approach to cultural politics would be, as a start, to respect both Guča and Exit as symbolic representations of the national and Western elements of the domestic cultural industry”.⁶⁴

It is therefore obvious and also regularly mentioned that the discourse of Two Serbias does indeed expand to the very manifestation to be analysed in this thesis, the trumpet festival in Guča. Let us now turn to investigate how this festival itself is discussed in Serbian web forums to see how this discursive construct reflects in discussions between forum users, who generally cannot be expected to be active in the broader discourse and may not even know of it in detail.

Discourse in web forums

In order to analyse this transfer of the discourse to a more public level and to provide a more realistic picture of how hotly debated the notions of different Serbias and also the Guča festival really are, this section takes a look at discussions on web forums. For this, I chose two of the major Serbian forums in terms of membership, which had a sufficient number of posts

⁶¹ Marija Krstić, “All Roads Lead to Guča: Modes of Representing Serbia and Serbs during the Guča Trumpet Festival,” *Nova Srpska Anropologija* 3 (2012): 451.

⁶² Dragoslav Petrović, “Mesto: Domašaj ‘Dragačevskog Sabora’ u Kulturnom Milijeu Srbije” (University of Niš, 2012).

⁶³ Petrović and Spasić, “Varijante Treće Srbije,” 25.

⁶⁴ Branko Radun, “Kulturna ‘Pink’ Strategija,” *Nova Srpska Politička Misao*, no. Special edition 1 (2008): 204.

on the topic of Guča. The first one is called ‘*Krstarica*’ and is one of the biggest such forums in Serbia. It has several thousand members and discussions can be very long, often exceeding one hundred answers per post. The second forum is simply called ‘*Forum-Srbija*’ and is smaller than *Krstarica*. However, there is steady activity with new posts every day and lively discussions within those posts. I simply searched for all threads in those two forums having the word ‘*Guča*’ in the title and following the methods of discourse analysis I identified two main clusters of relevant topics discussed in the online communities: Notions of Serbness and the image of Serbia abroad as a result of the Guča festival.

Notions of Serbness

The question of how far Serbia is culturally represented in Guča is widely debated and disputed in the forum posts under scrutiny and there are as always two main opinions – one in favour and one against the festival. One particularly telling post from the first camp, for instance, states that Guča is the “strongest manifestation of national culture in all of Serbia”.⁶⁵ Many users share the opinion that the festival is a clear representation of authentic Serbian folk culture. One for instance writes: “In Guča we find the spirit of national pride – it’s the happening of the year!”⁶⁶ Another one goes even further, saying “when you hear the trumpet coming from Guča, you know that this is a SERB telling a story. Europe, listen to this spirit!”⁶⁷ [Emphasis in the original] Also a Croatian user agrees and adds (coming from an outside position): “I find it beautiful when every nation takes care of its own [traditions]”.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ “Guča: Svetska Atrakcija,” *Forum-Srbija*, comment 1, www.forum-srbija.com/viewtopic.php?f=253&t=8786.

⁶⁶ “GUČA Ili EXIT,” *Krstarica Forum*, comment 23, forum.krstarica.com/showthread.php/158036-GU%C4%8CA-ili-EXIT.

⁶⁷ “GUČA,” *Krstarica Blog*, forum.krstarica.com/entry.php/8739-GU%C4%8CA.

⁶⁸ “Guča,” *Krstarica Forum*, comment 31, www.forum-srbija.com/showthread.php/164734-GU%C4%8Da.

However, there were also quite some users disagreeing with the idea that what is portrayed at the trumpet festival is a real representation of Serbian culture. One of them states that “Guča is a caricature of tradition and is our attempted version of Jazz”.⁶⁹ Very similarly, someone else adds that “the music and event in Guča are not a part of our national folklore or our identity”.⁷⁰ Elsewhere a person writes: “I don’t think that Serbhood shows itself in Guča and also don’t believe that it represents any kind of tradition”.⁷¹

The image of Serbia abroad

The second cluster contains posts referring to the image of Serbia outside the country’s borders and to the importance of the Guča festival for this, since many foreigners come to visit it and first get to know Serbia there. Closely following the opinions on the question of Serbness and appreciation of the event in Guča as a representation thereof or not, we can isolate two main lines: those who are proud of the festival (and the culture portrayed there) and are glad that it reaches out to foreigners, and those who dislike it or even feel ashamed for the event.

Numerous users identified positively with the image of Serbia presented to the outside world in Guča. One post says: “I appreciate every manifestation that has the aim to give people a good time and while doing this corrects the image of Serbia in the world at least a little”.⁷² Similarly, another user thinks that “Serbia can present itself to the world in its best way [at the festival]”,⁷³ while another one adds that “both [Guča and EXIT] are good for the image of Serbia in the world. They make our beautiful country better known, known for having a good

⁶⁹ “Exit Ili Guča???” *Krstarica Forum*, comment 15, forum.krstarica.com/showthread.php/393466-exit-ili-gu%C4%8Da.

⁷⁰ “GUČA Ili EXIT,” comment 24.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, comment 37.

⁷² *Ibid.*, comment 48.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, comment 25.

time, not for war”.⁷⁴ Generally, even when not talking about such critical issues as the connection between Serbia and war in Western public opinion, many posts simply show a sense of pride towards this festival and its popularity in the world: “Guča and Exit are Serbian brands”⁷⁵ and “All of Europe already knows us [because of Guča]”.⁷⁶

Again, there are also negative voices concerning this ‘Serbian brand’. “Guča is in fact our unique home-brand but the commercialisation of tradition there and the labelling of everything as authentically 100% Serbian, makes me wonder how real this actually is”.⁷⁷

Similarly: “it could be much better organised so that it really becomes a Serbian brand - and not in a negative way”.⁷⁸ Generally, one can clearly recognise the importance given to the question of representation to the outside world amongst the forum-participants. Many people have a firm opinion on this topic, whether they appreciate or dislike it. The question has quite some personal importance to many of the participants and many of them worry about the image of Serbia abroad.

Chapter summary

Taking this brief glance into some of the discussions surrounding Guča in web forums back to our initial level of analysis, the construction and presentation of separate versions of Serbia, some interesting correlations become visible. First of all, in both broad clusters of topics we see a clear pro and contra side, with users defending each of them. While this is not unusual in itself, it does point at an uncertainty of what Serbia means as a state, culture and nation and the two standing points largely follow the fault lines created by the Two Serbias discourse.

⁷⁴ Ibid., comment 108.

⁷⁵ “GUČA.”

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ “Guča,” comment 18.

⁷⁸ Ibid., comment 44.

The question often discussed in these forums whether Guča actually represents Serbia is therefore misleading. For those who argue that it does represent Serbia, this means it represents *their* Serbia, not necessarily that of others. Conversely, the same is true for the opponents, as they do not feel that their conceptions of Serbia are represented there. Therefore, the question is not so much whether the festival represents something but rather what it actually represents.

Many of the discursive strategies described by Critical Discourse Analysis also show in the context of web forums. Especially, the use of the collective ‘we’ and more precisely ‘ours’ is blatant. People defending Guča as a representation of Serbness repeatedly use these strategies: “*our* beautiful country”, “all of Europe already knows *us*”, “a nation takes care of its *own*”. Also some strategies of unification play a role, for instance when saying that in Guča “a SERB tells a story”, it therefore represents every single member of this group. Similarly, amongst the opponents of the festival, it is highlighted that the event does not represent Serbia in any way, while this in fact only applies to their conception of Serbia.

Summing up, this chapter has highlighted the development and nature of the Two Serbias discourse. Departing from an historical overview and the theoretical framework of Orientalism and Balkanism, I have analysed recent newspaper articles as well as samples of older ones to show how self-explaining the concept of Two Serbias is today. Then following the discourse from the ‘high’ political stage down to demographic conceptions and finally the cultural sphere, I turned to analyse how this discourse reflects in more casual discussions about Guča on Serbian web forums. It is obvious that the overall discourse plays a role also in the talk about this trumpet festival and is likely to be one of the reasons for the many disputes around it. This foundation now allows us to step to the micro level and see if and how this

discursive colouring of Guča in national terms reflects in the accounts of visitors and what implications that might have.

Chapter 3

The national colouring of the Guča trumpet festival

In the previous chapters, I have described and analysed how the discourse of Two Serbias was born in the 1990s and how it then developed and broadened in the early 2000s. We have seen that the discursive distinction between different versions of Serbia as a nation is today well accepted and widely shared amongst politicians, journalists, intellectuals and the wider public. I have furthermore shown that discussions about the Guča trumpet festival on web forums tend to follow very similar lines. The question I am going to analyse in this chapter then is how the nationalisation of the festival (the discursive connection between the event and a specific version of Serbia, i.e. the First Serbia) reverberates amongst people actually visiting the festival and what other factors contribute to the national colouring of Guča.

But why does this even matter? Is it not enough to accept that the festival in Guča is, like many other manifestations in Serbia, just another arena of the overall Two Serbias discourse? Would that not already answer the question, why Guča is so present and contested in Serbian public discourse? After all, it is easy to conclude that the event is talked about this much simply because the big discourse behind these discussions is so influential. But clearly, this is not enough.

In order to argue, as I intend, that the festival in Guča in itself cannot be described as a nationalist event in its own right but is rather largely a target of the discourse that colours it as one, it is crucial to also analyse the perception of those who actually experience it first hand: the festival's participants. This will allow us to answer several questions: what are the widely recognisable signs of Serbian nationalism in Guča? Is the national character of the festival

experienced as such by the visitors? How do they express and interpret this? Can this colouring be nailed down to specific, graspable evidence or do visitors in fact maybe reproduce the discursively created distinctions we have seen in the previous parts of this thesis?

To answer these questions, I am going to present a qualitative analysis based on interviews and participant observation conducted at the festival last year. The chapter will start with an introduction of some final theoretical framework on how music and nationalism interact and what consequences the national colouring of a festival like Guča may have. This will be followed by a historical overview of the festival itself from its foundation in 1961 to the late 1980s, the period when a process of nationalisation started taking place. Departing from that point, I will then analyse the diverse processes of nationalisation active in Guča: the general trend of folklorisation already briefly mentioned before and lastly, the logic of World Music, ethno-marketing, globalisation and commercialisation. The remaining part of the chapter then consists of the analysis of the empirical data collected in the interviews.

Music, festivals and national meaning

The issue whether and how the national colouring of the Guča festival affects its visitors is not merely a question of testing whether the discourse in fact expands to this very basic level. While that question will naturally play a role, there is another more important aspect to consider, namely that the festival could in itself also *create* national meaning, instead of merely *reflecting* it.⁷⁹ There are three principal ways imaginable, in which this could be the

⁷⁹ Just like music is both a product and a creator of culture. See: Marija Ristivojević, "Uloga Muzike U Konstrukciji Etničkog Identiteta," *Etnološko-Antropološke Sveske* 13 (2009): 117–118.

case: the music carries national meaning, the festival does, or the act of attending it already serves as a carrier of this meaning.

Music and identity

The idea that popular culture in general and music in particular could be a signifier and even transmitter of national feeling has been touched upon by many scholars of identity, which have largely been introduced in the first chapter of this thesis.⁸⁰ Additionally, scholars in the field of ethnomusicology have in the past increasingly dealt with notions of identity and nationality. Timothy Rice for instance analysed all identity related papers published in the main journal of the field, '*Ethnomusicology*', since the early 1980s and isolates four main functions of music in connection with identity as described by ethnomusicologists: According to them, music can give expression to pre-existing identities, make collective belongings visible (through common dances, for example), give identity a more graspable 'feel' or affection and give it a positive connotation.⁸¹

All of these points refer to the creation of boundaries through music in one way or another. While serving as a marker of unity and commonality within one group, music can also be a signifier of difference, separating this group from another one, by claiming a certain type of music as 'one's own'.⁸² This process is often observable in newly independent states where certain types of music are marked as national and in a certain way official, while others are

⁸⁰ In particular Billig, *Banal Nationalism*; Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*; Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*.

⁸¹ Timothy Rice, "Reflections on Music and Identity in Ethnomusicology," *Ethnomusicology* 7 (2007): 34–35; As a good example of how music can be used to create a positive sense of identity see: Donna A. Buchanan, "Soccer, Popular Music and National Consciousness in Post-State-Socialist Bulgaria, 1994–96," *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 11, no. 2 (2002): 1–27.

⁸² Martin Stokes and others, *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1997), 7.

neglected and thereby devaluated.⁸³ As I am going to show in the section on folklorisation below, trumpet music does play this role for Serbian national self-understanding and to a certain degree also creates a musical boundary.⁸⁴ Music may therefore in the case of the trumpet festival in Guča indeed serve as a signifier as well as creator of national feeling.

Festivals, public events and identity

Apart from the music itself, also the setting of a festival or public event can reproduce feelings of collective belonging. Michael Skey has dealt extensively with the connections between identity and collective participation in festivities and argues that they may “materialise solidarities that are otherwise presumed”⁸⁵ and “give evidence that the nation is a knowable community”.⁸⁶ Skey focused first and foremost on events that are meant to have an integrative function, such as national holidays – moments that he calls ‘ecstatic nationalism’⁸⁷. He argues that in such moments of heightened awareness, people can in today’s globalised world reconnect with their imagined community, which can provide them with a feeling of belonging.⁸⁸

However, it must also be clear that those participating in such events do not necessarily react to them the way it might have been intended by its organisers and there are naturally events that manage to mobilise national feelings better than others. Jon Fox gives a very telling

⁸³ This has been described in great detail on the example of Croatia by Catherine Baker, *Sounds of the Borderland: Popular Music, War, and Nationalism in Croatia since 1991* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 55–89.

⁸⁴ The nationalisation of trumpet music itself will be further discussed later in this chapter, when dealing with folklorisation.

⁸⁵ Skey, “‘Carnivals of Surplus Emotion?,” 146.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 147.

⁸⁷ Such a special event has also been analysed in: Lily Kong and Brenda Yeoh, “The Construction of National Identity through the Production of Ritual and Spectacle: An Analysis of National Day Parades in Singapore,” *Political Geography* 16, no. 3 (1997): 213–39.

⁸⁸ Michael Skey, *National Belonging and Everyday Life: The Significance of Nationhood in an Uncertain World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 109.

example when comparing national holidays and football competitions and the reaction of Hungarians and Romanians to them in Cluj, Romania, where it becomes clear that football (or by extension sports in general) is a much stronger mobilising force than public holidays (at least in this one case).⁸⁹ Festivals, being part of popular culture in the broadest sense, can most probably be put into this more effective category, as has in the past also been shown in at least one case study.⁹⁰

While Guča is, differently from the sort of festivities analysed by Skey or Fox, not intended (at least not officially) to serve any integrative function, it can nonetheless take on nationalist meaning through other means than wilful construction. One of these ways is to view festivals as a form of ritual, where a sense of ‘collective effervescence’ was already analysed by Emile Durkheim in the early 20th century.⁹¹ Durkheim’s central argument was that “ritually induced passion [...] [can] cement social bonds”.⁹² A very similar concept is also that of ‘*communitas*’ described by the most important scholar on rituals, Victor Turner, in the 1960s, who defined this term with the temporal elimination of social differences between the participants of a ritual, which thereby gives it an integral and unifying function.⁹³

Guča as a form of pilgrimage

Finally, the mere decision to attend a festival or attend it over and over again can take on the function of a ritual, or more precisely, a pilgrimage. While traditional pilgrimage is of course religiously motivated, scholars have long pointed out that the motivations for individual

⁸⁹ Jon E. Fox, “Consuming the Nation: Holidays, Sports, and the Production of Collective Belonging,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29, no. 2 (2006): 219.

⁹⁰ of a music festival in northern Australia. See: Michelle Duffy, “Lines of Drift: Festival Participation and Performing a Sense of Place,” *Popular Music* 19, no. 1 (2000): 51–64.

⁹¹ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Free press, 1915).

⁹² Barbara Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 2–3.

⁹³ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966).

participants in a pilgrimage cannot be regarded as uniform any longer.⁹⁴ Pilgrimages can therefore, amongst many other things, also serve a national purpose. Moreover, subsequent studies in this field also started to question Turner's original idea of *communitas*, claiming that pilgrimages (as a ritual form) can just as well reinforce existing boundaries instead of breaking them down.⁹⁵

There are some examples of national pilgrimages at hand. One classic case here is the significance of Galipoli for Australian national identity, which Mark McKenna und Stuart Ward recently analysed. In their article, they argue that the meaning of Galipoli for Australians is in fact created in Australia (through national education and storytelling), to be 'unpacked' in Galipoli by Australian travellers.⁹⁶ Another such case would be 19th and early 20th century Ireland, where Catholicism traditionally plays a crucial role in national self understanding, and pilgrimages at the time of the enhanced Anglo-Irish conflict became heavily loaded with national meaning.⁹⁷ Even in the case of Guča, the allegory of a pilgrimage has been deliberately taken up before, as one of the festival's organisers once claimed that "[Guča] is the feast of pilgrims flocking to the sanctuary of national tradition".⁹⁸

Taking together these considerations on the possible connections between music, festivals, rituals and national meaning, it is clear that the question whether or not Guča serves a nationally integrating function (besides reflecting a sense of nationness) is of great

⁹⁴ John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 3.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 4–5.

⁹⁶ Mark McKenna and Stuart Ward, "'It Was Really Moving, Mate': The Gallipoli Pilgrimage and Sentimental Nationalism in Australia," *Australian Historical Studies* 38, no. 129 (2007): 146.

⁹⁷ See: John Shovlin, "Pilgrimage and the Construction of Irish National Identity," *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, no. 11 (1991).

⁹⁸ Novica Zatežić and Velimir Ilić, "Pucaj Trubo," *Večernje Novosti*, December 8, 2007, 16.

importance. This should be kept in mind when reading the remainder of this chapter and especially the accounts given by the festival's visitors.

Serbian brass music and the festival in Guča

While brass music and especially the trumpet as a national instrument have the reputation of being quintessentially Serbian, this musical genre is in fact of rather recent origin in the Balkan region. Before the 19th century, brass music was rare in the area of today's Serbia, where originally string orchestras and other classical instruments like the clarinet were dominant.⁹⁹ The first recorded brass orchestra was only formed in 1831 at the court of the Serbian prince Obrenović, and it took until well into the 20th century for this music to spread from the cities and towns also to the villages.¹⁰⁰ The music in fact only became really popular after World War I and subsequently had its first high-time between the two World Wars.¹⁰¹ Therefore it can clearly be described as an 'Invented Tradition' in the Hobsbawmian sense,¹⁰² as the first attempts of popularising this musical genre also coincide with the Serbian wars of national liberation from the Ottoman Empire and the first waves of nation building in the country.

The trumpet festival in Guča is naturally an even more recent phenomenon. It was first organised in 1961 by a group of individuals from the Dragačevo region in south-western Serbia to revive this musical form, which was, as a result of the Second World War, already at the brink of extinction at that time.¹⁰³ As a location for their festival they chose the tiny

⁹⁹ Dimitrije Golemović, "Mesto i Uloga Limenih Dugovačkih Orkestara u Narodnoj Muzičkoj Praksi Srbije," *Zbornik Matice Srpske Za Scenske Umetnosti I Muziku* 18, no. 19 (1996).

¹⁰⁰ Gligorijević, "World Music Festivals and Tourism," 140–141.

¹⁰¹ Simić, "EXIT U Evropu," 104.

¹⁰² Eric Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁰³ Krsto Milanović and Dragan Babić, *Srpska Truba* (Belgrade: Narodno delo, 2003), 135–139.

village of Guča in the very centre of the region. The first *sabor* (assembly), as the event is officially called even today, lasted for just one day and the organisers managed to find only four active bands in the region to actually come and play, while Dragačevo used to be one of the centres of brass music before the war.¹⁰⁴ Notwithstanding these issues, the event managed to grow quickly in the following years, increasing to six bands in its second edition and sixteen already in the third. The organisers therefore actually succeeded in their aim to revive the genre¹⁰⁵ and today, the *sabor* in Guča is the biggest brass music festival in Europe and one of the biggest in the world, attracting around 800,000 visitors and 2,000 bands over the course of the now week-long event.¹⁰⁶

The first years of the festival were characterised by political commodification, as its organisers had to adapt to the political situation in communist Yugoslavia and to adjust to the prevailing cultural norms. From the beginning, the state authorities did not trust the event, as it represented rural and religious values that were not well accepted by the regime, which put strong emphasis on modernisation, industrialisation and urbanisation. Furthermore, during World War II the Dragačevo region was also strongly connected with the Serbian Chetnik movement, a paramilitary group loyal to the Yugoslav (Serbian) king, fighting against the communist partisans, which further complicated the situation.¹⁰⁷ The festival's organisers reacted to this distrust by adopting a distinct pro-Yugoslav and even Titoist stance, branding the event as a representation of one facet of Yugoslav identity, within the context of the

¹⁰⁴ Mirjana Zakić and Danka Lajić-Mihajlović, "(Re)creating the (folk Music) Tradition: The National Competition of Brass Orchestras at the Dragačevo Trumpet Festival," *New Sound: International Magazine for Music*, no. 39 (2012): 62.

¹⁰⁵ Waldemar Kuligowski, "Nationalism and Ethnicization of History in a Serbian Festival," *Anthropos* 1, no. 1 (2014): 251.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 252.

¹⁰⁷ Marković, "'Guča Is Guča': Ideological Transformations of a Music Festival," 80.

official ‘Brotherhood and Unity’ ideology.¹⁰⁸ This was to change after the collapse of communist Yugoslavia and the outbreak of civil war in the 1990s.

Nationalisation of the festival

One of the first things visible to a visitor of the Guča festival right after his arrival is the plain display of nationalist symbols on the streets of the town. Having the analysed discourse in mind it seems like most of the negative points mentioned in connection with Guča and also many characteristics identified with the First Serbia are indeed very present at the festival. While this could simply be viewed as evidence of the accuracy of these descriptions, the question *why* this is so is not easy to answer. Why should a seemingly banal brass music festival be filled with street vendors selling flags, T-shirts and other souvenirs with nationalist slogans, and why should nationalist songs be so present on the streets? To give answers to these questions, this section will, after giving an insight into the general appearance of the festival, set out to analyse the processes of nationalisation that have been active in Guča over the past decades and to discuss the dynamics behind these developments.

As mentioned, the nationalist appearance of the event comes for the most part from street vendors, selling all sorts of souvenirs with varying nationalistic connotations. Amongst the more common items are T-shirts and flags, bearing the Serbian colours or other nationalistic symbols. The photo in *figure 1* below shows a typical stand on the streets of Guča, selling mainly T-shirts with different versions of the Serbian two-headed eagle, the Serbian tricolours and various combinations of these two and trumpet-related symbols.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.



Figure 1: A typical street vendor on the streets of Guča

However, there are other vendors selling more radical nationalist items as well. The photos in figures 2 and 3 below show i.a. flags of the 19th century Kingdom of Serbia, T-shirts bearing the counterfeit of Draža Mihailović, the leader of the Chetnik movement, and also more current national ‘heroes’ such as the Bosnian-Serbian war criminal Ratko Mladić.



Figure 2: The flag of the Kingdom of Serbia, just above it (2nd from the right) is a T-shirt of Mihailović



Figure 3: Upper right – a T-shirt of Ratko Mladić

Another instance when notions of Serbian nationalism come to the fore at the festival are the many chants heard on the streets. Especially on the town's main square, around (or on) the statue of a trumpet player, young visitors like to come together and sing (amongst other songs) nationalistic chants, the most popular among them being ‘*Kosovo je srce Srbije*’ (Kosovo is the heart of Serbia). One such scene can be seen in the photo in *figure 4* below.



Figure 4: young people gathering around the statue, singing

As a result of this open presentation of national symbols, the Guča festival offered itself as an easy target of accusation in the framework of the Two Serbias discourse. But why is the festival's appearance so nationalistic, how did this develop and what does it say about the festival in general? The answers to these questions lie in the dynamics guiding the festival in recent years and will be dealt with in the following section.

Folklorisation

One important dynamic in Serbian society as a whole and at the festival in Guča in particular, is the already mentioned trend of folklorisation, as described by Ivan Čolović. In his book *'Bordel Ratnika'*, he first outlined this trend, which manifested itself in all fields of Serbian public life from the early 1980s on. Čolović's main argument is that all political events and especially official statements on the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s

were framed in mythological contexts, to create some sort of ancient legitimisation.¹⁰⁹ He then traces this trend from politics down to culture, especially the very popular so-called ‘Newly composed folk music’ (NCFM), which later was to develop into *Turbofolk*.¹¹⁰ The reason for this process of folklorisation, according to Čolović, is that folklore was seen as authentic, autonomous, original, unspoiled and rooted, and therefore could serve as a means of creating unity in unstable times.¹¹¹

After Čolović already named NCFM as one target of this folklorisation, a notion that has also been taken up by others,¹¹² it is only logical that also non-newly-composed folk music like brass music can be framed in such ways. In a revealing article, Miroslava Lukić-Krstanović describes the result of this process:

*Trumpet playing is like a protected sign and stamped symbol that has fulfilled all the requirements in the space of a national power game: homogeneous, order, domination, self-identification and at the same time, certain opposition to power. Trumpet playing, thanks to the folklore paradigm, media construction and bureaucratic meta-language, has achieved dominant social positions, between national role and doings of the consumers.*¹¹³

If the music played at Guča is in such a prominent position within Serbian popular culture and is loaded with such national significance, it is clear that this must also apply to the festival itself and it has often been noted also in academia that the nationalisation of trumpet music played a role in the ethnicisation of the festival.¹¹⁴ Waldemar Kuligowski analysed this process of ethnicisation in great detail, and positions it in the early 1990s, when the festival

¹⁰⁹ Čolović, *Bordell der Krieger*, 78:9.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 78:21.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 78:73.

¹¹² Robert Hudson, “Songs of Seduction: Popular Music and Serbian Nationalism,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 37, no. 2 (2003): 157–76.

¹¹³ Lukić-Krstanović, “Politika Trubaštva - Folklor u Prostoru Nacionalne Moći,” 205.

¹¹⁴ E.g: Krstić, “All Roads Lead to Guča.”

started to turn away from being a pro-Yugoslav event, as a result of the breakup of Yugoslavia and the ongoing wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was at that time that the pre-existing focus on tradition started to get reinterpreted towards ethnicity.¹¹⁵ This was also supported by the nationalist authorities of Serbia (or rump-Yugoslavia), who now invested more funds into the festival than had ever been the case. The newly found appreciation for the festival from the official side was also met with growing interest in the population, drawing especially nationalistically minded people to the event.¹¹⁶ The festival therefore, to quote Aleksandra Marković, “provided a space for conceptualizing Serbian identity that was changing as a consequence of the political circumstances”.¹¹⁷

As Marković, Kuligowski and others have rightly noted, this process of ethnicisation, which is also clearly connected to the broader folkloristic paradigm, took place in the 1990s and then halted after the end of the wars and the fall of Milošević.¹¹⁸ The ongoing nationalist appearance described in the photos and observations therefore, while rooted in these processes, must have continued for a different reason. This is where commercialisation and ethno-marketing come into the picture.

Commercialisation and the logic of World Music

After the year 2000, the trumpet festival in Guča started to open up to a wider public and subsequently grew to the immense size it is today. The answer to why nationalist symbols and items are still omnipresent at the event must therefore also be connected to its guiding dynamics in these recent years. These dynamics can be broadly subsumed under the banner of

¹¹⁵ Waldemar Kuligowski, “Nacionalizam običnih ljudi: Etnicizacija Muzičke Tradicije na Primeru Sabora u Guči,” *Anthropology Magazine* 11, no. 1 (2011): 74, <http://www.anthroserbia.org/Content/PDF/Articles/a11b8432d9cf46f4a49da53a0b363d0c.pdf>.

¹¹⁶ Kuligowski, “Nationalism and Ethnicization of History in a Serbian Festival,” 253.

¹¹⁷ Marković, “‘Guča Is Guča’: Ideological Transformations of a Music Festival,” 81.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 82.

commercialisation and have much to do with the logic of ethno-marketing and World Music, which, as Simon Frith has pointed out, is mainly guided by a search for *authenticity* and *difference*. In order for musicians, producers and also event organisers to compete in a global market, these two selling points are today absolutely crucial.¹¹⁹

The effects of commercialisation have been applied to the specific example of Guča before. According to Jelena Gligorijević, the two key words in the marketing of the festival inside Serbia are *tradition* and *authenticity* and therefore largely mirror the necessities of World Music marketing.¹²⁰ To visitors from outside the country, however, the notion of *difference* plays a more prominent role than mere tradition. As difference can be seen as one of the unique selling propositions of all folk, ethno and World Music, the organisers of Guča had to adapt to this paradigm and as in many other (mostly non-Western) states, this in the end resulted in a certain stylisation of ethnicity.¹²¹

Scholars have not failed to note that this process of adaptation to the world markets and the resulting stylisation of ethnicity often involve a neo-colonial facet.¹²² Since the term and genre World Music is a British invention from the 1980s, the West is still the main market for this kind of music. It is the Western public that is being sold ‘strange’, ‘foreign’ and ‘different’ music, and producers from other parts of the world have to comply with this. In order to highlight one’s difference, a certain stylisation of ethnicity and culture is therefore inevitable. In the case of Serbia, this is enhanced by an Orientalist or Balkanist facet as well. The term ‘Balkan’ is widely used in connection with folk music from Serbia and other countries in the region and again copies many of the stereotypes described by scholars of

¹¹⁹ Frith, “The Discourse of World Music,” 308–315.

¹²⁰ Gligorijević, “World Music Festivals and Tourism,” 144.

¹²¹ Haynes, “World Music and the Search for Difference,” 371.

¹²² See e.g. Guilbault, “On Redefining the ‘Local’ through World Music.”

Balkanism. Instead of being solely a geographical or musicological term, it often takes on additional notions of authenticity, originality, and ethnicity but also a sense of primitivism. These ideas about the Balkans deriving in the West are strongly mirrored by musicians and other professionals in the region.¹²³

The heavy emphasis on authenticity and tradition out of marketing logic that then led to a stylisation of ethnicity, combined with the foundations laid by the folklore paradigm in the 1990s lie at the heart of the nationalist appearance of the Guča festival today. Its legacy of nationalistically minded visitors and support from such parties and politicians, together with the commercially necessitated emphasis on ethnicity give the festival a strongly ethnicised tone, but it was the Two Serbias discourse that finally applied broader visions of the nation onto this event, marking it not only as ethnic, but as nationalistic and making the festival this prominent in public discussions on national identity. Having this in mind, let us now turn to the perceptions of the festival's visitors, in order to see how this nationalisation reflects in their experiences.

Perceptions of the participants

As described in the first chapter of this thesis, my interview sample consists of people connected to the festival in different ways: as organisers, musicians, local residents or visitors. While the rough interview outline followed similar paths in all cases, the answers given by the interviewees diverge significantly, which considering their very different backgrounds, is hardly surprising. In this section, I am going to isolate the most important recurring themes

¹²³ Ivan M. Čolović, "Balkan u Naraciji o World Muzici u Srbiji," *Novi Zvuk: Internacionalni Časopis Za Muziku*, no. 24 (2004): 60–62.

coming up in the interviewees' accounts, define thematic clusters and contrast them with the notions of the Two Serbias and nationalisation discussed this far.

The most notable recurring theme in all interviews is by far the question of *commercialisation* and the resulting discrepancy between authenticity and profit. It is particularly noteworthy because every single interviewee mentioned the issue of commercialisation in one way or another, while none of my initial questions guided them to this topic. Yet, the comments largely follow very similar lines, criticising the festival's sell-out. One interviewee states that "[Guča] is just a commercial spectacle. The most important thing is to sell".¹²⁴ In some cases, this general notion of selling out is also combined with some sort of nostalgia for times when this used to be different, e.g.:

*Before the 90s this was a real festival, where orchestras could show their quality. There was nothing else. Nowadays this is all commercial. A broad audience is in the interest of the musicians, the restaurant owners want to sell tons of meat and hectolitres of beer, the local government gets subventions from the state and the state has an interest to build some sort of brand to attract tourists.*¹²⁵

Similarly: "Serbian culture is today a very small part of this festival. What remained is mainly commercial entertainment, like any other festival in the world"¹²⁶ and "in recent years, the quality of this festival has fallen sharply, as a result of new people in the regional government, who only see economic interest and no other values".¹²⁷

While these comments are targeted mainly at the perceived sell-out of the festival or failures of different stakeholders, they are sometimes also related to questions of tradition, ethnicity

¹²⁴ Interviewee 1, Belgrade, 7th August 2014

¹²⁵ Interviewee 2, Novi Sad, 7th August 2014

¹²⁶ Interviewee 5, Guča, 9th August 2014

¹²⁷ Interviewee 5, Guča, 9th August 2014

and nationhood, namely when considerations shift from commercialisation towards the intrinsically connected issue of *authenticity*. The interviewee cited above, looking back in nostalgia at the times before this commercialisation added:

*This used to be a festival of the trumpet. It was not a festival of beer, or of stuffed cabbage, of grilled meat, nor of Ceca [a famous Serbian turbofolk singer who played at last year's edition of the festival] or anything else. Back then it was really an expression of Serbian culture. It was a real expression of what we are! Today it is only commercialised; an event that half a million people have to attend.*¹²⁸

Another interviewee situated this 'expression of what we are' in other elements but the organisation, stating that "others, like the caterers who have run their businesses for generations, still keep the national tradition alive in their places' environment, food, drink and music. They, from the beginning to the end, keep the tradition alive."¹²⁹ It is therefore the organisation that destroys what Guča stands for (in order to sell) and does not value real Serbian traditions, while others, such as for instance the caterers, still do.

The issue of authenticity is also often related to turbofolk as the antithesis to 'authentic' Serbian music such as the brass music present in Guča. The comment above concerning Ceca already hints in this direction, and this issue is repeatedly taken up by my interviewees. For instance: "These Turbofolkists have nothing to do with Serbian folk music"¹³⁰, and also nostalgia plays a role in this discussion as in:

I have grown up in a good time, the golden times, you know? Ex-Yu [referring to 70s and 80s ex-Yugoslav rock music]. And back then also folk music was on a high level. There weren't this many oriental elements in

¹²⁸ Interviewee 2, Novi Sad, 7th August 2014

¹²⁹ Interviewee 5, Guča, 9th August 2014

¹³⁰ Interviewee 1, Belgrade, 7th August 2014

*our music and there was no turbofolk. Trumpet music, especially its west-Serbian style, still held on to this. This is truly our sound!*¹³¹

This repeatedly mentioned dichotomy between ‘authentic’ Serbian music on the one hand and ‘orientalised’ Turbofolk, or also southern Serbian brass music and Gypsy music on the other, touches on another topic discussed before: *Orientalism*. A notion widely shared by my interviewees is the heavily negatively burdened meaning of the adjective ‘oriental’. For instance: “The southern school [of Serbian brass music] has many oriental elements. The Eastern and Western styles on the other hand – they play authentic Serbian music”.¹³² The musician in my sample saw the topic with a bit of humour saying that “[what you see here in Guča] is a part of Serbian culture. A bit also Turkish (laughs)”.¹³³ He also made a strong distinction between Serbian bands, especially from his region, the West, and Roma bands playing at Guča, stating that “they are a completely different nation. They have nothing in common with us. [...] They play whatever they want, partly Serbian songs that are part of Serbian culture, partly their songs or songs from elsewhere”.¹³⁴

But references to the orientalist discourse are not limited to a dichotomy between ‘authentic’ Serbian brass music, on the one hand, and Roma brass music and turbofolk, on the other. One interviewee framed this in a very interesting way when I asked him why he thinks this festival is so popular amongst foreigners: “I think that it is attractive to go to a wild country, in the sense like ‘come on, let’s go to Serbia to see something’. It is a bit like going to India, see something strange, something exotic.”¹³⁵

¹³¹ Interviewee 2, Novi Sad, 7th August 2014

¹³² Interviewee 2, Novi Sad, 7th August 2014

¹³³ Interviewee 4, Guča, 9th August 2014

¹³⁴ Interviewee 4, Guča, 9th August 2014

¹³⁵ Interviewee 1, Belgrade, 7th August 2014

Another very frequent theme is the festival's *ethnicisation*, which is often named in connection with its commercialisation as a main point of criticism by those critical of the festival. One interviewee complained about how nationalistically minded agents changed Guča in the early 90s: "It was those people close to Milošević, those savages who had been fighting for Kosovo under the slogan 'Serbs for Kosovo'. They started rebranding the festival in this way". He furthermore stated that the T-shirts and other nationalistic items available in Guča derive from that time and that there still exist some "fools who believe in this story, 'we heavenly Serbs, Kosovo, bulwark of Christianity etc.'", while he also adds that these people are quite marginal today but still give the festival a nationalist touch.¹³⁶

One of the founders of the festival was not very upset about this ethnicisation though when I asked him about it. He told me that "from the beginning, the festival was a renaissance of Serbian folk culture with the wish to preserve this national spirit and tradition". However, he did see the changes in the 1990s as a form of appropriation from the political side.¹³⁷ This distinction between nationalisation in the 1990s, which is often described as forced from politics, and the original idea of the festival is often used by its supporters to legitimise the event. A local resident told me:

*The festival only wanted to preserve national identity, space, customs, values, culture, arts and tradition. It was created to preserve something from the past, from national culture and folk tradition. Of course this also has a national dimension, national, not nationalistic! There might of course be some examples of nationalism in Guča, by individuals, but you cannot generalise this to the whole manifestation.*¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Interviewee 1, Belgrade, 7th August 2014

¹³⁷ Interviewee 3, Guča, 8th August 2014

¹³⁸ Interviewee 5, Guča, 9th August 2014

My interviewee in Belgrade reflected on this presence of nationalistically minded individuals in Guča and their influence on the festival's perception, connecting it to the ethnicisation of trumpet music as such:

*It is very hard to be different in a group that believes otherwise. If you are against this music, which is our tradition, you are automatically against our tradition. If you don't like this music and are critical towards it, that is already not OK. People like to deal with their own and that is why many Serbs wouldn't say anything negative about Guča because it is their own.*¹³⁹

Also another interviewee took up this discussion of trumpet music's ethnicisation, connecting it again to the 1990s: "This damn war changed even the music itself! Brass music moved into national culture and became a dominant form".¹⁴⁰ The festival's co-founder framed this even more drastically, saying "the trumpet entered the spirit of the nation like the spirit of the nation entered the trumpet".¹⁴¹

This far we have seen many clusters connecting in different ways to the discussions in this and previous chapters. The final cluster contains direct mention of the Two Serbias discourse and the dichotomy between the *Guča* and *EXIT* festivals. My interviewee in Belgrade commented on the foundation of EXIT in the early 2000s, describing it as a "revenge of Serbia" after the Milošević years, to create "something urban to improve the appearance of Serbia" and as a result "the second part of the population that does not enjoy the music played at EXIT needed something else", which resulted in the extreme growth of Guča".¹⁴² Another interviewee was even more direct, and without me asking for the discourse took it up:

¹³⁹ Interviewee 1, Belgrade, 7th August 2014

¹⁴⁰ Interviewee 2, Novi Sad, 7th August 2014

¹⁴¹ Interviewee 3, Guča, 8th August 2014

¹⁴² Interviewee 1, Belgrade, 7th August 2014

*In Serbia there is always this discussion, are you for Guča or for EXIT? But I say they are very similar! People claim there are two Serbias, but no. I grew up with Rock n Roll and I still play that today but I adore trumpet music! If you go to Guča, this doesn't mean you are part of that culture and wouldn't go to EXIT too. Now, between EKV [Ekatarina Velika – a Yugoslav new-wave band from the 1980s] and Ceca, that are two Serbias!*¹⁴³

Chapter summary

When analysing these broad clusters of themes - commercialisation, authenticity, Orientalism, ethnicisation and the EXIT-Guča dichotomy - it shows that many of the topics discussed in the previous parts of this thesis are indeed also important for the festival's participants.

However, it is also apparent that those accounts largely do not follow the lines of the Two Serbias discourse. Most notably, the festival's participants do care a lot about the issue of commercialisation, which while already described as one of the dynamics between Guča's recent development, does not relate directly to any notion of two or more Serbias. Similarly, many of the points collected under the cluster of Orientalism, while being interesting in following many of the theories introduced before in this thesis, do not point at a reflection of the Two Serbias discourse in the visitor's accounts. The strong connection between the First Serbia and Guča observed in the literature, newspapers and some forum posts is therefore not directly echoed by my interviewees.

Only in some areas, notions of the discourse do reflect directly. For example, when one of my interviewees explained the attractiveness of the festival to people from Western Europe with its exotic and wild appeal, this largely overlaps with the Orientalist vision of a First Serbia.

Also the definition of the EXIT festival as a revenge of Serbia (clearly meaning the part of the

¹⁴³ Interviewee 2, Novi Sad, 7th August 2014

Serbian population who was against the Milošević regime before) seems to mirror the idea of two Serbias.

But even though the discourse does not directly reflect in most of my interviewees' accounts, none of the interviewees, not even the most critical ones, could give any concrete example or explanation as to why the festival is nationalistic, while all of them were very aware of its nationalistic connotation. This results in them either taking these accusations for granted (in the case of its critics) or to defend the festival (in the case of its supporters), which they tend to do via drawing a clear line between the 'pure' *sabor* as intended in the 1960s and its appropriation in the 1990s. Thus, similarly to the scholars, journalists and forum users, my interviewees take the nationalist connotation of the Guča festival for granted and in the lack of clear explanations as to why the event, in an interviewee's opinion, should be nationalistic, it can be expected that the discourse does play into this.

As a result of the festival's past (its ethnicisation in the 1990s especially) and the commercially necessitated emphasis on ethnicity in recent years, Guča became an obvious target for accusations in the framework of the Two Serbias discourse. These accusations do not reflect directly in the accounts of the festival's participants though, but are rather presumed and taken for granted. However, Guča can still be seen as a place where national belonging gets reinterpreted along the lines of authenticity and tradition, reinforcing the borders of what it means to be Serbian. These issues are a major concern for all interviewees and are hotly debated at the festival, be it along Orientalist lines or concerning the issue of commercialisation.

Conclusion

As we have seen in my analyses based on scholarly literature, newspapers, forum entries, interviews and observation, there is a connection between the discourse on Two Serbias and the trumpet festival in Guča. I have shown that the overall discourse is well accepted by scholars, journalists and even the wider public and has become a taken-for-granted notion for many of those taking part in public discussions in Serbia. We have seen that both in scholarly works and journalistic articles, authors repeatedly and routinely refer to the notion of Two Serbias, while seldom defining or questioning the exact meaning of this concept.

As a result, the discursive construction of competing conceptions of the nation is by now remarkably well established, even to the point of holding on to it in the face of obvious shortcomings in its application. Departing from this realisation, I have followed the discourse down from the political level to more mundane manifestations, and have shown that the notion of Two Serbias is also routinely applied to non-political issues, such as demography, geography, music and finally festivals and specifically also the Guča trumpet festival.

After then turning to this specific case study, we have seen that many of the accusations made in public discourse both against the First Serbia in general and the festival in particular, at first glance seem to hold, as I have exemplified with photos and descriptions. However, the question remained why this should be the case and why vendors, for instance, sell items with clear nationalistic connotations. In order to answer this, I relied on the theoretical framework of everyday ethnicity, combined with qualitative research and an analysis of the festivals guiding marketing dynamics. The music itself has not been a matter of analysis here, while I

have shown that trumpet music in Serbia is highly nationalised, but it is not so much the music played at Guča that mark the event in national colours but rather the setting of the festival as a whole and the talk about the festival in particular.

My interviewees, while mirroring many of the topics discussed in this thesis and referring to parts of the Two Serbias discourse at times, were by and large unable to point at specific nationalistic elements of the festival, no matter how critical they might be of the event. Instead, both supporters and opponents of the *sabor* took its nationalist reputation for granted, so that those critical of it simply blamed the festival's open display of nationalism without giving reference to what they meant exactly, and those supporting it felt the urge to defend themselves against these vague and ill-defined accusations. I have also given possible explanations for this ongoing national colouring of the event, most importantly its history of ethnicisation in the context of the broader Serbian dynamic of folklorisation in the 1990s, and the necessities of emphasising ethnicity in the context of modern ethno- and World Music marketing.

Having these findings in mind, Guča appears to be first and foremost a projection space of the overall Two Serbias discourse, which offered itself to accusations coming from adherents of a Second Serbia because of its history and ethnic focus resulting from its guiding marketing logic. It is in this light unlikely that the festival's organisers follow any national ideology when planning the event, not to speak of a specific First Serbia-ideology.

All this is not to say, of course, that there are no radical elements to be found in Guča. The often-mentioned street vendors would not sell their nationalistic products if there was no market for them, and there are definitely still many radical nationalists attending the event, as

a sort of leftover from the 1990s, when the manifestation was at times a meeting point for people with such convictions. However, the majority of visitors coming to Guča are likely to do so *despite* its nationalistic colouring, not because of it. This colouring therefore may not resonate at all with a majority of the festival's participants, while it is certainly known to most of them.

However, while based on my qualitative data one cannot conclude that the Guča festival is a nationalist happening, as is often done in the framework of the Two Serbias discourse; it can still be viewed as a place where national belonging gets reinforced for those attending. As a result of its history, its marketing dynamics and the discursive national colouring, Guča is a place where conceptions of what it means to be Serbian and what Serbian culture really is are re-evaluated.

In this sense, Guča can be put into the theoretical framework of everyday ethnicity as outlined in the first chapter of this thesis and may indeed function as a place where, to again use the words of Michael Skey, “solidarities that are otherwise only presumed” are materialised and the nation becomes a “knowable community” for those attending.¹⁴⁴ However, one should also keep in mind that while some form of identity does ‘happen’ at this festival, this identity is not necessarily national or ethnic but can rather take the form of a temporary community for those attending, without being linked to any of those larger identities.¹⁴⁵

There is therefore indeed more than one Serbia, but there is also more than one Guča. While certain characteristics of the First Serbia are discursively applied to this festival and its visitors do experience a sense of collective national belonging in this setting, the event, the

¹⁴⁴ Skey, ““Carnivals of Surplus Emotion?,” 146–147.

¹⁴⁵ In the sense of Emile Durkheim or Victor Turner

music and notions of Serbness, while strongly intertwined in this specific setting, still mean very different things to everyone attending.

Bibliography

Primary sources

- Antonić, Slobodan. "Odgovor Popovu i Dereti." *Vreme*. October 4, 2003.
- Bazdulj, Muharem. "Hronika Najavljene Praznine." *Nedeljnik Vreme*, June 11, 2014.
<http://www.vreme.rs/cms/view.php?id=1241918>.
- Ćirjaković, Zoran. "Kako je Druga Srbija postala Prva." *Politika.rs*, November 21, 2014.
<http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Komentari/Kako-je-Druga-Srbija-postala-prva.lt.html>.
- Čpajak, Biljana. "Srbija razgovara: Koliko su se približile Nacionalna i Građanska Opcija." *Politika*. December 24, 2012. <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Politika/Srbija-razgovara-koliko-su-se-priblizile-nacionalna-i-gradjanska-opcija.lt.html>.
- "Dačić: Srbija će čuvati Prijateljstvo s Rusijom." *Politika.rs*, July 10, 2014.
<http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Ekonomija/Dacic-Udeo-u-Petrohemiji-na-ime-duga-Gaspromu.lt.html>.
- Gligorijević, Jelena. "Boris Tadić i Klub neodgovornih Intelktualaca." *Nedeljnik Vreme*, July 6, 2012.
<http://www.vreme.rs/cms/view.php?id=1056445>.
- Koljević, Bogdana. "Zašto je Novak Đoković danas Srbija." *Nedeljnik Vreme*, May 26, 2011.
<http://www.vreme.rs/cms/view.php?id=992499>.
- Kuljić, Todor. "Negrađanski Rat u Građanskoj Srbiji." *Politika.rs*, August 15, 2013.
<http://www.politika.rs/pogledi/Todor-Kuljich/Negradjanski-rat-u-gradjanskoj-Srbiji.lt.html>.
- Lengold, Jelena. "Plemenska Pitanja." *Politika.rs*, May 21, 2013.
<http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Pogledi-sa-strane/Plemenska-pitanja.lt.html>.
- Radun, Branko. "Kulturna 'Pink' Strategija." *Nova Srpska Politička Misao*, no. Special edition 1 (2008).
- Zatežić, Novica, and Velimir Ilić. "Pucaj Trubo." *Večernje Novosti*, December 8, 2007.

- "Exit Ili Guča???" *Krstarica Forum*, forum.krstarica.com/showthread.php/393466-exit-ili-gu%C4%8Da.
- "GUČA." *Krstarica Blog*, forum.krstarica.com/entry.php/8739-GU%C4%8CA.
- "Guča." *Krstarica Forum*, www.forum-srbija.com/showthread.php/164734-GU%C4%8Da.
- "GUČA Ili EXIT." *Krstarica Forum*, forum.krstarica.com/showthread.php/158036-GU%C4%8CA-ili-EXIT.
- "Guča: Svetska Atrakcija." *Forum-Srbija*, www.forum-srbija.com/viewtopic.php?f=253&t=8786.

Literature

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. 3rd ed. London: Verso, 2006.
- Baker, Catherine. *Sounds of the Borderland: Popular Music, War, and Nationalism in Croatia since 1991*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010.
- Bakić-Hayden, Milica. "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia." *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995).
- Billig, Michael. *Banal Nationalism*. London: SAGE, 1995.
- Božilović, Nikola. "Tradicija i Modernizacija (Evropske Perspektive Kulture na Balkanu)." *Sociologija* 52, no. 2 (2010): 113–26.
- Brubaker, Rogers. "Ethnicity without Groups." In *Ethnicity without Groups*. Harvard University Press, 2004.

- Brubaker, Rogers, and Frederick Cooper. "Beyond 'identity.'" In *Ethnicity without Groups*. Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Buchanan, Donna A. "Soccer, Popular Music and National Consciousness in Post-State-Socialist Bulgaria, 1994–96." *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 11, no. 2 (2002): 1–27.
- Cohen, Anthony P. *Symbolic Construction of Community*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Čolović, Ivan. *Bordell der Krieger: Folklore, Politik und Krieg*. Vol. 78. Osnabrück: fibre, 1994.
- Čolović, Ivan, and Mimica Aljoša. *Druga Srbija, Zbornik Tekstova*. Belgrade: Beogradski krug, Plato, Borba, 1992.
- Čolović, Ivan M. "Balkan u Naraciji o World Muzici u Srbiji." *Novi Zvuk: Internacionalni Časopis za Muziku*, no. 24 (2004): 59–62.
- Comaroff, John L., and Jean Comaroff. *Ethnicity, Inc.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Duffy, Michelle. "Lines of Drift: Festival Participation and Performing a Sense of Place." *Popular Music* 19, no. 1 (2000): 51–64.
- Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free press, 1915.
- Eade, John, and Michael J. Sallnow. *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Edensor, Tim. *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*. Oxford; New York: Berg Publishers, 2002.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006.
- Fleming, K. E. *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha's Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Fox, Jon E. "Consuming the Nation: Holidays, Sports, and the Production of Collective Belonging." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29, no. 2 (2006): 217–36.
- Fox, Jon E., and Cynthia Miller-Idriss. "Everyday Nationhood." *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (2008): 536–63.
- Frith, Simon. "The Discourse of World Music." In *Western Music and its Others*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Gligorijević, Jelena. "World Music Festivals and Tourism: A Case Study of Serbia's Guča Trumpet Festival." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 20, no. 2 (2012): 139–54.
- Golemović, Dimitrije. "Mesto i Uloga Limenih Dugovačkih Orkestara u Narodnoj Muzičkoj Praksi Srbije." *Zbornik Matice Srpske za Scenske Umetnosti i Muziku* 18, no. 19 (1996).
- Gordy, Eric. *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.
- Gordy, Eric D. "Reflecting on 'The Culture of Power', Ten Years On." *Facta Universitatis - Series Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology and History*, no. 1 (2005): 11–19.
- Green, Sarah F. *Notes from the Balkans: Locating Marginality and Ambiguity on the Greek-Albanian Border*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Guilbault, Jocelyne. "On Redefining the 'Local' through World Music." In *Ethnomusicology: A Contemporary Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Harnish, David. "New Lines, Shifting Identities: Interpreting Change at the Lingsar Festival in Lombok, Indonesia." *Ethnomusicology* 49 (2005).
- Haynes, Jo. "World Music and the Search for Difference." *Ethnicities* 5, no. 3 (2005): 365–85.
- Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence O. Ranger. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Hudson, Robert. "Songs of Seduction: Popular Music and Serbian Nationalism." *Patterns of Prejudice* 37, no. 2 (2003): 157–76.
- Kong, Lily, and Brenda Yeoh. "The Construction of National Identity through the Production of Ritual and Spectacle: An Analysis of National Day Parades in Singapore." *Political Geography* 16, no. 3 (1997): 213–39.
- Krstić, Marija. "All Roads Lead to Guča: Modes of Representing Serbia and Serbs during the Guča Trumpet Festival." *Nova Srpska Anropologija* 3 (2012): 163–86.

- Kuligowski, Waldemar. "Nacionalizam Običnih Ljudi: Etnicizacija Muzičke Tradicije na Primeru Sabora u Guči." *Anthropology Magazine* 11, no. 1 (2011).
- . "Nationalism and Ethnicization of History in a Serbian Festival." *Anthropos* 1, no. 1 (2014).
- Lazić, Mladen. "Serbia: A Part of Both the East and the West?" *Sociologija* 45, no. 3 (2003): 193–216.
- Lukić-Krstanović, Miroslava. "Politika Trubaštva - Folklor u Prostoru Nacionalne Moći." *Zbornik Radova Etnografskog Instituta SANU* 22 (2006): 169–87.
- . "The Festival Order: Music Stages of Power and Pleasure?" *Etnoantropološki Problemi* 3, no. 3 (2008): 129–43.
- Marković, Aleksandra. "'Guča Is Guča': Ideological Transformations of a Music Festival." In *Feste, Feiern, Rituale im Östlichen Europa: Studien Zur Sozialistischen und Post-Sozialistischen Festkultur*. Vienna, Zurich, Berlin, Münster: LIT, 2009.
- Matthew, Collin. *This Is Serbia Calling: Rock'n'Roll Radio and Belgrade's Underground Resistance*. 2nd ed. London: Serpent's tail, 2004.
- McKenna, Mark, and Stuart Ward. "'It Was Really Moving, Mate': The Gallipoli Pilgrimage and Sentimental Nationalism in Australia." *Australian Historical Studies* 38, no. 129 (2007): 141–51.
- Milanović, Krsto, and Dragan Babić. *Srpska Truba*. Belgrade: Narodno delo, 2003.
- Petrović, Dragoslav. "Mesto: Domašaj 'Dragačevskog Sabora' u Kulturnom Milijeu Srbije." University of Niš, 2012.
- Petrović, Tamara, and Ivana Spasić. "Varijante Treće Srbije'." *Filozofija I Društvo* 23, no. 3 (2012): 23–44.
- Rice, Timothy. "Reflections on Music and Identity in Ethnomusicology." *Ethnomusicology* 7 (2007).
- Ristivojević, Marija. "Uloga Muzike u Konstrukciji Etničkog Identiteta." *Etnološko-Antropološke Sveske* 13 (2009): 117–30.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979.
- Shovlin, John. "Pilgrimage and the Construction of Irish National Identity." *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, no. 11 (1991).
- Simić, Marina. "EXIT u Evropu: Popularna Muzika i Politike Identiteta u Savremenoj Srbiji." *Kultura*, no. 116–117 (2007): 98–122.
- Skey, Michael. "'Carnivals of Surplus Emotion?'. Towards an Understanding of the Significance of Ecstatic Nationalism in a Globalising World." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 6, no. 2 (2006): 143–61.
- . *National Belonging and Everyday Life: The Significance of Nationhood in an Uncertain World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Stokes, Martin, and others. *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1997.
- Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966.
- Wodak, Ruth. *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.
- Zakić, Mirjana, and Danka Lajić-Mihajlović. "(Re)creating the (folk Music) Tradition: The National Competition of Brass Orchestras at the Dragačevo Trumpet Festival." *New Sound: International Magazine for Music*, no. 39 (2012).
- Živković, Marko. "Stories Serbs Tell Themselves: Discourses on Identity and Destiny in Serbia since the Mid-1980s." *Problems of Post-Communism* 44, no. 4 (1997): 22–29.