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The Balkans Traditional Patterns of Life

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In the inner courtyard of an Albanian house in Kiçevo a street tradeswoman offers her colourful cloths for sale. The family head – left in the picture – has to give his consent first, however, before the materials are bought. (Lída Míček-Jahn ©)

All pictures of Lída Míček are printed by her kind permission. They were taken on her on various travels in the Balkans between 1978 and 1985. The pictures on pages 11, 17, 18, 20, 21, 27, 29 first appeared in print in: Lída und Tomáš Míček, Entdeckung Balkan. Jugoslawien Griechenland Bulgarien, Munich 1987

Introduction

As a new edition of the issue "Traditionelle Lebenswelten auf dem Balkan" in the series "Beiträge zur historischen Sozialkunde" is now published in English ("The Balkans – Traditional Patterns of Life") five years after the original edition this preface can do with some amplifying reflections. The great interest in the German issue which is out of print since has prompted us to publish this English-language edition intended for a broader readership. The content and the historical approach of this issue as well as of other publications in the project "Balkan Family", on which it is based, have provoked a scientific discussion which has to be dealt with. What is more, in the mean time Southeast Europe has been shaken by yet another war whose social repercussions are relevant also for the scientific study of "traditional patterns of life in the Balkans".

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This expanded new edition addressed to a broader readership is aimed both at school teaching and also at educational work in general – classes and lectures on university level for example. That in Central and Western Europe an increased degree of educational work dealing with traditional circumstances of life in Southeast Europe is indeed necessary to us seems to be the order of the day, in particular after the political events in the last months and in view of the reconstruction work that will have to be done in Southeast Europe on the part of the West. In as far as these materials are also used as teaching aids in the countries of Southeast Europe it will be of great importance to take into account also those controversial questions arising in the recent academic discussion. Originally, the intention was to publish some of the contributions to this discussion as part of this new edition. That, however, would have gone too far into details and thus beyond the scope of a teaching aid. The bibliographical references respectively the suggestions for further reading list these contributions. The preface goes into

several principal criticisms, in as far as they address practical aspects of imparting knowledge, of teaching. As to provide assistance a greater number of sources and pictures has been included. As regards the explanations and observations made in the three articles offering a general survey the authors and publishers of this issue are confident that they can stand unrevised.

Two of the essential topics in the discussion about the subjects of this issue shall be taken especially: the problems of the cultural specificity of violence and the question complex dealing with family forms in Southeast Europe. The article "Traditional Value Patterns and the War in Ex-Yugoslavia" makes the attempt at explaining behaviour patterns in wartime against the background of a traditional patriarchal world and its notions, admittedly an unconventional attempt but even so a very important one for educational work that aims to instruct and inform. One formulation that particularly invited criticism was: "A further characteristic of this war are the atrocities perpetrated against women. How better to give expression to one's firm hold over the enemy in a patriarchal world than to rape the women of the enemy and thereby prove to him that he is unable to protect "his" women? In patriarchal ways of thinking the expectations are that men die in battle, but the rape, torture and sometimes even the brutal murder of a woman are beyond this world and its notions. Brutal violence against women is aimed also at the male members of the family as well as the extended circle of a woman's male kin". This standpoint was massively contradicted: the rapes of women in wartime being a constant cultural factor. All in all, it was argued that one could not speak of culturally specific forms of violence in the context of the atrocities reported to have taken place in former Yugoslavia. Whenever anthropological factors that are supposedly constant are discussed an intercultural perspective of history is in particular demand. When such essential topics as war and the use of violence are at the centre of debate a scientific approach that stands up to close intersubjective scrutiny is of particular importance for educational work.

The question of different family forms in various large areas of Europe at first seems to be a much less explosive subject. Even so, the debate on the so-called "European Marriage Pattern", respectively the "Balkan family household", makes the emotions of the participants in this discussion run high. The

fierceness of the discussion as such becomes only understandable against the background of different ways of approaching this issue. Historical family research in Central and Western Europe strove at typification. Accordingly, the attention was focused on establishing differences. Specific family forms, as can be encountered above all in the Western Balkans, presented an extreme foil of contrast. For the analytical objective to find criteria of typification this approach oriented towards extreme forms was quite legitimate. On the other hand it seems understandable also that in generalisations on such a basis many researchers from Southeast Europe could not recognise their present Lebensraum. Moreover, terms such as "European Marriage Pattern" were not comprehended as the expression of scientific model-finding interested in ideal types but rather as a form of political exclusion and isolation. It seems understandable when in this situation in historical family forms elements of similarity are sought rather than differences. On a conference a pointed formulation was coined in passing, referring to the "belief in the nuclear family as the ticket for Europe". In all the bitterness of irony this remark accurately sums up the connection between scientific points of view and the political realities. The criticism of the first edition of "The Balkans – Traditional Patterns of Life" also included aspects regarding the content just as much as the approach chosen by the authors. Anyone who writes from a Central European perspective about historical family forms in Southeast Europe lays the emphasis on such phenomena as blood revenge and house jurisdiction, the patron saint feast and economic life in complex family groups, patrilineality, the principle of seniority and a male-dominated social order, perceives the Balkans as the "other", as "radically different". "Othering" has become a veritable catch-phrase in recent discussions in the field of humanities. The German cultural anthropologist Werner Schiffauer in his article "Die Angst vor der Differenz" (The fear of difference), published in *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* (Journal on Folklore), makes the following principal statement: "The reproach of othering is fairly popular at the moment. On cultural-anthropological conferences it is the done thing regularly to make this reproach every time a lecture aims at presenting a "different" culture, that is, at showing that the actions and ways of thinking of members of a "different" ethnic group follow a different "logical pattern" than that which is familiar to us. It is said that the lecture "dichotomises", it compares us to the "others" – the West to the rest (respectively the Occident to the Orient, Christianity to Islam, Northern Europe to the Mediterranean)". One might readily add "Central

and Western Europe to the Balkans. He elaborates further: "Even when represented as being positive the other remains problematic nonetheless, for the very reason that the assumption exists that every statement expressing difference (and however positive it may be meant) implies or entails hierarchy, that is to say, power, subordination, isolation and exclusion – if not even destruction. The reproach of othering, therefore, is frequently made with a distinctly moralising undertone". At the end of his analysis Schiffauer writes (page 30): "Summing up, the developments of the last years have led cultural anthropology into a dilemma: the construction of the other has become problematic", and, "There is, I believe, no way out".

In history, too, the problem of othering is encountered, in particular in a historical-anthropological approach, such as this issue is committed to. The discussion about the "Balkan family" is a good example hereof. For historical anthropology, however, the situation in all probability need not to be seen quite as hopeless. Two differences in particular appear to be essential between these two disciplines:

First: Historical anthropology examines the past with regard to the present, but not the present itself. "We" and the "others" thereby come into play in a different way. When an Austrian researcher occupies himself with Austrian families in the 18th century his "collective awareness" as an Austrian is not in the least affected – from the present only the interest in the change of family structures flows into his analysis. In relation to the topic of his study he is a "foreigner", even though he works on his own Lebensraum. Therefore, he can approach this subject in the same distanced way as, say, Scandinavian, Italian or Greek family circumstances. This is different with an identification-related approach to history. Anyone for whom the historical family forms in his culture of origin are important in relation to his "collective awareness" in the present day projects this relationship "we" – the "others" into the past. Only then the problem of othering arises at all. Only then the emphasis of differences can be perceived and felt as subordination, exclusion or degradation. Such, the transition from an identification-related approach to an analytical study of the past seems to be the decisive step for history towards overcoming this predicament.

Another difference to cultural anthropology seems to be that historical anthropology is less committed to strongly dichotomously contrasting forms of approach than its neighbouring discipline which employs methods of field-work in restricted small areas. After all, it is this dichotomous "discourse of difference" that leads to the problematic forms of othering. Subor-

dination, exclusion, isolation and degradation can appear, at least or be suspected, every time two cultures alone are compared to one another and there exist a close personal relation to one of them. If, however, a third or fourth cultural area is included in this comparative analysis hierarchical evaluations on the part of the reader will not be evoked in the same way. The discussion about this issue and its content would definitely have – as would the debate on the “Balkan family” in general – lost a lot of its fierceness if an additional large area had been included in the study, for instance the Mediterranean. This would have underlined very clearly the comparative-analytical approach. Unfortunately, however, such an expanded volume will not be possible in this new edition. It seems to be important to mind the general principle: The risks respectively the suspicion of “othering” arise from a two-sided comparison; a multiple comparison, however, creates distance towards all the objects of comparison in the same way. This distance of the comparative approach can also be achieved by differentiating within the examined cultural areas. This issue presents numerous such points of differentiation with regard to the various forms of traditional patterns of life in the Balkans. To take up these suggestions and analyse them more closely could be an important didactic impulse in dealing with the articles and sources presented here. The differentiation within traditional patterns of life in other European large areas could not be outlined here. To take up this point can also be of great help in disproving and refuting the suspicion of a euro-centrist attitude in looking into the topics examined here. All in all, it seems to be crucial to develop a didactics of difference which opens up the possibility of cultural comparison without degrading one side at the same time. This demand is relevant generally in a world with a strong tendency to omnipresent global networks, in relation to Southeast Europe even more so in view of the difference in political power and assessment in past and present. The Kosovo crisis which at the beginning of this year escalated into war lends a special relevance and topicality to this new edition. The question about the historical backgrounds of this renewed conflict in former Yugoslavia does not only preoccupy academics. And this question about the roots clearly takes us beyond the scope of political events to the stage of historically traditional thinking and behaviour patterns in everyday life. Explaining the horrible past, however, is not the only thing that matters, it is essential also to obtain knowledge of typical conditions and patterns of life in this world – this could turn out to be of crucial importance in the process of reconstructing this region. In general, the attempt to gain understanding and learn from

history ought to be directed towards the present and the future. Thus, deeper insights into traditional patterns of life in the Balkans can contribute to a better understanding of the specific problems refugees from this area have to face in their new Central or Western European environment. The same holds true for the situation of the migrant workers. Specific difficulties in the host countries make it a dictate of solidarity to give more thought to the historical traditions of the migrants’ home countries. In view of many such difficulties a didactics of difference is in particularly high demand. The events of the Kosovo war bring “Europe” into it as well, with entirely different implications than five years ago when this issue was first published. While the question about culturally specific forms of violence in certain regions of Southeast Europe was asked at the time, today the reverse question seems to be unavoidable: “Are there not culturally specific forms of violence on the other side as well? Where do those methods of “clean” warfare come from? What is behind the presentation of such forms of violence as a media spectacle”? Foremost, “In what tradition of human rights could a so-called “humanitarian intervention”, that is to say a “war for human rights”, come about”? The bombings of Belgrade, Novi Sad, Podgorica and Priština have undoubtedly widened the already existing gaps, respectively torn up a new gulf. Besides, one will have to accept it as the reality that far beyond the stage of former Yugoslavia the trust put in Western values “has suffered a heavy set-back” throughout Southeast Europe. In the field of academic and scientific cooperation and the presentation of research results in the respective institutions of the educational system the situation has not become easier. The articles in this new edition are amidst this field of tension. They will certainly provoke renewed discussions. If, however, they take place in a spirit of honesty and mutual respect then such discussions, by virtue of a better understanding among the participants, will also contribute just as well to building more trust and confidence.

Karl Kaser/Michael Mitterauer

English Version: STEFAN MENHOFER, © 1999

A Patriarchal Culture? Functions and Forms of Family in the Balkans

“The story of a family can also portray the soul of a land. This is especially so in Montenegro, where the people are divided into clans and tribes to which each family is indissolubly bound. The life of the family reflects the life of the broader community of kin, and through it of the entire land.

The story of any Montenegrin family is made up of traditions about the lives of ancestors who distinguished themselves in some special way, most frequently through heroism. These traditions, spiritually so close to one another, reach back into the remote past, to the legendary founders of clan and tribe. And since there are no unheroic tribes and clans, particularly in the eyes of their members, there is no family without its renowned heroes and leaders. The fame of such men spreads beyond the clan and tribe, and through them the soul of the land speaks out. Because of this, the story of a family may be the portrait in miniature of a land.

Though the life of my family is not completely typical of my homeland, Montenegro, it is typical in one respect: the men of several generations have died at the hands of Montenegrins, men of the same faith and name. My father's grandfather, my own two grandfathers, my father, and my uncle were killed, as though a dread curse lay upon them. My father and his brother and my brothers were killed even though all of them yearned to die peacefully in their beds beside their wives.

Generation after generation, and the bloody chain was not broken. The inherited fear and hatred of feuding clans was mightier than fear and hatred of the enemy, the Turks. It seems to me that I was born with blood on my eyes. My first sight was of blood. My first words were blood and bathed in blood.”

This is the introductory paragraph to Milovan Djilas' autobiography. When this was being written in the fifties many may well have thought that this world of killing fields would eventually, once and forever, belong to the past. Now, four decades later, we know that this is not the case. And, even though the horrible events in former Yugoslavia cannot simply be interpreted as a continuation of conflicts of the past after a relatively long span of time in peace and stability – there is no mistaking a certain continuity to the bloody traditions of Balkan history.

Djilas regards these bloody traditions of his home country as rooted in specific familial and social circumstances. This point of view may well be important also for the understanding of the current situation. Attempts at an explanation which focus solely on political and military events in the past fall short of a conclusive analysis. Many aspects which seem so utterly unfamiliar to us in the media coverage can be explained in all probability only against the background of rather specific social developments in the Balkans, which took an entirely different shape

than in Central or Western Europe. The examination of such specific developments, however, is of great significance beyond explaining the tragic events in former Yugoslavia. This will contribute to a better understanding as to why in this continent, Europe, only a few hundred kilometres away from our own *Lebensraum*, there exist such fundamentally different forms of thinking, different values, behaviour patterns and social forms. The differences in the family circumstances serve as a particularly suitable starting point for a detailed analysis.

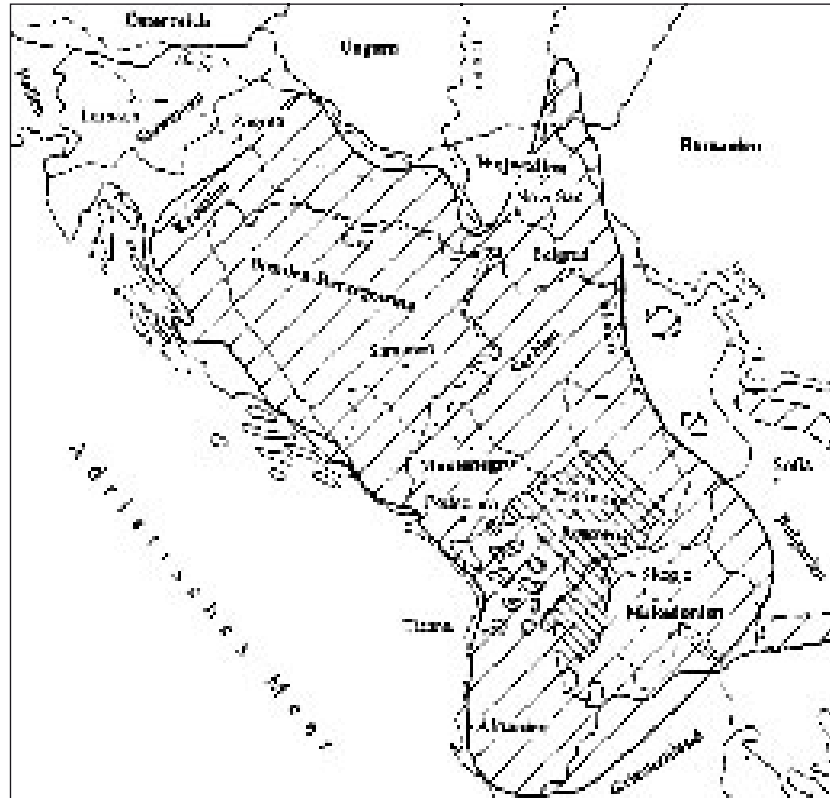
Families that are integrated into tribal units, decimated by blood feuds and that demonstrate an attitude of pride in their heroic forefathers, and thereby build and affirm self-confidence – this image, as portrayed by Milovan Djilas in his autobiography, standing in stark contrast to the family circumstances in Central and Western Europe, will obviously not suffice as a scenario appropriate for generalisation in terms of reflecting the image of the “typical Balkan family”. Anyone born at roughly the same time in Dubrovnik, Zagreb or Sofia will probably hardly find any similarities to his very own history and origin. In the Balkans just as much as everywhere else around the world urban and rural familial structures and circumstances are different quite profoundly from one another. The rural forms, in turn, corresponding to the structure of the natural and the cultural areas in the Balkans, are many and diverse. Tribal societies with corresponding familial circumstances only represent a minority any more in this, the 20th century, they are confined to the virtually impassable mountains in the northern regions of Albania, in Kosovo, parts of Herzegovina and Macedonia as well as, of course, in Djilas' fatherland, Montenegro. They were much further spread though in former times and have influenced greatly the structures of family deep into the lowlands, foremost by migration

movements setting out from the mountains. This holds true for those parts of Serbia and Bulgaria formerly under Ottoman domination and, therefore, Oriental influence as well as the areas at the *Militärgrenze* (literally “military frontier”) that were parts of the Habsburg monarchy, or even Dalmatia, which was shaped by Italian urban culture. The specific traditions of the inhabitants of the mountain areas have gained a special importance in the eventual shaping and forming of the respective Balkan societies. Therefore, it seems to be reasonable to take this as our starting point in an examination of familial forms of life.

Blood revenge and house-jurisdiction

Djilas refers to blood revenge as a specific characteristic of familial and tribal circumstances in his home region – a phenomenon particularly unfamiliar surely to his readers elsewhere. He describes both victims and avengers in his own family, from his own depth of experience he portrays inconceivable scenes of individual and collective bloodshed which shaped the time of his childhood and adolescence. All of which had such a lasting impression on him that for his autobiography he chose the title “Land without Justice”. This characterisation will definitely be comprehensible to each one of his readers. What happened at the time in those regions, with reference and in the name of “heroism” and “family honour”, this sheer brutality and arbitrary use of force, can hardly be legitimised today from anyone’s sense of right and wrong. Even so, from the perspective of legal history, social history and historical anthropology one ought not to automatically equate blood revenge with a total absence of law; to the contrary, one will rather have to comprehend and regard it as an appropriate means under certain circumstances of restoring social order in a form adequate to the common sense of right and wrong shared

by the group as an entirety. The term “blood revenge” alone proves to be enough of a hindrance to such an approach, for it is associated with wilful murder and arbitrariness, in general, rather than with a legitimate form of killing. Thus, the more technical German term *Sühnenahme* (liter-



ally “making atonement”) has been suggested on the part of the jurists, which, at any rate, quite as much as the event thereby referred to, will remain unfamiliar to our everyday understanding. In a mountain area in the Balkans, not very far from Montenegro, in northern Albania, blood revenge or *Sühnenahme*, in the sense of this form of legitimate killing strictly regulated by traditional principles of law, has survived until this century. In spite of the high toll of lives which was taken, as always, among the male side of the population by blood revenge – here, it has not become a comfortable excuse for arbitrary and wilful murder. This appears to have been so in those areas rather where the old tribal hierarchies disintegrated, where the claim to the monopoly of power

The distribution of patrilineal-complex family forms in the Balkans around

 1850 and  today.

Design: Karl Kaser

AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS BY REPUBLIC AND AUTONOMOUS REGION IN YUGOSLAVIA

| Year | Yugoslavia | Bosnia Herzegovina | Montenegro | Croatia | Macedonia | Slovenia | Serbia | | | |
|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|
| | | | | | | | Total | Proper | Vojvodina | Kosovo |
| 1921 | 5,10 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1931 | 5,14 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1948 | 4,37 | 5,15 | 4,51 | 3,94 | 5,28 | 3,78 | 4,39 | 4,54 | 3,61 | 6,36 |
| 1953 | 4,29 | 5,04 | 4,55 | 3,81 | 5,30 | 3,66 | 4,32 | 4,44 | 3,50 | 6,42 |
| 1961 | 3,99 | 4,64 | 4,43 | 3,56 | 5,02 | 3,47 | 3,96 | 3,97 | 3,31 | 6,32 |
| 1971 | 3,82 | 4,41 | 4,34 | 3,43 | 4,68 | 3,35 | 3,76 | 3,63 | 3,18 | 6,61 |
| Change 1921–1971 | -1,28 | -0,74 | -0,17 | -0,51 | -0,60 | -0,43 | -0,53 | -0,91 | -0,43 | +0,25 |

All Yugoslav republics show a relatively high average number of household members in the period of this study. Closest to the figures in Central Europe come those in Slovenia and Vojvodina, two regions shaped by Western structural patterns of settlement. To the Southeast we can observe a significant increase the peak figures of which are reached in Kosovo – the only region in Yugoslavia, where the average number of household members actually rose in the period of this study. Otherwise, a drastic decrease in the forms of complex families can be detected in all parts of former Yugoslavia, a clear indication of the degree of importance these forms must have enjoyed in historical times.

YUGOSLAV FAMILY STRUCTURE IN 1953

| Structures of Families | Yugoslavia | Bosnia Herzegovina | Montenegro | Croatia | Macedonia | Slovenia | Serbia | | | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|
| | | | | | | | Total | Proper | Vojvodina | Kosovo |
| Total | | | | | | | | | | |
| Families (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Nuclear | 62,2 | 65,8 | 69,6 | 63,4 | 57,4 | 70,5 | 58,3 | 54,1 | 17,1 | 45,8 |
| Extended Families | 34,2 | 29,8 | 29,1 | 33,0 | 41,7 | 24,3 | 38,0 | 42,9 | 23,9 | 50,0 |
| With Non-kin | 3,6 | 4,4 | 1,3 | 3,6 | 0,7 | 5,32 | 3,7 | 3,0 | 5,0 | 4,2 |
| Change 1921–1971 | -1,28 | -0,74 | -0,17 | -0,51 | -0,60 | -0,43 | -0,53 | -0,91 | -0,43 | +0,25 |

In all Yugoslav republics and autonomous regions, respectively, the share of extended families is exceptionally high – again with the difference from the Northwest to the Southeast which we have already seen in table 2.

Families with non-kin play – in stark contrast to Central and Western Europe – a subordinate role only in relation to forms of families living with kin. That even in Kosovo the percentage of extended families does not quite break the 50 per cent boundary has little to mean with regard to the dominance of this pattern. Complex and extended families time and time again become basic nuclear families on account of splitting up. Forms of family extension in societies with patrilineal-complex family forms as a rule are merely a transitional stage in the family cycle.

Source:

Byrnes, Robert F. (ed.) *Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga, Notre Dame-Indiana 1976, p. 121 f.*

on the part of the state on the other hand did not totally assert itself. Apart from the continual struggle against the Turkish “archenemy” that was waged with the utmost of brutality, to which Djilas refers to in this context, the bloody confrontations between enemy families and groups, originating from traditions of blood revenge, are those that have a lasting effect on the forms of conflict settlement in the Balkans. In the course of the radical social transformations in the 20th century, however, they have lost their original social context – and therewith also the once clearly defined limits to their potential of violence.

From the perspective of the modern rule of law one aspect in societies practising blood revenge is particularly difficult to understand: if blood-guilt has arisen, then revenge can be exacted not solely on the actual culprit himself but, more so, also on any other adult male of his family. Thus, there exists a collective responsibility of the male side of a household. This responsibility, however, is held to be relevant not only for the contemporary generations. There are accounts of cases when blood-guilt was punished eventually not before sixty, at times even one hundred, years had passed. Such behaviour is quite incompatible with the concept of the individuality of guilt. It requires a completely different understanding and notion of individuality and family community. We can generalise this even beyond those cases giving cause eventually for blood revenge: the entire family group is held responsible for the actions of each one of its members, in the positive as well as the negative sense. The heroic feats achieved by the ancestors are told to very distant descendants still, since one

firmly believes that they live on, literally, in them. On the other hand, once that blood guilt has arisen, it will never be forgotten again. Not only the brothers, cousins and nephews have to face the possible implications, it might even take the life of a grand-son. Women, however, cannot fall victim to blood revenge, nor can they pass on the “guilt” to their children. They may, though, provoke certain obligations to take revenge – above all by sexual misdemeanour. On the other hand, they can contribute significantly to the family honour of their fathers and brothers by conducting themselves in an irreproachable manner. The term “family honour”, as we understand it from the tradition of Central European societies, does not do full justice, however, to the immense binding power of honour within the tribal communities in the Balkans. We are lacking the terminological equipment and instruments so as to characterise this integration of each person into the family unit, this strong group identity to which the individual takes but second place

only. Thus, the sole way that remains is to describe this different nature of family by its specific characteristics. The system of blood revenge is one of the most distinctive features in this respect. We can still track down the remnants thereof in the tribal areas of the Western Balkans. Going far beyond these relic zones, a strong group identity, adopted by the families, which inhibits considerably the development and emergence of an individual self-identity, is very characteristic of this area.

Blood revenge was quite common in many tribal societies of early Europe. It was overcome essentially, however, in the Early Middle Ages already, thus, more than a millennium before the first efforts were undertaken to combat blood revenge in the Dinaric Alps by the Albanian and Montenegrin princes, respectively the Yugoslav kings. It had been the church above all in the Early Middle Ages that had sought to combat the practice of blood revenge. That this attempt did not produce any resounding success over the years, not even so much later on, is a sign

Damaged Family Honour

A shal had spent the major part of his life in the United States. He returned to his homeland as an old man so as not to have to die abroad. As he told me full of pride he had achieved in life all that matters to a man. He had set up a house, had acquired modest wealth and had become a respected and reputed citizen who was frequently entrusted with various posts and responsibilities. What saddened him, however, was that never had the president of the United States shaken hands with him. Fellow citizens might perhaps smile at his distress. To the Skypetar, however, who remains a man of agonal thinking even far away from his homeland, a handshake from the first citizen of the state is not a formality. In his view this expresses the visible recognition as an able and equal citizen by society and the state. The shal told me with profound sadness that a murder of a little child that had occurred in his homeland in his own lineage had robbed him of his life's dearest wish coming true. The president had once visited the park in which he, the shal, had been employed as a gamekeeper. As a result of the abominable crime which had been committed shortly before in his own lineage and which he had found out about from the priest of Shale he naturally had been forced to avoid being introduced to the president for a handshake. I remarked that the president could not have known about the events in Shale. The man remained firm, however, his standpoint was that he could not have expected the president of the United States to have to put up with shaking the hand of someone who belonged to a lineage whose name had been besmirched in front of everybody and that had not even had the opportunity thus far to clean itself, for the villain who had damaged the honour of the lineage had managed to escape to Montenegro.

(Walter Peinsipp, *Das Volk der Shkypetaren*. Wien-Köln-Graz 1986, p. 115)

Breaches of the social norms by one individual not only affect the individual alone but also the entire lineage – even, as in this case, distant relatives over a long geographical distance.

of the lack of efficiency which the church displayed in the efforts to assert its principles – perhaps also of its adaptability to local traditions which we can observe here in other family-relevant matters as well. This right of legitimate killing claimed by the families in societies with blood revenge has otherwise been claimed in Europe in the first place by kingdom and its appointed organs and connected institutions and, following which, by the authority of the state as such. In acephalous tribal societies, however, such authorities are nowhere to be found. Blood jurisdiction is a family concern, primarily. Here, the obligation on the outside to seek blood revenge corresponds with house jurisdiction to the inside, which can also bring in its wake eventually killing as the harshest form of punishment. In this respect the right respectively the obligation lies primarily with the house-father, though possibly also with brother and spouse at the same time, with the latter in particular were he to catch his wife in the act of adultery. In some areas of Albania when the bride left her parental home a cartridge was clipped onto her wedding dress at the neck. In the wedding night she had to give it to her spouse, who was to keep it in case of unfaithfulness on her part. If, indeed, he killed her with this cartridge, then she was considered to have been killed from the hands of her father or brother. “A bride has a cartridge in her neck”, this has become a proverbial saying almost. Even in the feeble attempts in the tribal societies at establishing some sort of official jurisdiction open to the public, the house community to which the guilty belonged was involved still in the eventual execution of the penalty. At an execution, the closest male relative, brother, father or uncle, respectively, had to take the first shot or set the pile of wood on fire. It is very difficult to comprehend as to how such forms of killing one’s own relations were compatible with the bonds of kin-

ship, as must have been especially intensive in those areas particularly. In a society with a long tradition of state jurisdiction a world of a dominant, household-administered justice remains barely conceivable in any event, at least so far as practised in the form of blood revenge.

Another aspect that has to be seen in context with house jurisdiction is the right of corporal punishment. The practice of beating women and children, according to surveys from the inter-war period, was fairly widespread throughout former Yugoslavia. Characteristically, the traditional tribal areas were not to the fore in this respect. Here, the forms of house jurisdiction were firmly restricted by traditional rules and regulations which had to be observed. A “familial culture of beating” was far more prominent in areas in which traditional family circumstances were subject to a radical process of transformation, in particular in Serbia. House jurisdiction in its many and diverse forms played an important part in large areas of the Balkans – by no means only in the tribal regions. This strong position of house jurisdiction is connected closely to a very poorly developed system of state jurisdiction. In this respect there are differences between Central and Southeast Europe which are of considerable importance also for both family structures and inner-familial relationships.

A specific Christian house cult: the “slava”

With regard also to the function of family as a cultic unit one encounters remarkable particularities in the Balkans. They can be illustrated very well by the example of the festival of the patron saint of the house. The specific relationship above all between the family and larger communities becomes visible clearly by this example.

Of the various names for this festival of the patron saint of the

house “*slava*” is the most frequently used expression. “*Slava*” quite simply means “feast” or “festival”. The festival of the patron saint of the house is the quintessential feast, the most important event of religious celebration in the course of the year – from the perspective of the families occasionally even more so than even Easter or Christmas. This is astonishing all the more since, unlike the celebration of the birth and resurrection of Christ, respectively, the *slava* does not involve one of the great mysteries of Christian history of salvation. The *slava* is celebrated on the feast-day of various saints of rather minor importance. These feast-days of the respective saints only obtain their high standing owing to the fact that a house community worships this particular saint as its patron saint. Unlike the universal festivals of Christendom the *slava* was celebrated on different days from one house to the other. Therefore, it has not a universal but rather a particular character. Such a main festival oriented towards family stands out as a singular phenomenon in the intercultural comparison of the Christian churches.

The contents of the *slava* are oriented also towards the family as a group. The absolute highlight is a banquet involving joint drinking to the honour of God and the respective patron saint, in conjunction with praying for health and joy for the entire family as well as the circle of invited relatives and friends. The commemoration of the dead, strictly family-related again, plays an eminent part. The *slava* candle is lit for the dead, thus invoking their presence. In some areas there is also a written record of the complete line of male ancestors reaching back for many generations which is read out on this occasion. This list of the ancestors, however, as a rule, is familiar anyway to most without the written version. All rites pertaining to the *slava* are conducted by the house-father. The local cleric more

often than not does not even attend the ceremonies.

The *slava* and its traditions are passed on by the sons. If there are no male descendants, however, this continuity can be guaranteed only by way of adoption. Daughters on the other hand cannot fulfil this function. By the tradition of passing on the *slava* cult through the male line common features of this cult emerged within the context of patrilineal kinship. In those areas with tribal structures the tribes in their entirety, respectively their subgroups, shared the same patron saint. This worship of the patron saints was connected altogether with a strongly patrilineal way of thinking in terms of descent. The specifically high estimation of male offsprings has to be seen in this context. This finds very graphic expression in the curse formula "May your *slava* candle go out". That means "You shall die sonless". He who leaves no sons cannot be remembered ritually after his death. Such a conception is quite unusual in a Christian society. One would associate this rather with a society of ancestor-worship. And in precisely such a form of society the origins of the *slava* will have to be dated.

This origins quite probably takes us back to the pre-Christian era. These festivals are widespread in the whole of the Balkans, from the northern parts of Greece to the Serb-populated areas of Croatia and from the Adriatic to Slavonia and Bulgaria. Not only the Serbs, however, who regard the *slava* as one of their foremost national characteristics, but more so, Croats, Montenegrins, Albanians, Vlachs, Sarkatsans, Macedonians and Romanians alike heed this custom as do – and this is remarkable all the more – not only the Orthodox but also the Catholics and, albeit with slight modifications, even Muslims. Apparently, this tradition is rooted in a common substrate, that is, the celebratorial commemoration of the ancestors, adapted in the

course of Christianisation as the festivals of the saints. A genuinely Christian origin of the *slava* can be ruled out definitively. As for that matter, Christianity was a communal religion to a far too strong degree, even in its forms within the Eastern Church, which became the determining factor in the Balkans. Here, five hundred years of Ottoman rule, however, led to a decrease in the importance of the parishes and, inversely, to a strengthening of the house cult – a phenomenon which can be observed frequently against the background of the oppression of certain religious communities. It is significant all the more though that this process did not entail the shifting and restructuring of traditional

Western Europe. Going to church on a regular basis was completely unknown in most regions. In various autobiographies it is reported that family members went to church no more than once or twice a year – at Easter in particular, the most important festival, when the entire parish gathered. Thereby, on the level of the parish such close social bonds could not form, as are a typical feature otherwise of the Christian churches – especially within the Catholic Church from the age of Counter-Reformation. Here, in the rural areas in particular, the parish church came to be centre, essentially, of interaction among the various local groups. Apart from ecclesiastical functions

The personal religion of members of my family was a mixture of pagan and Christian beliefs and practices. Many of the local religious rites and rituals are of pagan origin and related to family health, livestock breeding, and grain harvests. They derive from many different sources, pagan, Christian, and Moslem, some indigenous and some borrowed from Illyrian, Graeco-Roman, Slavic, and Turkish cultures. Hardly anyone in my family knew anything about the history of Christianity and the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Church represented little more for them than the social functions connected with birth, marriage, death, patron saint's day, and other major holidays, and its position as a pillar of nationalism. Hardly any member of the family went to church more than twice a year, and some may not have entered the church more than half a dozen times in their entire lives. On Christmas and the patron saint day, the head of the household led the prayer, in which he pleaded for peace and divine mercy for those who had died, for a bountiful harvest, and for divine blessing on the living. His prayer was spontaneous and ungrammatical, but sincere.

Wayne Vucinich, *A Zadruga in Bileća Rudine*, in: Byrnes, Robert F. (ed.) *Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga*, Notre Dame-Indiana 1976, p. 180

This autobiographical report about the religious practices and habits in a zadruga in the eastern part of Herzegovina in the inter-war period clearly shows the dominance of the house cult.

communal Christian festivals to the sphere of the house. To the contrary, one sole festival of the house cult has survived, has perhaps even risen in standing, which otherwise cannot be shown to have been a demonstrably Christian feast, and the character of which scarcely bears any Christian imprint.

The relationship between the house and the parish community was rather different, generally, in large parts of the Balkans than, traditionally, in both Central and

non-religious concerns were also addressed here, so that the parish became a specifically significant field and background for both actual and conscientious contextualities on a local basis. In vast areas of the Balkans such a strong parish unit does not exist. Frequently, the cemetery is of greater importance as the religious centre than the church itself. Here, however, one does not gather as a community. It is quite frequent that patrilineal lineages have their own, secluded burial places – a sign

that thinking in terms of descent takes the upper hand over the sense of belonging to the parish even beyond death.

This entirely different situation in the Balkans can best be comprehended from its very contrast to the influencing of family circumstances in the West by the high standing of the parish. Family, and not only as a cultic unit, assumed a far more autonomous function in the Balkans.



*In the South Bulgarian village of Vehtino in the Rhodopian Mountains grain is threshed in the traditional manner by the family members: Three horses are led around in a circle and such stamp the seeds from the ears.
(Lída Miček-Jahn ©)*

In the West, however, the entire system of basic education has been modelled and developed, as a rule, in accordance to the parishes, and has thus interfered in the field of socialisation with what had formerly been strictly familial functions. In the Balkans, generally speaking, there was no such ecclesiastical school system, or one that was promoted and supported by ecclesiastical institutions on a local basis. This has to do with a different attitude towards education in the first place on the part of the Orthodox churches than that developing in the West, it is quite clear also, however, that the limited opportunities and options in the Ottoman era contributed largely thereto. In the time after World War II the illiteracy rate in the Balkans still varied between 30 and 50 per cent, easily the highest throughout Europe. The peak figures of this statistics showed in the Yugoslav republics of Macedonia, Bosnia and

Serbia. A lack of school education goes hand in hand with little opportunity of alternative orientation as compared to familial socialisation, and thus also with little opportunity of individualisation. In the domain of educational functions also until deep into the 20th century the family stood unrivalled and unchallenged from without.

Another example of the influence of parish structures takes us beyond the field of religion in the strict sense of the word. All over Western and Central Europe the parish provided for the framework and background to the development of groups of single young men. These “young men’s societies”, or whatever they were called, occupied essential functions in the everyday life of the parishioners – for instance with regard to their customs of courting and rebuke. What is more, the youth groups provided the backing for inner-familial processes of emancipation. In the Balkans, there existed no comparable counterpart whatsoever. Such processes of emancipation, in any event, appear not at all to have been seen as positive in the face of the prevalent family models.

Economic Life within the complex family group

All that can be said for the fields of law and cultic worship holds true equally as much as far as economic matters are concerned: as a unit of the organisation of labour family has also preserved traditional functions for very long in the Balkans. In comparison to the rest of Europe economic functions were given up not until a relatively late stage. The percentage of the rural population among the population total may serve as a rough indicator of these differences in development. In the rural areas the share of livestock breeding, on a family scale was far higher, of course, than in the cities characterised by an increasing division of labour. According to statistical data the rural population in Yugoslavia

in the time immediately after World War II amounted to 83 per cent of the total population, by far the highest percentage in this respect throughout Europe. As for comparative figures, this is 44 per cent in Italy, 33 per cent in Czechoslovakia, 22 per cent in Switzerland and merely 5 per cent in England. This family scale transhumance in the Balkans, however, does not only stand out on account of its very frequency but also with regard to its specific form. In the Balkans as in no other region of Europe shepherds' transhumance has survived up into the 20th century. The combined efforts of several adult men were required in the here practised forms of pastoralism. Correspondingly, the joint-family with a complex structure is the basic unit frequently of the organisation of labour. This family form, however, is not only to be found in the zones of pastoralism. The so-called "zadruga", as is the artificial term for this phenomenon coined in the 19th century, can be encountered all over the Balkan Peninsula, including parts of Croatia, the west of Bulgaria and the north of Greece. Apparently, it has spread to large parts of the Balkans, setting out originally from the pastoral areas, in the course of migration movements and was adapted according to the economic circumstances of each new area of settlement.

The decrease in importance and the eventual breakdown of the *zadruga* is traced frequently to the transformation of the organisation

of labour within society. Money economy and wage-labour, industrialisation and urbanisation are presumed to have effectively precipitated the decline of this traditional form of life. This analysis more or less hits the nail on the head. The old economic community of several adult men living together with their wives and children could not be maintained that easily any more



once special property emerged, acquired by one person alone. Now, it suggested itself for obvious reasons to split the joint-families into nuclear families. It remains quite remarkable nonetheless that the *zadruga* often managed to adapt to such transformed conditions and circumstances of the organisation of labour. In the 19th century already there existed rural *zadrugas* in

Everyday life in a Serbian zadruga with 35 members at around 1910. There, sheep-breeding is the basis still of family scale transhumance.
(Srpski etnografski zbornik. Naselja i poreklo stanovništva. Srpska Akademija Nauka i Umetnosti. Beograd 1910, Bd. 10/Bild III)

Before the war, a large number of men, particularly married men, went to America, whence they sent large sums of money home to their wives. The wives gave up folk costume and began to deck out their daughters with ready-made garments and thereby trained the girls away from needlework. The folk custom of the "sewing bee" had meant the girls getting together in this house or that, where two rooms were set aside for embroidering on cloth and open work in linen, but now they get together just for parties, to be joined by the lads with tamburas. So long as money flowed in from America, they spent freely, even getting into debt at shops and inns (which rapidly sprang up) but when money ceased to pour in, when they felt the burden of debts, there began dissatisfaction in many households and the splitting up of the married sons. The zadrugas broke up, for after the war the men traded in livestock – cattle, horses, pigs – and earned big money, and everyone wanted to be his own master and get rich. That commercial prosperity destroyed the zadruga, and with it went influences which utterly transformed the village, so it looked quite different from what it had been before the war.
(Vera St. Erlich, *Family in Transition. A Study of 300 Yugoslav Villages*, Princeton-New Jersey 1966, S 47)

This report by a village teacher from the district of Gracae in the region of Lika in Croatia illustrates quite vividly the impacts of the modern monetary economy on life in traditional joint-families.

which one member worked as a trader or craftsman. In such case there still existed physical proximity. Not though with the migrant workers. Their travels frequently took them to a different continent even, to one of the Americas, where they stayed for quite some time. Nonetheless, they still belonged to their *zadruga*. Such it did not come as much of a surprise when considerable sums of money – their wages earned abroad – were sent back home to increase the family resources. The economic community was maintained still when the system of the organisation of labour had long since been abandoned altogether. In comparison with the rest of Europe such forms are special cases. They do of course have their economic rationality, but in the end they can only be explained to a satisfactory result against the background of a specific family solidarity which becomes comprehensible only from the entire spectrum of family functions.

Functional variety and family identity

In the mountains of the Balkans in particular, even if not only there, up into our century family has maintained a wealth of traditional functions: military functions – the size of a family was measured often by the number of guns, that is men – as well as judicial, cultic and social ones alike. The familial functions were so important and strong since higher institutions and groups were so weak: the state, the churches, the parish etc. This strength of family functions corresponded with the strength of family consciousness. Identification with higher groups does not necessarily have to interfere with the level of identification with the family just as much as individual self-identity ought not necessarily to be seen as a rival to familial group identity. These various stages of identity, however, are shaped by a relationship of reciprocal influencing. Compared to Cen-

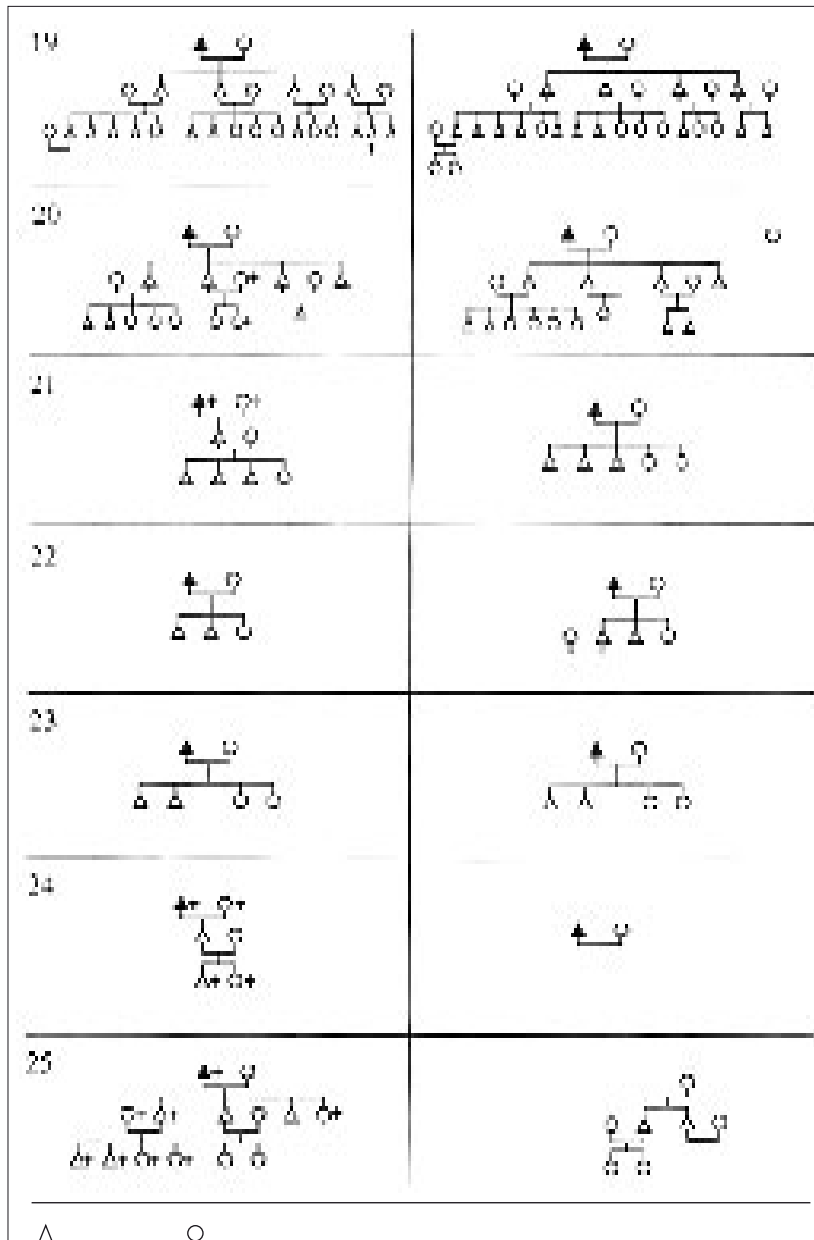
tral European circumstances one may well venture to assume that the existential importance of the family as such for someone coming from the traditional Balkan milieu was markedly higher at, say, the beginning of this century. This difference shall be examined in more detail by the example of one phenomenon then repeatedly observed.

After the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina on the part of the Habsburg monarchy a regiment from these crownlands was stationed in Vienna. The Bosnians were renowned for their imposing appearance and physique, even so, they continually struggled with their health. Time and time again cases were admitted to the military hospital which all showed clear symptoms of a mental illness. These were symptoms that could not be found present in soldiers from other regions of the monarchy. The doctors traced them to the long separation from the family. The essential point, however, seems to be that these observations were made in times of peace. This had nothing to do with such war neuroses as the “partisan disease” frequently occurring during World War II. In our case this mental illness stood in very close connection with a social uprooting. The separation from their parental home and familial circle to the Bosnians caused an existential shock of entirely different form and dimensions than to the fellow soldiers of their age from the other parts of the Habsburg monarchy – an indication perhaps of the especially deep-rooted embodiment of personal identity in the family.

These very traditional family forms characterised by an abundance of different functions performed by the family itself prevailed in large areas of the Balkans even at the beginning of this the 20th century. Some of these functions had long ceased to be performed, or were at least carried out on a much more reduced scale, by families in Central and Western Europe. Thus,

one could say that there existed a different stage of development in the secular process of giving up family functions and leaving them to higher social groups and institutions. Such a statement, however, has to be taken with extreme caution. It is all too easy here to fall into the habit of an evolutionist attitude which takes as its starting point the assumption that familial development may well be phase-different, that it is identical, however, with regard to the eventual objective and, wherever, has to pass certain stages of the same kind. Evolutionist categories such as “progressive” or “retrograde” will hardly be the appropriate criteria to do full justice to the different family circumstances in Central and Western Europe on one hand and in the Southeast of Europe on the other hand. This becomes apparent in the field of family functions just as much as it shows in the corresponding areas of family structures, familial roles and inner-familial relationships.

In scientific literature on the topic the debate over specific family structures in the Balkans focuses its attention strongly on the term “*zadruga*”. Within the Balkan States as well as without ideological factors play an important role in this debate. Besides, very often traditional family forms – whether real or presumed – become the starting point and breeding ground for social ideals and rather wishful notions. This is true for the *zadruga* in particular. For the nationalists the *zadruga* – according to the whereabouts – stands for the noblest expression of the collective spirit and soul of, alternately, the Bulgarian, Serbian or Southern Slavonic people. It embodied “mutual help and support, moral solidarity, respect for the elders and those rich in experience and decent and honourable relationships” – all of which values that were seen to be in great danger and under threat by the looming Westernisation and, in general, by the prospects of modernisation. For the communists



The family structures in seven neighbouring houses show the whole wide range of possible forms of household composition on the common basis of patrilineality. Simple and complex, lineally and laterally extended households stand next to each other. The forms of composition are always in a state of change. Even within the comparatively short period of two years a complex family can transform into a simple one, a three-generation-household can become a one-generation-household. The possibility of complex structures does on no account mean that this form of composition appears regularly. In spite of the many and diverse possibilities of extension the pattern of patrilineality by no means led to the “complex family” on a regular basis, that is in the sense of an especially large number of family members living together. A family with non-kin appears only once in this random sample, one living together with kin through the female line not at all.

it reflected the “purest form of collectivism” which was to “elevate society from egoism to altruism, from exploitation to justice”. Researchers from an altogether different ideological background emphasise its egalitarianism and democratic elements as the most prominent structural components. There have been and are, indeed, critical counter-currents to the mythicisation of the *zadruga*, they in turn, however, are not entirely free of such mythicisation themselves: the *zadruga* as, quantitatively, a fairly insignificant and, historically, a relatively recent phenomenon standing opposed to the majority of nuclear families, that is family circumstances altogether which are virtually the same as in the rest of Europe. In scientific research outside the Balkans also ideological standpoints, especially though a rather bold and simplifying labelling, play a certain part in the debate over family forms in the Balkans. In this respect one might refer to the much-noted publication by one French researcher in the eighties, who classifies the Balkan states as, generally, belonging to the type of the “famille communautaire”, Central Europe including Austria as a part of the “famille autoritaire” and, eventually, subsumes France under the category mainly of the “famille égalitaire-nucléaire”. Then, he brings these structural types of family into connection directly with respective political systems, that is with communism, fascism and parliamentary democracy, respectively. Whether such basic an approach of establishing a contextual relation of familial and social structures leaves wanting or not shall be left open – the main concern here is the emphasis of egalitarian and collective elements in the classification of the prevalent family structures in the Balkans. From an outside perspective it is common otherwise to single out on the level of intercultural comparison the component of dependence and to speak of “patriarchalism”. This labelling, too, is

somewhat simplifying, on a basis, however, on which further discussion and debate seems to be fruitful and rewarding.

If we state that the *zadruga* – or any other family form in the Balkans as for that – is structured “patriarchally” this is indubitably correct. That does not, however, allow any further conclusions on the particularities of family circumstances in this area and cannot establish a distinguishing feature to other regions. In the sense of the domination of the father within the family itself one may well refer to all traditional societies in Europe as “patriarchal” societies. An exception to which are those household and house communities headed by a widow. Such family forms, however, are few and far between in the whole of the Balkans and very rare indeed in comparison with Central or Western Europe. The reasons for that lie with differences in the conditions of familial development: in complex family units, as a rule, after the death of the head of the house another adult man takes over, which rules out virtually the possibility of a “matriarchal” household with the widow as the leading figure. This, however, is merely a derived phenomenon and in itself does not contain any structural difference. Here just as much as there the male domination of the family represented the norm. The patriarchal system was not called into question as a whole only because of this more or less relevant number of exceptional cases.

Patrilineality as basic pattern

By the term “patriarchalism” frequently also other phenomena are comprehended along the line which pertain to the role of the men within the family, which, however, are by no means causally related to patriarchy itself. Three such phenomena shall be examined in detail here, patrilineality, the principle of seniority and the priority of the men. All three assume a particular role and impor-

tance in the family structures in the Balkans. All three refer to significant structural differences to Central and Western Europe.

Patrilineality in the first place belongs to the terminology of relationship, is a term that refers to the special importance of the male line for family ties. In the whole of the Balkans the paternal line is given priority over the maternal line, the “thick blood” over the “thin blood”. This may even go so far that any degree of relationship through the women is not seen and accepted as such. The descendants from one common ancestor through the male line, however, feel very close to each other. Clans, descent-groups and lineages are the most important social forms beyond the scale of the house community (compare Karl Kaser

mer since the structuring principle comes to the fore far more in an extensive group. The *zadruga* as a rule consists of the house-father and his sons or a group of brothers, each one with wife and children, respectively. The patrilineal core, however, may on the other hand be composed of uncle and nephew, grandfather and grandson or various cousins. In this respect the variants are manifold. Their common feature always is that all the men living together in a house community come from the same lineage. Conversely, all the married women – tradition requires it such – must not be born in the very house itself. The wives, daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law, all of whom come from without. The daughters leave the house on the day of their marriage. In the *zadruga*

“Your father sends you word to come down to the village. Yesterday they brought you the bride, and tomorrow is the wedding.”

Maxim accepted this news quietly and without excitement, just as news without special significance is accepted. Holding his stout shepherd’s hook in his hand, he leisurely walked down to the village. Before leaving, he had asked a friend to look after his sheep, only until tomorrow, as he would be back by then.

And so it was. While the drunken wedding guests were celebrating his feast in high he started back to the mountains without greeting his young wife, almost without having spoken to her. He had to go back to his sheep, his young wife he would see some other time.

*For Maxim knows very well, just as all the other people knew, that the wedding and everything connected with it had not been arranged for his sake, but that the house, the *zadruga*, required a fresh, healthy and cheap hand, someone who would help to dig up the ground in the spring.*

It often happens that a father keeps begging the village priest for days and weeks to marry his fourteen-year-old boy, who, according to church law and civil law, is not of an age to marry.

If the priest replies that he is not allowed to do so, that he is unable to fulfill the father’s wish and, finally, that it would be a sin against the boy, the peasant will not be convinced and will persist in spite of all arguments, with his only counter argument: “There is nobody to do the work, I am in great distress, Sir....”

(Vera St. Erlich, Family in Transition. A Study of 300 Yugoslav Villages, Princeton-New Jersey 1966, S 219f.)

This report in the Belgrade newspaper “Vreme” from the year 1938 is characteristic in many ways – of the heteronomous choice of the marriage partner, of the precedence of economic necessities over emotional desires, but above all of the low marrying age which is so markedly different from the “European Marriage Pattern”.

in this publication). The principle of patrilineality also determines the internal structure of the house communities – both of complex just as much as of simple ones. This becomes more tangible with the for-

there is no room for brothers-in-law or sons-in-law. In case of a sonless house only a son-in-law is entitled to continue the house community by way of exception. He is then ritually admitted to the house as *domazet*.

Adoption is also practised occasionally. These special cases of artificially establishing patrilineality, however, only confirm the structuring basic principle of direct descent through the male line.

Such a strict patrilineality in the composition of the family can rarely be encountered in Central or Western Europe. In as far as a familial continuity of the house community is a matter of relevance here, this can also be guaranteed by the women, for instance by the daughter or the remarried widow, the latter case is actually a quite frequent one among farmers and craftsmen. In the Balkans – leaving aside the urban areas – this would be unthinkable. As far as the relatives living with the family are concerned, the attention also, as a rule, is not focused on whether relationship exists through the male or female line. This holds true in particular with the farm-hands who themselves in some rural areas to a large part came from the circle of relatives. The norm, however, was that the share of the non-related persons among the farm-hands was larger by far. It is an essential characteristic of the family in Central and Western Europe that non-related persons may just as well be a part of it. In this context one tends to think of foster children or inmates, to name but a few further examples. All these forms are nowhere to be found in the family circumstances in the Balkans, at least with regard to the rural areas. Neither are there any farm-hands from the own family nor any other forms of non-related members of the house community. The structuring principle of patrilineality rules out this situation in the first place – in both complex family groups á la *zadruga* just as much as in other types of less complicated structure. Thus, the contrast to the open family forms of Central and Western Europe can illustrate very well to which extent family circumstances in the Balkans are determined and defined by the dominating system of kinship.

The strictly patrilineal structure

gives an indication of the much-discussed origin of the *zadruga*. If this complex family form had emerged for the very reason that the demand for workers had increased and at the

the roots of a special form of familial development in the Balkans which is widely different than in Central and Western Europe might well reach very far back.

Grandmother's death seemed to goad Uncle Mirko into taking from life what was good for the taking, with all the last strength left in him, without regard for anything, even his good name. Always a man of his word, sober and up-right, he now grew wild and berserk as never before. Though in his sixtieth year, he decided he must have male progeny. In Montenegro anyone without male children was cursed. With him the longing for a son became a gnawing disease and, moreover, an unavenged wound. He did everything, visited fortunetellers and drank potions. His wife had long ago stopped bearing children, some thirty years. They had once had a son, but he had died. He spoke of him like one possessed, of his intelligence and beauty, though the child had died while still in the cradle. About his wife he said crudely, "I planted seeds in her for forty years, and all in vain. No seed can sprout on rock, and out of her you couldn't get even a stone." He counted his daughters for nothing at all.

*Realizing the unrelenting force of his yearning, and feeling herself to blame, his wife declared, "Let him bring another younger woman beside me. I will be like a mother to her, but I have spent my whole life with him, and let him not drive me away." He paid no attention to this but chased her away, as though she were a leper. He brought into his cottage a widow with two children, all in the hopes of her giving birth to a son. She, in turn, settled easily on the property, but she did not last long. Either he himself became convinced that it was all too late and in vain or else he grew angry for some other reason. At any rate, out she went, too. (Milovan Djilas, *Land without Justice*, p. 103)*

The case of Milovan Djilas' uncle Mirko is a drastic example of the high estimation of the births of sons, in particular in the traditional tribal areas. The suggestion by his first wife was not an extraordinary one in this region. Even though forbidden by the church, bigamy was nonetheless socially tolerated in case of a childless, that is sonless, marriage.

same time also the total number of the population, as is pointed out occasionally, then it remains open as to why both the brother-in-law and the son-in-law were so rigorously and pedantically excluded from the house community. During haymaking, for instance, one should think that it did not really matter whether one descended from the same ancestor or not. The strict patrilineal emphasis and form of the *zadruga* as well as the principle of patrilineality in general needs an explanation going beyond the field of economy. It has to be viewed against the background of this very way of thinking in terms of descent and lineage which has already been referred to in the context of family honour, blood revenge and the *slava*. And from this context it can be concluded that all this, indeed, constitutes a very old pattern. Thus,

This principle of patrilineality deep-rooted in the cultures in the Balkans not only illuminates specific forms of traditional family circumstances, but also explains specific familial behaviour patterns as well as forms of familial relationship. Patrilineality has had strong impacts on marriage patterns and generative behaviour. Compared with the so-called European Marriage Pattern in Central and Western Europe the marrying age of both men and women in Southeast Europe is far lower. The Western pattern could not guarantee the preservation of the male line, in particular in a time of high infant mortality. Generally, there was not much interest anyway – apart from, perhaps, the aristocracy – in such an objective. In the Balkans on the contrary the preservation of the paternal line enjoyed an altogether different standing than in the West. If in fact

the “slava candle was not to go out” then the possibility of marriage at an early age already had to be taken into serious consideration. This was the only way to ensure that in a milieu of high mortality one male offspring at least would survive, reach adult age and then himself provide for reproduction.

Generative behaviour was oriented strongly towards the births of sons. Detailed demographic analyses have shown the share of sons to be considerably higher among the lastborn children than among the previous ones. Apparently, marital reproduction was given up more so after the birth of an additional son than after that of another daughter. It is likely that connected to which is the astonishing phenomenon that the Balkan States in contrast to all other European states show a surplus of men among the population in all age groups from birth. At an early age this can be put down to the difference in caring for and looking after the child for which fact there are definite indications. In the initial position, however, a connection to generative behaviour might well have to be seen.

In the relation of legitimate and illegitimate children generative behaviour in the Balkans may have been heavily influenced by the principle of patrilineality. The share of illegitimate children was extremely low in the Balkans – in comparison for instance with the Eastern Alps or with other regions in Central and Western Europe. The lowest figures can be found in the mountains in the Western Balkans, where tribal structures have survived longest. Here, pre-marital motherhood was incompatible with the prevalent values. It entailed the killing of both mother and child until deep into the 20th century. All in all, this rigidity in the punishment of breaches of the generally accepted sexual norms and patterns has to be comprehended from the tradition of patrilineal notions of lineage and blood. Pre-marital as well as extramarital

relationships entered by female members of the family put at risk the paternal line and thus damaged the integrity of family honour.

In the inner-familial relationships the principle of patrilineality resulted in a different hierarchy of such relationships than we are used to from Western tradition. In the *zadruga* it was not the relationship between husband and wife that was at the centre of attention but rather that between father and sons or between the brothers, respectively. Mother and sister took priority over the young wife. The high level of emotionality in the relationship between brother and sister is a specific characteristic of this family tradition. In folk-songs to which great significance must be attached as model functions one repeatedly comes across the motif of a sister mourning over her dead brother far more than over her spouse. In the family of her husband the young wife was a complete stranger. Her situation only began to improve once she had given birth to a son. At first there was no solidarity among the group of women marrying into the family in contrast to the men who had practically grown up together. Frequently the rivalry between the sisters-in-law wore on. The atmosphere, generally, in the relationship with the mother-in-law, however, was an especially polluted one. The daughter-in-law could not expect any help or support on the part of her husband. The respect for his mother compelled him to take a stand against his wife in case of a dispute, reaching as far as corporal punishment. The position of a woman marrying into a *zadruga* gradually improved as her children grew up and subsequently became her allies, particularly in old age, when she, now herself a mother-in-law or grandmother, respectively, took over the authority over the other women or children of the family, or as a widow perhaps even the role of the head of the house.

In familial consciousness patrilineality brought strong bonds

between the living and the dead. In those regions in the Balkans in which these bonds find a specifically pronounced expression people could often give the names of their ancestors all along the line over ten or more generations. This consciousness of one's ancestors is rather differently shaped than that of Western hobby genealogists. The ancestors whose names were recited in the *slava* were pictured as living on in their descendants. It was essential to maintain and continue both the honour and the good reputation of the family established by their accomplishments and heroic feats. Such consciousness of one's stock of ancestors necessarily involves a strong element of continuity and preservation. It compels to conformism and leaves little space for an individualistic special development. The duty of the young is to respect the old, not to rebel against them. The traditional familial culture in the Balkans is certainly not one that would have consciously promoted processes of emancipation on the part of the young.

The principle of seniority and a male-dominated system of regulations

In all probability the principle of seniority also is closely connected with this strong patrilineal bond to one's ancestors as the second important formal principle of family structure. It can be established with the help of an intercultural comparison that in societies with a strong consciousness of the ancestors or an ancestor cult, authority is always exerted by the respective elders within the family. This is traced generally to their special proximity to the ancestors. It cannot be proved with certainty, however, whether this in fact holds true for the Balkans alike. Here also, patrilineal family structures as well as the authority of age within the family obviously and markedly correspond with each other. In contrast to Central and Western Europe this

structural characteristic becomes very clear. In the rural regions of this area the arrangement is frequently to be encountered that the old farmer hands over to his son or son-in-law the headship of the house community and running of the household affairs while he for himself chooses to retire and relinquish his position. There is no counterpart to this institutional arrangement in the Balkans, and in the everyday life as well renouncing one's position as the head of the house would have been an exceptional case. The head of the house in Serbo-Croatian is *starešina*, that is the "old". This expression clearly indicates how strongly the position of authority within the family was connected to age. In the *zadruga* it was handed over among the male members according to age. Thus, it was not the oldest son who held the prior right of

succession of the late house-father but, more so, the oldest brother. Obviously, this principle of seniority has not always been heeded to exact effect and implication. There were regions in which the new head of the *zadruga* was appointed by way of election. Such examples, however, of the principle of qualification taking precedence over the principle of age are the exception rather than the rule. In turn, it can be reconstructed very well with the help of linguistic references as to how firmly thinking in terms of criteria of seniority was embodied in society. "*Stariji*" in Serbo-Croatian means both "older" and "senior", "*mladiji*" "younger" and also "minor". These criteria of rank took full effect also in the order and hierarchy within the family.

With regard to the criteria according to which the age was meas-

ured that defined the inner-familial hierarchy some standpoints can be encountered which may seem somewhat astonishing to the Western reader: "A boy of three years is older than a girl of twelve to fifteen years". "According to the law the brothers are older, and a sister always ought to obey her brother, even if he is a child and she is of adult age already; she is supposed to pay respect to him, take off for him his shoes



and stand up on his entering the room". "A sister is always pictured as the younger one, albeit in the relationship with a brother who is actually younger of age. Sisters are subordinate to brothers". "A young brother may give instructions and commands to his sister. Male means older". Such statements as are recorded in a sociological survey of the population of Bosnia in the thirties show very clearly which relationship of tension there emerged as a result of the two traditional systems of inner-familial hierarchy, the priority of age on one hand and the priority of the men on the other hand. It has to be noted, however, that those examples naturally should not and cannot be generalised for the whole of the Balkan area. They suggest, at any rate, a male-dominated order of social rules on a more general

Market scene in the West Macedonian town of Gostivar: Men dominate the public sphere.
(Lida Miček-Jahn ©)

basis which makes some specific phenomena pertaining to family circumstances in the Balkans more readily comprehensible. This priority of the men also finds expression for instance in the custom that the women had to kiss a man's hand. In some *zadrugas* this was a common practice only in the relationship between younger women and older men, in others this would also involve young boys and unmarried



Serbs from the village of Vraniste, southwest of Prizren at the Albanian border, celebrate a wedding. The bride is not permitted to show any signs of joy, for she is leaving her parental home.
(Lida Miček-Jahn ©)

adolescent boys. Furthermore, the custom which compelled the women to take off the shoes for the men and then wash their feet as a sign of paying their respect complements this picture. And, it has to be seen against a similar background when the women were forced to stand upright throughout the course of a meal whereas the men could take a seat. This last custom is the only one that can be shown to have been heeded occasionally at least in Central and Western Europe as well, otherwise these forms are unknown here in which the difference in social rank between men and women finds expression. This does not only include the form which in some of the aforementioned areas might originate from Oriental influence, it also comprises such differences in rank implied and expressed therein as that between a young boy and an adult woman. If the characterisation “patriarchal” can cover all the aspects

of such social phenomena remains dubitable. These here are entirely different relationships of course than that with the house-father, this, essentially, is about the gender-specific relationship in every phase of the cycle of family life. The terms “male-dominated social order” or “priority of the men” will probably be more accurately to the point.

Why did such a markedly male-dominated social order develop and come to the fore in the Balkans? This will be easiest to explain with regard to the mountain areas. The forms of transhumant sheep breeding practised there necessitate a specific division of labour with extremely polarised tasks to be fulfilled by men and women, respectively. They are patently different to the forms of economy in other European mountain areas – in the Alps or the Pyrenees for instance, and this also with regard to their impacts on social forms and gender-specific relationship. Parallels are most likely to be found in the Caucasus. The specific gender roles, however, among the population of the mountain areas cannot be explained exclusively by the conditions and circumstances of pastoralism. The tradition in these regions of constantly having to be able to defend oneself comes into play as an additional factor contributing profoundly to the shaping of the image of the men. Fighting as a typical all-male task and duty as a rule leads to a sharply polarised conception of the gender roles. There have always been farmers able to defend themselves in many areas of Europe. Not anywhere else, however, has life been shaped and defined throughout such a long time by the continual readiness to fight. The men's ability to defend themselves was not only needed, and tested, in the course of enemy attacks from without. Moreover, in the mountains this was a constitutive factor also of the internal legal system. In the rest of Europe there existed no counterpart thereto whatsoever.

Complex models of explanation

are needed to analyse as to why these male-dominated social orders and rules have spread and, indeed, survived in the Balkans far beyond the level of the pastoral milieu in the mountains. Here again, the extent of tenacity ought to be taken into account with which one persisted in the traditional gender roles, even if the original functional conditions do not apply any more. Some parts of the tribes, clan groups and also single families that migrated from the mountains to the plains did not abandon their traditional notions and concepts of masculinity and femininity only because now they were growing corn and tobacco instead of grazing sheep and goats. The institutional gender-specific perception was passed on in many ways and various areas of life – in the field of religion for instance as we have seen in the *slava*, in legal matters as can be shown with the help of patrilineal forms of property law respectively the law of inheritance, or in the various customs and traditions. Thus, several zones group around the mountains at the heart of the Balkans in which the different expressions of this male-dominated social order might not always be detectable on the same, consistent, level of intensity, but, at any rate, in which they still exist in comparable patterns at least.

The male-dominated order in both family and society is connected to patriarchy just as much as it is to patrilineality and other social phenomena in which the gender-specific relationship plays an important part. One has to distinguish, however, between the various aspects of this entire complex. As the comparison with Central and Western Europe has shown, one aspect does not necessarily have to appear in close relation to another. Gradual nuances and other forms of differentiation also have to be taken into consideration. Thus, it appears to be problematic to characterise social structures in the Balkans simply as a “patriarchal regime”, a “patriarchal

order” or a “patriarchal culture”. This applies all the more to the term “patriarchal morals” as a label for specific behaviour norms. There exists a close connection indubitably between the behaviour patterns in larger social groups and those practised within the unit of the family. The familial hierarchy and order,

summed up the results as follows: “The phenomenon of collapse and rebellion is the main impression when one studies family relations in the state of quick transformation. The most common and also the most significant characteristic of this phase is the extensive discord or disunion in the family which suddenly appears.

One of my first cousins, Ruša, an unmarried daughter of Uncle Ivan and an old maid, considered it her sacred duty never to abandon the hearth and never to marry. She repudiated the role of a woman in a patriarchal society and took up the role of a man. The records tell us that in earlier periods of history such a woman even wore man's clothing and bore arms like a man. Ruša did not go that far, but she did the work traditionally reserved for men. She plowed the fields, sowed grain, mowed hay, took livestock to the market, and bargained with merchants. She celebrated the family patron saint and other major holidays. She swore like a man.

Wayne Vucinich, *A Zadruga in Bileća Rudine*, in: Byrnes, Robert F. (ed.) *Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga, Notre Dame-Indiana 1976*, p. 172

The peculiar phenomenon of a transformation of the gender roles is fairly wide-spread in the societies in the Western Balkans shaped by tribal circumstances. This is the expression of a strongly polarised conception of the gender roles which finds confirmation in the standardisation of the exceptional case. What is interesting about the story of cousin Ruša is that here, apart from specific activities, the feast of the family patron saint and swearing were also regarded as traditionally reserved for men.

however, in traditional societies of the Balkan area cannot just be seen as a patriarchally determined one alone. In this context I would like to refer again to the special feature of familial group identity which can probably best be comprehended by the rich variety of family functions.

A traditional form of life in a state of flux

At the beginning of our century such traditional family forms characterised by a particular variety of functions were intact still to a large extent in the rural areas in the Balkans. In some regions the process of transformation began to take effect in the inter-war period already, in other areas not until the years after World War II – whether at an earlier or at a later stage, this development in any event produced especially profound consequences. In the thirties the Zagreb sociologist Vera Erlich carried out an extensive study of family circumstances in Yugoslavia. She

In this moment the problematic of human relations becomes evident. When a centuries-old, time-honored order is prevalent... the level of quarrels in the family is low... In the phase of abrupt transformation, the phenomena of family strife and disunity appear. The scope of individual action and reaction broadens, and space becomes too narrow for the immensity of human aggression and wilfulness”. She saw the expression of this so radically transformed family atmosphere above all in the increase of physical violence against women, children and the aged, and, on a general basis, in the growing brutalisation and the decrease of the level of care for family members, in the soaring numbers of cases of adultery, in the escalation of alcoholism etc. All of which she observed in regions of beginning modernisation, in Croatia and Serbia as well as in parts of Bosnia, though not in regions of “patriarchal order” in the mountains. She assessed these events as a transitional phenomenon that would disappear once a new

social equilibrium had been reached.

The abrupt process of transformation of traditional family forms the early impacts of which Erlich's study

in both family and society: extraordinary forms of the use of violence as a typical phenomenon of societies in a phase of radical transition. From this

point of view – in the attempt at an explanation of events so difficult to comprehend as the disintegration of Yugoslavia – one would not



*An older Turkish woman tries to avoid the eye of the camera on the porch of her house, even though her husband has allowed her to be photographed.
Muslim believers do not want to be photographed ...
(Lida Miček-Jahn ©)*

seeks to explore has experienced in the ensuing years an extraordinary acceleration – at first the breaks caused by war, expulsion and flight, then the radical social reorganisation of the Tito era when industrialisation and urbanisation were tremendously pushed forward. There is presumably hardly any other European region that has experienced such profound social transformations in the course of the 20th century as that of former Yugoslavia. The highest illiteracy rate or the highest share of the rural population have already been referred to as an indication of the initial state of things. Also, hardly any other region has been plagued over the years by so many wars taking such a high toll of lives. What did this accelerated and crisis-shaken social development mean for the family? How did the elements of tension caused thereby influence society in general? Vera Erlich's thesis that the process of abrupt transformation has created an enormous potential of aggression on family level could well be invoked considerably past the period of her study as to explain the use of violence

only have to look for continuities to specific Balkan traditions, but also have to consider the actual effects and consequences in particular of breaking with such traditions.

English Version:
STEFAN MEN-
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Descent, Relationship and the Public

“The Balkans are different” – it would not have needed the most recent armed confrontations in former Yugoslavia as to reemphasise and support this simple statement. It can be read in many schoolbooks that at the turn of the 20th century the Balkans constituted a “powder keg”: revolts in Macedonia, political murder, massacres of the civilian population in both the Balkan Wars (1912/13), many raped women. The wars in the first half of the nineties only serve as a proof of continuity easy to produce.

The question remains whether beneath this level of historical events certain structures can be detected of this different nature, which would put these events into a general cultural context. Half a year spent in Sarajevo at the end of the seventies on account of a study visit gave me new insights and enabled me – for at the time I was familiar with the culture of the Balkans to a superficial degree only – to make some observations which, however, for quite some time I could not put into the according perspective of interpretation: an old couple in the Baščaršija (the market quarter at the heart of town); he enters the coffee-house I happened to be sitting in while she stays outside, taking her place on a stone in the street. Two hours later – I had long since left the coffee-house but somehow strolled back to its vicinity – she was still sitting on her stone and he inside the coffee-house. Here, the relevant public sphere was not so much out in the streets but in the coffee-house, and this seat was taken by the men, in the literal sense of the word.

I had made the acquaintance of a Muslim law student, who held me in high regard for the very reason

of my possessing a car. He extracted from me many a day and mile, so to speak, for the purpose of being able to pay visits to his relations. Going to “public” cultural institutions, the mere thought of which would not even have crossed his mind. The

relatives were his primary notion of public sphere.

I shared my room with a Croatian student from Bosanski Brod. He was a supporter of Dinamo Zagreb football club. This was his most visible connection to the outside world. I have always had the impression that the small room in the student hostel was but the extension of his parents’ house. He brought loads of food from home and served all of which to me as if I were his guest and he had to comply with his role of being the attentive host, a public role of course.



Visiting an Albanian family in Kosovo. During the meal the woman makes Turkish coffee on an electric hotplate on the floor, before the meal she brings water and fresh towels to the guests who are held in high honours. In accordance with customary law guests enjoy protection and particular attention on the part of their host. (Lida Miček-Jahn ©)

Three pictures, three facets of public sphere, phenomena characteristic of this being different which I was capable of interpreting only far later on. The culture of the Balkan societies is shaped by behaviour patterns, determinants of decision making, strategies of planning one's life and conceptions of conflict settlement fundamentally different than those in the culture we live in. This different cultural nature cannot be interpreted by an event-related approach to history. It appears to be evident that here we face a cultural pattern which – if this applies at all – is comprehensible only by way of assuming a historical-anthropological approach. Its centre is an entirely different conception of kinship and public sphere than we are familiar with from our cultural experience.

If in the following passages the historical conditions for the emer-

gence and the development of this pattern, the historical, social and cultural consequences are analysed and the impacts on the present day are outlined, the Central Balkans will always be at the focus of attention. The Balkans, in both past and present, are shaped partly by enormous processes of migration, and thus the area of distribution pertaining to this cultural pattern cannot be localised precisely, at least with regard to the exact geographical boundaries. In any event, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Western and Central Bulgaria as well as the northern part of Greece belong to its area of distribution. Strictly speaking, the pattern in question is existent also in those parts of Western and Central Europe, where there are larger agglomerations of migrant workers from the Balkan

States. The question whether each one belongs to this cultural pattern is determined neither by ethnic origin nor by religious creed. Orthodox and Catholic Christians belong to it just as much as Muslims or various Slavonic as well as non-Slavonic nations. The current, official endeavour of the Balkan States, to be classified and registered as a part of Central Europe or Europe, however defined, presents a quite formidable hindrance to such an attempt at differentiation – for, Europe being labelled good and the Balkans, in contrast, labelled negative, who would then want to belong to the other culture, to the very “Balkan-shaped” culture?

Historical determinants of a different system of kinship

We have pointed out above that

My family's history is obscure. According to legend, the family came from the Montenegrin tribe of Piperi though the toponymic and ethnographic data suggest that it may have descended from the tribe of Drobnjaci. The legend tells how one Gajun Vucinich murdered a Turk, sometime late in the eighteenth century, and escaped to avoid Turkish reprisal. He first settled near Trebinje, later moved with his family to Bileca Rudine, and put down on the landed estate (agaluk) of a feudal landlord in the village of Mosko. After a short stay Gajun asked his landlord for permission to settle on the latter's land in the village of Orah, and the request was granted.

According to the legend, Gajun raised a family which included three sons and four daughters. After marriage, the sons, with their spouses and children, continued to live together, while the daughters married and left the family. Gajun died about 1815. His surviving sons lived together until about 1830; Todor, the eldest of them, was the head of the house. When the zadruga broke up, Todor remained in the family house in Orah, while his two brothers established homes on the age's estate in the adjoining village of Panik. This is all that we know about the family's origin, and only a part of the information may coincide with facts. Moreover, nearly every family in Bileca Rudine has a similar family legend.

My great-grandfather Todor died in 1863 and was survived by four sons and three daughters. The four sons with their spouses and children continued to live together in a zadruga, while the daughters married and left home. The eldest of the four sons, my grandfather Jeremije (1822–1890), was the head of the house; he started a Citulja, the record of births, marriages, and deaths in the family. Even this sole document on the history of our family is incomplete, since no one in the house was literate and the priest failed to record the changes which occurred in the family.

Grandfather Jeremije from the start participated in the insurrection and then in the war that followed was an officer-commander of one of the armed bands that cooperated with the Montenegrins. He brought the family unprecedented laurels, became the most distinguished member of the entire clan, and was decorated for bravery by Prince Nikola of Montenegro. Two of his sons, my Uncles Ivan and Rade, as teenagers took part in the well-known battle of Vucji Do. For Uncle Ivan's efforts, in the late 1930's, many years after his patriotic deeds, the Yugoslav government awarded him a modest pension (...)

Between 1905 and 1910 my father, Spiro, and uncles Djoko and Todor emigrated to the United States. The three brothers who went to America retained full rights as members of the zadruga; they occasionally sent money to the brothers left at home, which enabled them to purchase more land and to build a water cistern and several outbuildings. Each brother, like many an emigrant, hoped to return home after saving some money. My father was the only one who married.

(Robert F. Byrnes (ed.), Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga, Notre Dame-Indiana 1976, S 165–167)

The story strictly follows the patrilineal line of descent. Detailed knowledge of the members of this male line reaches far back, in this case back to a Montenegrin tribe in the 18th century. Apart from the migrations and various divisions of the house the celebrated feats which establish the family honour are a major theme.

there exists a connection between a different conception of public sphere and kinship. This connection, however, becomes logical only when taking a further element into account, namely the modern state (and such of its attributes as the authority of the state, its bureaucracy or centralism). Following Norbert Elias, the crystallisation of a public sphere (that is, in our familiar sense of the word) has to be viewed in close context to and against the background of the strengthening of an apparatus of rule and a network of authorities that governed large parts of life: The public clock which replaces the individual perception of time by a publicly defined one; the official authority as the instrument of the ruler, who himself pretends to represent general or public interests, the department that ensures public security, that which strictly separates public from private stretches of water, and one that implements institutions open to the "general public".

Wherever the state does not create a public element different sorts of public sphere are likely to be practised instead. Each chosen solution will depend on the respective different cultural and economic contexts as well as on proven patterns of action. In the central areas of the Balkans the patrilineally structured groups of kinship were those that took the place of a non-present or hardly effective, respectively inefficient, authoritative power on the part of the state and an evident lack of public sphere.

We have to assume that in most parts of Europe our cognate system of relationship, which is bilineally oriented (that is based on the equal recognition of both the female and the male line of descent), has more or less asserted itself in the time of the Late Roman Empire already. Therefore, our terminology pertaining to relationship does not distinguish between relations of the male and the female line. It is irrelevant from a conceptional

point of view whether an uncle comes from the paternal or the maternal line. Furthermore, in such a system the circle of relatives is not already determined from the outset but more so depends on each one's position within the net of kinship. Each culture individually establishes the degree up to which relationship reaches. The parents, for instance, share with their children a circle of relatives largely identical; they are related to people, however, to whom their children have no relation whatsoever, the children, in turn, are related to people who are not bound in kinship to their parents.

Patrilineal systems of kinship, based on ancestry, as have developed in the Balkans are entirely different though. In such a system only the male line of descent is of conceptio-

has to be preserved at virtually any cost, the male ancestors are to be ritually worshipped etc. Hand in hand with such a system of kinship goes a terminology that systematically differentiates between relatives on the mother's and on the father's side. Consequently and conclusively thought through, this results in a large number of different expressions pertaining to any form of kinship. In the Balkan languages the catalogues of which each contain approximately seventy terms (among which, of course, there are some that are derived from the same stem). In a system of kinship leaning heavily on ancestry the circle of each one's relations does not depend on the individual position within the family but is determined straight away, irrespective thereof.

Der Standard, 9. 6. 99, p. 4

Among brothers and sisters

When the Serbs had driven Afet Kuqi's family out of their house in Kacanik in May the refugees had but two options: either to go straight away to one of the enormous refugee camps or to seek a hide-out with relatives of theirs in Macedonia.

Afet Kuqi was lucky, in Tetovo, next to the Macedonian border with Kosovo, he knew a distant relative of his, Nuri Kuqi – their great-great-grandfathers had been brothers – who agreed to share his house with Afet's family. Now both families lived under the same roof on a space of barely one hundred square metres, all in all thirty eight people, more than the half of them children. Nuri Kuqi lives almost comfortably for Macedonian standards. The thirty eight of them have to share one common bathroom, one toilet and the kitchen, where normally the three oldest women sleep.

In spite of the agonisingly confined space both families get on very well with each other, so they say. "Thank Allah", Afet says, "if it had not been for Nuri we would have had to put up with living in a tent". "And", he adds, "it is really only a question of time before you go crazy there". Nuri is fairly relaxed: "We would have also taken in people that are not actually related to us. Anyway, all Kosovars are our brothers and sisters".

Almost two thirds of the registered 247.800 expellees managed to avoid the refugee camps in this way. In the region around Tetovo alone with its population of nearly 200.000 people 51.258 refugees were accommodated by host families.

This report shows the solidarity in thinking characteristic of strictly patrilineal lineages. The common ancestor of both the refugee and the host family lies five generations back.

nal interest. Kinship through the female line, even though taken note of, is completely irrelevant, however, in the actual day-to-day realities of life in the Balkans. The male line of descent on the other hand is of crucial significance. It

The group of blood relations consists of all living women and men who are descended directly through the male line from the oldest known male ancestor. How far one particular group is prepared to trace back its ancestors is a matter

largely of collective consciousness, respectively other necessities – such as the degree of public sphere, that is, in practice, that of public security. Groups in regions where public security is not guaranteed will automatically strive at keeping as numerous as possible since a strong group can far better provide for the security of its members than a small one. Thus, such a group will seek to refer to that forbear known by name



*Blood brothers from the North Albanian tribe of the Shala. Apart from patronages or godparenthoods blood brotherhood is one form of gaining artificial kin beyond the scope of actual kinship in a ritual way. At the "photo shooting" the guns and pistols are essential for both men.
(Gjurme te historise kombetare ne foto-ken e Shkodres, Tirana 1982, p. 84)*

furthermost back in time. Lineages living for a longer period of time in areas of relative public security will possibly lose track of their most distant ancestors, and the respective group will then consist of all descendants from the grandfather, or perhaps the great-grandfather. Such lineages are clearly defined,

there are only very feeble connections to other such groups. In this context, one speaks of "segmentary" societies. The position of the woman in a patrilineal system is by far too weak as to establish such interrelations by way of exogamous marriage. Systems of godparenthoods, respectively other forms of patronage alike, are also not suitable for completely accomplishing this. In principle, godparenthoods or patronages pertaining to marriage, the child's haircut and (with Muslims) also to the cutting off of the umbilical cord create a certain level of relationship between the two families. As usually these godparents or patrons are not permitted to come from the own group, some extent of relationship at least forms between two respective lineages which, as a rule, however, would have been rather feeble in character.

One might refer to such groups as "sibs" or "lines", both of which terms however, are rather imprecise in scientific as well as everyday usage and are employed to describe various facts and features. In Anglo-American cultural anthropology it has gained general acceptance to instead refer to such groups as lineages, a practice that shall be followed here. Another much-discussed and debated term, "clan", is usually taken to describe lineages whose ancestors are not known by name.

In the time before World War II the presence of and sense of belonging among the lineages attained a very pronounced level still in the above mentioned areas. This cohesion within the lineages was undermined strongly without any doubt by the eagerly promoted processes of modernisation and, connected to which, the ever-increasing influx of the rural population to the urban areas as well as, in general, by a growing level of mobility; it would be quite wrong though to assume that such cohesion among the groups could not be encountered any more in the present day. We have to consider the interesting

question as to whence this system of kinship, an exceptional phenomenon throughout Europe, originates. A tricky problem, admittedly. Two observations might provide some help though. Interestingly enough, this conception of kinship was quite common also among the Muslim population of these areas. The Albanian-Muslim population of Kosovo and Northern Albania is characterised thereby just as much as the Muslim population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is remarkable all the more since Islam strongly favours marriage between relatives. Here, marriage between first cousins is permissible and quite common. This, however, is a strategy of marriage which necessarily has to run counter to the system of kinship based on descent, for the marriage partners there have to be picked from without the lineage. In actual fact, however, marriage between relatives – apart from the social élites – has never quite managed to catch on with the Muslim population of the Central Balkans; the principle of exogamy of descent was maintained strictly. In other domains, however, Islamic practices did assert themselves, for example in the field of the succession of women. It was customary among the Christian population until this century that in patrilineal lineages the women were excluded altogether from the right of succession, whereas among the Muslim population, as a rule, the Islamic traditions and regulations were heeded which assured that the women were awarded at least half of the share of the men.

The fact that the exogamy of descent was maintained among the Muslim population clearly indicates that those lineages must already have existed before the onset of Islamisation. Which, in turn, could have occurred at the earliest after the conquest of the Balkan areas on the part of the Ottoman Empire, that is in the course of the 14th and 15th century. A second observation suggests the idea that this tradition

of the forming of lineage kinship is even considerably older. The essential principle of patrilineality comes to the fore here. Lineages on a patrilineal basis are rather unusual for the conditions of the 14th or 15th century in Europe, though not for the pre-Roman or Roman era. Since the transition to a cognate system of relationship did not come about until the late phase of the Roman Empire, influenced to a considerable degree in all probability also by early Christianity, we have to assume that with these patrilineally

as well as the northern Pindos have both always been regions of nomadic and semi-nomadic livestock breeding. Greek sources describe the large sheep and goat herds of the Illyrians. These sources, however, do not contain valuable information on the social organisation among those groups of shepherds. Not only would it not really come as much of a surprise, more so, it would have to be expected rather, if they were organised on a patrilineal basis. Intercultural comparisons among pastoral societies have shown that

My grandfather's house, which was considered communal, and in which we all gathered for ceremonial occasions, for Christmas and Easter dinner, receiving guests, weddings, christenings, house blessings, and funerals, was built of large stones and had a metal-edged impenetrable door, with a gun port nearby. It was our "mother-house" (matica), a remainder from the Turkish times. In the middle of our court was a tower (kula) several stories tall, by then completely abandoned. There were no more Turks, so it was not necessary to watch from the highest floor to see if they were coming.

All villagers with our family name lived near our house. There was not a single man with our last name in any other place; all of us gathered around the tower like chicks around a hen. When anyone in Poljica, from Dolac down to Podstrana, uttered our name, he knew that meant the clan which lived in the middle of Krug, neither at the top nor bottom of the village, but just a little above the church. That we were all of the same tribe was also evidenced.

by the kitchen, which consisted of two hearths; distant relatives, who had in common with us our great-great-grandfather, did their cooking in its second part. Communal consciousness had been so deeply implanted that when a villager moved to the seashore, he went to a spot where some of his people already resided and built his house nearby. He could have built it in a better location, but he did not wish to be separated from his flesh and blood. Even though they no longer had a communal kitchen, the longing for the clan or the fear of flying too far from the nest remained, because they believed that in hard times and at old age woe befell the loner.

Ante Kadic, "The Democratic Spirit" of the Poljica Commune, in: Byrnes, Robert F. (ed.) Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga, Notre Dame-Indiana 1976, p. 211 f.

This account from Central Dalmatia shows how strongly common descent through the male line could produce group cohesion even far beyond the scope of the house community. It is a wide-spread phenomenon in the Balkans that descent-groups, clans and lineages also form a settling community.

organised lineages we encounter a phenomenon of remarkable age and tradition. The assumption that this represents the remainder of a social order which had developed in the bosom of the oldest known ethnic group in this area, the Illyrians, is certainly not unfounded.

It is further supported by additional reflections. The Dinaric Alps

they strongly tend towards forming unilineal, segmentary social orders founded on descent. Why this is so may well eventually elude reasonable and analytical explanation but the type of economic activity evidently plays an important part therein. Reproduction and fertility of the animals quite naturally was of utmost importance for the survival

of such pastoral communities – a circumstance which may have suggested analogous conclusions on society in the sense of its concentrating and focusing itself on reproduction, ancestry and hierarchical order in the lines of descent. Additionally, such pastoral communities as a matter of fact spent the better part of the year in remote zones of pastoralism, often high up in the well-nigh impassable mountains where security was a latent concern that had to be dealt with. Pastoral communities, in general, enjoy the reputation of high flexibility, which, however, is only part of the truth. Rebuilding and reforming a lost herd was a laborious task involving several years of hard work, years without income and with insufficient supply only. The preparedness to defend oneself at any stage as well as the actual fighting strongly pushed forward and accentuated the male side of society. Under these sorts of circumstances a patrilineal structure of lineage is a foregone conclusion, really.

This social order and its implications such as the ideology of ancestor-worship inevitably had to be a thorn in the flesh, so to speak, of many a Christian missionary since Christianity had broken away from all conceptions and notions in this context: the preservation of the male line as a religious mission, the conferral of the feats achieved by the ancestors upon their descendants, the immense importance of descent in salvational anticipations, ancestor-worship practised by the living; the family ties were replaced by the religious community as the centre of socialisation instead. In case of the patrilineal societies though of the Central Balkans the Christian missionaries had obviously failed to impart their message. Even in the 20th century a fair number of pre-Christian elements can still be encountered in the field of thinking in terms of descent, ancestor-worship and patrilineality.

This merely superficial Christianisation, in turn, can be ex-

plained only by taking into consideration the altogether insignificant presence of the organs of state. Had those pastoral communities been subject to a firm and stable control on the part of the state they would undoubtedly have been christianised far more thoroughly. Therefore, we have to assume that throughout classical antiquity as well as the Middle Ages, in spite of being under, alternately, Roman, Byzantine, Bulgarian and Serbian domination, the inhabitants of the mountains enjoyed extensive space to do as they pleased.

The historical, social and cultural consequences

Until the time of the subjugation of the Balkans to Ottoman rule we can only formulate the hypotheses outlined above which are based on anthropological observations; written sources are rare and rather inadequate in form until the 14th century. During the Ottoman era we can estimate fairly accurately the social as well as cultural consequences of a life away from state institutions in which both identity and public sphere at the same time were created by one's own lineage.

The Ottoman campaigns of conquest triggered enormous migration movements which we cannot examine in greater detail here. To us, however, it is of great significance that the plains and valleys, in particular along the few connections between North and South, were deserted by the old-established inhabitants. This loss of population could only partly, and incompletely, made up for by the Ottoman administration, calling upon settlers from Anatolia. Most people had retreated to the almost impassable mountains of the Balkans, where they lived a life of virtual autonomy, untroubled by the Ottoman authorities. In these mountains there must have existed over centuries a quite staggering population density which in the present day can only remain

unthinkable. In whatever system of kinship people might have lived before, in the plains, now, at any rate, they came into contact with patrilineal kinship, adapted to the new circumstances and came to know the advantages of such groups as a strategy of survival. It is no coincidence therefore that the ancestors of many old Balkan lineages came from the time of the Ottoman campaigns of conquest (14 to 15 generations ago). When subsequently, triggered by the intense pressures of the extreme population density in the mountains as well as the breakdown of the Ottoman state machine, they returned to the plains on a large scale from the second half of the 18th century, they did not come alone or in isolated groups of a few, to the contrary, they arrived with their entire, or at least part of the lineage, and went on to clear their new fields and pastures together.

Life away from any organisational interference on the part of the state took its toll in as far as the natural environment became the defining element in the development of social forms to an extent which for us can only seem incomprehensible. I should like to distinguish – without going into geographical details – two different milieus: one of the short distance and one of the long distance. Pastoralism basically has to follow a certain axiom: changing between summer and winter pastures. In summer, the winter pastures dry up in the given climatic conditions; thus switching to the green summerly pastures in the mountains becomes an inevitability, come April or May. With the first snow in November at the latest one necessarily has to go back to the winter pastures in the (almost) snowfree plains. Feeding the animals in sheds, respectively pens, was not practised.

“Milieu of the short distance” means that the geographical conditions, that is, abrupt transitions between the mountainside and the valley, made it possible to change pastures without having to cover

long distances (completing the route within one day, for instance). This was the case in Montenegro as well as both Northern and Central Albania. This resulted in each respective lineage cultivating its own, clearly defined territory which consisted of summer as well as winter pastures. Thus, the lineages firmly established themselves at a certain place. The emergence of tribal societies in clearly defined tribal territories was a direct result of which. At the beginning of this century more than sixty tribes and tribal areas were counted in Northern and Central Albania, in Montenegro the figure amounted to roughly thirty.

In the “milieu of the long distance” – to the north, east and south thereof – more often than not the distances between the summer and the winter pastures were quite considerable. Trekking from one pasture to another would take up one to two weeks (for instance as to reach the Khalkidiki Peninsula starting out from the northern part of the Pindos or vice versa, or to make one’s way from Western Serbia to the Sava plains and back, respectively). Here, the lineages could not establish themselves as tribes, neither could there crystallise clearly defined tribal territories. The summer pastures in the mountains were owned by each respective lineage on the basis of customary law (for the Ottoman administration was not interested in the mountain pastures), whereas taxes had to be paid for the use of the winter pastures which, as a rule, were under the control of Ottoman big land-owners.

In this case, the lineages were either nomads or semi-nomads (with some forms in between). It was either a part of the households only that embarked upon the long trek, or all of the households went along to the other pasture. In which case the lineage, if it was not very large, formed a protective unit on trek and an economic community on the summer pastures. If the lineage was a very numerous one it could well

split into more flexible subgroups, would then go on to various different pastures and come together again to full strength on the winter pastures, where the permanent residences were.

A second, highly significant fact was that this system of kinship based



on direct descent through the male line split the Balkan societies into segments which barely had anything in common at all. The above mentioned system of godparenthoods, respectively patronages, or a common language constituted the sole, feeble links. Until the emergence of the modern Balkan States in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century there was no institution above this segmentary level that would have managed to assert itself. The Ottoman system of rule considerably contributed to this development. It was so structured, in principle, that frequently one sought to delegate and devolve any administrative concerns regarding the “unbelieving population” to this circle of addressees itself. On one side there were the Muslims, who enjoyed all rights, on the other end of the spectrum were the non-believers (in the Balkans mostly Orthodox and Catholic Christians) who were systematically denied any of such rights. This on one hand led to an increasing impoverishment of the Christian population in general,

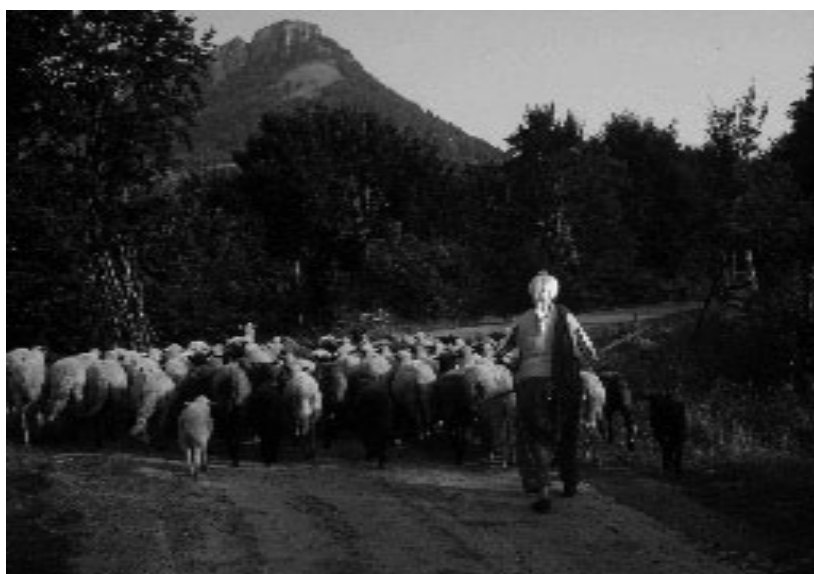
A Sarkatsan grazes the sheep herd of the co-operative in the Balkan Mountains. The Sarkatsani are Greek-speaking pastoral nomads and live in scattered groups in Central Bulgaria in the region around the Šipka pass.

Ten of the animals are in his personal property.

(Lída Miček-Jahn ©)

on the other hand it pushed forward, at least in the mountain areas, this tendency towards segmentation. Here, however, the Ottomans had to content themselves with merely the theoretical implications of the authority of the state.

If we try to analyse the impacts of this segmentation we have to stress the self-awareness and very level of self-focusing within these lineage segments in the first place.



A Pomakian peasant woman from Srednogortsi leading the sheep herd to the summer pastures. The Pomakians, a Bulgarian ethnic group, were forced to convert to Islam in the time from the 16th to the 18th century and their way of living is different in some respects to that of the Christian Bulgarians. Today, they live in the valleys of the Rhodopian and the Central Balkan Mountains (Lida Miček-Jahn ©)

They provided for both identity and their own public form. Which, in turn, existed only within the frame of the segments, the criteria for the individual rank within the hierarchy were set by these segments in advance. One focal aspect of such a segmentary public sphere was the gathering in meeting of the tribe or lineage, an assembly convened by the honourable "elders", the leaders, as to discuss the most pressing issues, reach and pronounce judgement upon some matter of concern or formulate declarations of war against either neighbouring tribes or the Ottoman administration, respectively. These assemblies constituted a public element and – this being essential still in the present day – this element was exclusively male. Each household was represented by its family head at such an assembly. A household could only be represented by a woman if

there was no adult man living in the house. The representative role of the women, however, was a strictly limited one. They were permitted to take part, though not to speak up, let alone be involved in the process of decision making.

This male public sphere, as it were, was hierarchised formally only to a very rudimentary degree; that is to say there was only a small group of men intended for leadership. They had special titles which varied from one region to the other. These positions of leadership remained within the respective household and were bequeathed to the following generations. Among the rest of the men, respectively the heads of the households, besides the former an informal hierarchy had to exist as well; who enjoyed a high standing or was held in somewhat lower esteem? Whose words weighed more heavily?

Segmentation was a perfect breeding ground for a mentality of heroism which was preformulated in the first place by the very principle of patrilineality. This segmentation effectively meant that each other lineage, in principle, was regarded as a potential adversary. Only godparenthoods or patronages could eventually weaken the barrier of this hostile judgement of one another. One's own heroism could well be toughened through the enemy group, either by way of ordinary theft of livestock or, ultimately, in armed confrontations. Among many tribes of Montenegro and Albania in particular a permanent state of war was more or less the order of the day. This state of affairs was caused mainly by a palpable population increase which in the 19th century led to the rapidly decreasing availability of suitable pastures. Each attack carried out by one lineage on the other's tribal territory resulted in bloody conflict.

Heroism could also develop freely in the encounters with the troops of the Ottoman administration. These clashes were triggered by raids, robberies and other offences

(encroachments on the property of Muslims, for instance) committed by members of the respective tribes. In such case it could well happen that the administration reacted by sending troops into the mountains in order to search for the culprits. This in the end often entailed a series of bloody confrontations. The lineages have never – and this fact is of considerable importance also for our time – experienced the Ottoman state, or the institution state itself for that matter, in a positive way; rather to the contrary, it has always been perceived as an adversary only. The collective experience gained over centuries amounted to the mere fact that the state and its institutions, organs and authorities had to be fought and opposed.

Similar facts hold true with regard to the judicial system. The state – for the very reason of its evident lack of presence and effectiveness in these regions – failed to either achieve public security or establish an official judicial system open to the public in the mountain areas of the Central Balkans. As a consequence of which the tribes and lineages had to organise and structure a judicial system of their own on a markedly unsophisticated level. This process took place on the basis of a body of customary law that had been passed on for generations, thus setting rather different criteria than those an Ottoman kadi or the judicial system of the modern Balkan States would have viewed appropriate. This judicial system on the basis of customary law was only partly subject to the institutions pertaining to the tribes and lineages, in most cases action was basically taken upon an individual measure of decision making. Whether a sanction appeared appropriate or not was decided by “public” opinion. The possibilities of sanctioning also included each one’s, respectively each group’s, voluntary decision or obligation to seek blood revenge. As we all know, this practice was frequently resorted to. This, however, is not an indication or expression of “savageness” but the

reflection rather of an evident lack of state jurisdiction.

In this context one has to underline the flagrant uncertainty which must have prevailed then regarding the precise state of the law. It is hardly surprising against such a



social and cultural background that literacy did not really manage to exert any noticeable influence. The ability to both write and read was limited to a small circle of people. Thus, contracts, agreements and judgements could only be reached and established in verbal form and had to be confirmed, respectively upheld, by way of laborious ritual incantation ceremonies.

A Kosovar woman making cheese in her hut on a pasture in Šar Planina, south of Prizren. The whole cheeses hang from the ceiling to dry. Her husband grazes the sheep herd on the mountain pasture, helped by large, white sheep-dogs ...
(Lida Miček-Jahn ©)

Impacts on the present day

We have seen the circumstances under which this system of kinship developed. In its eventual forms it was strongly exposed to the natural order of things; the principle of segmentarity corresponded with the absence of the state, and the public sphere developed and formed in the male-dominated institutions of the lineage.

The emergence and consolidation of the modern Balkan States in the course of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century constituted a profound break in the history of this system of kinship. The primary concern on the part of the state quite obviously had to be to crack those segments secluded from the outside world in favour of asserting its own monopoly of power. This objective could at times be realised only by means of using armed force. Montenegro comes as a suitable example of these events. From the beginning of the 19th century the first state authorities and institutions were set up here under the patronage of the local Montenegrin bishops, parallel to the tribal institutions, and at around the middle of the century they had such gained in strength and efficiency that they could then challenge the influence of the tribes. The disbandment of the tribal territories by means of armed force was successfully completed and Ottoman administrative units were established in their place. In the course of time more and more laws were enacted, and also enforced, which were intended to drive a wedge into this different system of kinship, break it and eventually transform it into the modern bilineal type: blood revenge was forbidden, the women's right of inheritance became established in law and both its ideological as well as its legal main pillars were taken away eventually from patrilineality.

Similar processes took place in the other Balkan States as well. The phase of Communist rule signified

an enormous thrust in development in this respect. In spite of this accelerated transformation in some ways the Balkan States are far from having shaken off the historical legacy of the lineage society. This becomes most visible nowadays in the northern regions of Albania. There, the traditional scope of influence exerted by the tribes that is founded on customary law stands diametrically opposed still to the authority of the state, which manages to gain in strength and effectivity to a gradual extent only.

Above all the gaping discrepancy still between the citizens and their states, that is their state bureaucracies, has to be noted. The strong form of nationalism in our day does not at all imply an intense level of identification with the state as such but rather with the nation. There is only a limited degree of loyalty towards the state and its institutions. It shows a hostile attitude still towards its citizens; for generations the state has waged war on the traditions of the male side of society so as to assert and establish the modern principles of state and law. The relationship of reciprocal distance often leads to emotional conflicts between the citizens on one hand and the state authorities on the other hand.

In this context most people also mistrust bureaucracy and its written principle of form. People who traditionally had to manage without any form of writing as a result associated bureaucracy with very negative experiences. This might have been a decision reached by a court awarding the same share of the inheritance to the daughter as to the son or a verdict confining a man to prison for having resorted to the principle of blood revenge. For the very reason that until World War II this written principle of form was not widespread at all, great significance was attached, generally, to an official stamp. As it were, the official stamp below an issued document even in the present day still stands, quite literally, for the

sealing of one's fate. This holds true all the more, for nowadays one cannot simply retreat to the mountains, unlike the old days when the law could thus be evaded. The last great migration to the mountains took place during World War II when thousands of people fled their homes as to seek refuge in the mountains for fear of the occupying armies; the foreign troops could not follow and track down the population there. In our day such a strategy would be impossible.

The state has undoubtedly asserted itself, and it has also created a public sphere of its own. Besides, however, there still exists a counter element persistently perpetuating itself. Even if, with regard to the system of kinship, thinking in terms of descent recedes to the background more and more, nonetheless, as always, one's relations play an enormous part. This network is even extended through the modern processes of migration: some relatives for example are moving over to urban areas, others work abroad temporarily. Such processes barely reduce in importance the standing of kinship, quite frequently they can even add enriching other facets and dimensions owing to the new possibilities of reciprocal exchange.

The rather unpronounced system of political parties which is hardly based on ideological conflicts or differences (whether in the interwar period or in the post-communist era) can be blamed partly on the historical heritage of a segmentary society determined by descent. These lineage segments were given a new practical form more or less as political parties. As far as I can tell the emergence of this system of political parties in the Balkans – with the exception of Greece – has never been analysed in detail from such a perspective.

In many ways kinship goes hand in hand still with public sphere. The standing of a man and his family in our day, as ever, is determined by standards set by his own

circle of relatives. Various studies among the working class population of Belgrade in the late sixties have shown that life in a big city, at least for the first generation of newly arrived, does not necessarily introduce much of a change in this respect. The interviewees spent the best part of their spare time visiting their relatives, even if they lived in distant parts of the city.

The observation that the coffee-house essentially constitutes the focus of male socialisation and (re) presentation on a public stage only seems to contradict the above said. The coffee-house in fact comprises many an aspect following the example of the traditional institutionalised lineage assemblies of the past. First, we must not interpret the Balkan man looking for company as a typical macho city slicker on the prowl, for this is the milieu in which he frequently comes across his own relatives. In conversation this traditional hierarchical stratification founded on the basis of patrilineality, however intransparent or hard to comprehend for outsiders, becomes clear. Second, the coffee-house is a place for talking politics, here, decisions are made, as was the case in the historical model.

Which leaves the question as to why the coffee-house of all places, why would it become the essential place for the substitution of the past. In this respect one assumption alone can be presented: the coffee-house offers the opportunity within one self-contained, condensed spot and system to fall back on and reaffirm the historically relevant behaviour patterns; it is a substitution for the traditional assembly of the tribe or lineage; it creates a public air by the very possibility alone of meeting relatives of the male side there (the coffee-house for itself does not necessarily represent public sphere as such); as it were, the mutual rituals of invitations, intensively fostered, provide a substitution for the obligation in former times on the part of the head of a household to serve his

guest coffee and raki (a spirit).

The institution of the coffee-house has different functions in various cultures. In the Central Balkans it became the monument to a very different ideology of kinship and its importance for descent, lineage and public sphere.

English Version:

STEFAN MENHOFER ©, 1999



Tribal assembly of the Shala in the north of Albania, summer 1993. This was the first such assembly called after the breakdown of the Communist régime. To the left of the picture in the foreground is the bairaktar (leader), to his right an old man who looks back on 14 generations of his patrilineal ancestors. (Photocollection Robert Pichler)

Traditional Value Patterns and the War in Ex-Yugoslavia

The various national movements in the Southern Slavonic countries concerned themselves very thoroughly with their respective village cultures. In them, in a world of rapid modernisation, they sought to find and detect their origins and to understand what characterises their people and makes it special. This more often than not resulted in a romantic transfiguration and idealisation of rural or village value patterns, as seen from an urban, intellectual perspective. These patterns, as it were, should be “characteristic” of the nation and serve as models.

The processes of industrialisation and urbanisation in the Southern Slavonic societies fundamentally changed and influenced the existing traditional society. This “modernisation”, however, did not only include the one-sided influencing of the villages by urban, “Western” values. In spite of the growing economic and social differences between the urban and the rural world the influence of village culture in the development of the nation and its society must not be underestimated.

The goals and ideals of the agrarian and nationalist parties in inter-war Yugoslavia which dominated the political stage at the time were not put into practice in the socialist postwar state. Even so, they remained an important factor. This became evident at the beginning of the nineties during the collapse of the Yugoslav state, when nationalist movements seized power in the former republics by emphasising the “threat to the own people as a nation” and the “history of the own nation”, thereby at the same time also strongly addressing the “tradi-

tional” values of their society.

The historical background of some characteristic features of these traditional values shall be presented and commented on here. At the same time this article looks into the question as to why these traditional values, despite the processes of modernisation in the socialist society, still enjoy strong presence. Furthermore, we seek to place some traditional value patterns into the context of the war in Croatia and Bosnia. The focus of these reflections will be on two regional areas which shall be discussed in greater detail later on.

A rurally oriented value system:

It is not possible to reduce the modernisation of various societies in Croatia and Serbia in the 19th and 20th century exclusively to the penetration of village life by modern urban influences. These changing influences had their effects in the opposite direction as well. Rural traditions also had their impacts on the way of life in the cities and strongly contributed to shaping it. These influences were directly connected with the mass migration from the villages to the growing cities, away from agriculture on to industry or other urban working options. As to coin a catch-phrase: these aforementioned developments could be described as “the urbanisation of the villages” and, at the same time, as “the ruralisation of the cities”.

The Serbian history in particular richly illustrates this specific development. Almost all Serbian cities, owing to centuries under Turkish domination, developed only in the

last 150 years from small villages and market communities to larger towns. Thus, until into our century there existed no specific Serbian urban tradition whatsoever. The attachment to the village roots remains strong, and mutual obligations between the family in the city and the kin in the country further strengthen these ties. There is, for instance, a very close relationship between the brother who has moved over to the city and the other brother who has chosen to stay in the home village. The former sends his children to the village for their holidays, while the children of the latter naturally live with their uncle when they go to school in the city.

The great process of urbanisation began very late in former Yugoslavia. It was not until the beginning of this century that the populations of the cities began to grow more rapidly and, in particular after World War II, this process experienced a further acceleration. The Serbian town of Aradjelovac in Šumadija, south of Belgrade, illustrates these developments very well. In the year 1961 73 per cent of the 9,837 inhabitants were not born in the town itself. Almost three quarters of the population had at some stage moved to Aradjelovac, a process which then was still in full flow.

The population increase in the big cities such as Belgrade and Zagreb also reflects the aforementioned development, the population of Belgrade nearly doubled in a period of twenty years, and in Zagreb, too, the population increase is quite staggering. This process of urbanisation is by far not concluded as yet, as is shown by the example, again, of Zagreb, where the total number of inhabitants rose from 650,000 in 1981 to 706,770 in 1991.

Naturally, nowadays in most cities, notably the very big ones, there is a Western-oriented society, comparable to our own, which comes to the major part of the population. These statistics, however, show society to be in the middle still of a strong process

of transformation, a process in which traditional value patterns can get a significant role too.

Roots in pastoralism?

As to be in a position to compare characteristic traditional value systems of rural societies in various regions of Serbia or Croatia to each other it is absolutely necessary to put them into a deeper historical context and examine the following questions: Which development influenced and shaped village life and the traditional values in this area, and what exactly constitutes the historical background of these societies?

Characteristic of the early development of the social structure in many Balkan societies was – and this is illustrated in particular by Jovan Cvijić's work – the constant interrelation of transhumant pastoralism and settled forms of agriculture which was caused by the series of Ottoman conquests and, following which, the time of Ottoman domination. The Turkish conquest of Southeast Europe was accompanied by a massive process of migration which lasted quite long. The main direction of these population shifts was from the south to the north, in line with the advances made by the conquerors. Another important process of migration took place from the plains to the mountains. Parts of the plains became completely deserted. The mountain areas, in contrast, were more densely populated again. Generally, however, the inhabitants of the mountain regions were hardly integrated at all into the Ottoman state and so developed social structures and survival strategies of their own. In this process the already existing older patterns grew stronger and stronger. All these strategies were based on the "complex family", usually referred to as "zadruga" in the literature, as the foundation of the organisation of life. This type of family structure developed in the mountains under

the circumstances and conditions of a pastoral society. Life in this family form was based very strongly



A shepherd with his donkey, an indispensable pack-animal on the narrow and stony paths of the Southern Pindos. The shepherd's crook with the hook on the upper end helps the shepherds catch the sheep.

The Vlachs or Aromunes in this part of Greece had their permanent winter residences in the Thessalian lowland plains, where they spent the winter with their herds. In the summer they moved up into the mountains to the summer pastures with their families, the herds, domestic animals and all tools and utensils.

(Lída Miček-Jahn ©)



Vlach shepherds from Métsovo, a small town at 1200 metres altitude in the Pindos, east of Joánina. For centuries Métsovo has been the cultural and economic centre of the Vlach population

(Lída Miček-Jahn ©)

on patriarchal principles which became fundamental laws for family and society.

The principal aim of this patriarchal organisation was to provide for the protection of family groups in a hostile environment. The Ottoman Empire was founded on Islamic principles, and the Christian population, even though it had its own ecclesiastical organisations, was merely tolerated in this system. Under these circumstances and in the face of a situation of almost permanent threat the man and his weapon came to be the dominant symbols of these patriarchal mountain societies.

A further characteristic of these Balkan societies was a continual interrelation of pastoralism and settled forms of stock-breeding and farming. Until into the 19th century time and time again there occurred changes in either this direction or the other. This process of fluctuation only came to an end with the emergence of the modern states.

In reference to which the American anthropologist Philip Mosley has defined three areas in which the typical patriarchal patterns of familial organisation prevailed. According to him the central regions of the patriarchally organised *zadruga* were the mountain areas in Montenegro and the north of Albania in which this pastoral form of life with its inherent laws is most pronounced. With the resettlement of the plains around this central region two more zones developed in which the traditional family organisation for a long period of time represented the determining social pattern. These two zones, however, became less important the farther they were from the central area. They included Bosnia, Serbia, parts of Bulgaria, Macedonia, the rest of Albania, the northernmost parts of Greece as well as the southern and the eastern regions of Croatia (primarily the areas at the former Austrian *Militärgrenze* – literally, “military frontier” – in Croatia and

Slavonia.)

Family forms and the ability to defend oneself – two examples:

Serbia had been settled as late as the end of the 18th century by shepherds from the Dinaric Alps. Until the beginning of the first revolt against the Turks in the year 1804 these pastoral communities preserved their specific form of life, they adapted skilfully, however, to their new environment. In the huge, almost impenetrable woods of this area – at that time the largest part of Serbia was covered with dense forests – they bred pigs instead of sheep and grazed them in the nearby woods. Here, much the same as in the mountains, society was also strictly agnatically organised, with lineages and *zadruzas*. This form of organisation proved to be very effective, in particular in wartime. This was evidenced not only by the repeated revolts against the Turks but also by the entire tradition of hayduke and marauders, a common facet of pastoral life. The almost permanent military conflicts with the Ottoman state after the settlement of the plains were closely connected to a scarce economic basis, a patriarchal organisation, marauding raids and a very deep-rooted ideology of heroism.

When one regards the war in Bosnia against this historical background many events during the war can be seen as marauding and looting of lineages in the old pastoral tradition. Nowadays, quite as in the time of the revolts against the Turks, small armed groups resort to hayduke-like warfare, albeit in “modernised” form. This war, however, as in the era of the revolts, is also a war between the rural and the urban sphere. Then, the few cities were well and truly dominated by the Turks. This traditional anti-urban behaviour became particularly obvious during the siege of Sarajevo. These are of course only partial explanations for the current

problematic situation which is immensely complex and depends on various factors; nonetheless, historical parallels come to the fore time and time again.

The course of the further development of the societies in the two outer zones of settlement produced different results. If the external conditions were favourable for the complex families these forms were preserved for quite some time, if, however, conditions were unfavourable they would disappear fairly rapidly. The whole system of the *zadruga* gradually broke down, not though many of the characteristic behaviour patterns that had been developed in the pastoral societies and had existed for centuries. The interrelation of pastoral and martial ways of living was at the beginning of most Balkan societies. A closer examination of this interrelation which finds strong expression also in literature generally and in folk-literature especially can certainly contribute to a better understanding of many characteristic features of today's problems.

What circumstances the traditional organisation of life in the Balkan societies was confronted with in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century shall be illustrated with the help of the example of Šumadija in Central Serbia and then also of the area at the former Croatian-Slovenian *Militärgrenze* in Southern Croatia.

In the first half of the 18th century central Serbia, then the Pashaluk of Belgrade, was very thinly populated only. The resettlement of the area in the 18th and 19th century, therefore, was accompanied by the gradual disintegration of Ottoman power in Europe. Under these prevailing conditions, characterised by a multitude of conflicts, the Serbian nation and the Serbian state began to emerge, and this sphere of conflict influenced all phases of the process of becoming a nation and forming a state. The aforementioned fighter's ideal was

very strongly present at that time. As to how the situation of everyday life was caught up with the events of war in these times shall be illustrated by the example of Karadjordje, the founder of the Serbian and later Yugoslav royal house. In 1781, his family came to Šumadija, then an area almost entirely covered with wood. Karadjordje later lived with his *zadruga* in a house similar to the other houses of this particular era, that is to say, not much more than a long, rectangular hut. In view of his active role in the armed resistance against Ottoman domination he equipped his house with several gun ports for the purpose of defence. The eastern side of the house directly faced the woods to which he and his family often managed to flee in great danger. Karadjordje, like the other richer settlers in this region, lived on livestock trade with Vojvodina and other areas of the Habsburg Empire. This source of income enabled him to gradually increase his estates and acquire considerable wealth.

The first half of the 19th century for the people of Šumadija was a period of almost incessant battles against Turkish domination in the wars of independence. Parallel to these events a dramatic change took place in the 19th century as regards the economic and demographic situation. At the beginning of the

resettlement of Šumadija there was plenty of land for the small number of new settlers. Soon, however, the influx of new settlers to this area grew stronger and stronger, and the region became more and more densely populated. From 1834 to 1910 population density in Serbia increased from a mere 18 to 60 inhabitants per square kilometre, the number still steadily climbing. The country was soon densely populated, the level of emigration to overseas was low and the process of industrialisation only marginal. The cities were growing only very slowly at that time. In 1834, 94 per cent of the total population of Serbia lived in the rural areas, and a very high percentage of people lived on agriculture and stock-breeding. In the course of the 19th century little changed. In 1910, approximately 87 per cent of the population still lived in the rural areas. There were changes, however, in the economic day-to-day realities for the peasants, brought about by the decline of livestock breeding in favour of the strongly increasing forms of farming. The last years of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century were a period of stagnation in terms of economic productivity and the potential development of the economic standard of living. The pioneering phase of the resettlement

of the region had long passed, the huge woodlands had been cleared for the most part and industrialisation had not quite got under way as yet. Small scale agriculture, minimal class differences and small land-ownership were characteristic of the social structure at the time. The further development of society in Šumadija and the whole of Serbia was shaken by a series of wars and similar experiences in this century. I shall refer to them and their results later in this article.

The second example is that of the Croatian-Slavonian *Militärgrenze*. The *Militärgrenze* was organised as a militarised defence zone against the Ottoman Empire by the Austrian authorities during the 16th century. The Austrian military administration offered the settling colonists land and exemption from feudal tax burdens in return for their participation, that is to say active service, in the battles against the Turks. Each family was guaranteed land-ownership. These families were self-sufficient, living on extensive farming and pastoralism and, additionally, also on thieving sprees across the border into Ottoman territory.

On the Ottoman side there also was such a militarised defence zone, similarly organised. In the beginning of its foundation both frontier

Boško Bošković was the last chieftain of the Polje clan. The Poljani realized that his death marked the end of the last living trace of their history, the uprising, the long and bitter border struggles, and the campaigns in the great wars. The whole region came to the funeral, and many from other parts of Montenegro. Honor was done not only to a hero, but to a heroic district, to a family that had achieved leadership by the sword, and to a clan that was vanishing. Suddenly everything was forgotten – he internecine feuds, Boško's violent pacification of these very Poljani in 1919, and all his weaknesses and faults. There remained only his heroism and glorious name, which personified the heart and soul of the clan.

The murder had taken place in the Sandžak, that is, on the other side of the Tara – long a bloody border between two creeds. Consequently, it was not difficult for the mourners, the keeners, and the eulogists to incite the masses to a punitive massacre against the Moslems ...

Never was there such a campaign, nor could one even imagine that this was hidden in what is called the national soul. The plundering of 1918 was an innocent game by comparison with this. The majority of the crusaders were themselves later ashamed of what happened and what they had done. But – they did it. My father, too, who was not particularly given to cruelty, at least not more than any other Montenegrin, never liked to talk about it. He felt shame for taking part in those events, like a drunkard who sobers up after committing a crime.

The police officials in the little town across the Tara as well as the civil authorities in the communities were mostly Montenegrins, and in the hands of the aroused mobs. In Sahovići the authorities informed the vigilantes that a group of Moslems, taken under protective custody on the pretext that their lives were in danger, were being moved to Bijelo Polje. The Montenegrins lay in wait for them in a likely spot, and massacred them near the cemetery at Sahovići.

Some fifty very prominent Moslems were killed. A similar attempt was made on the Moslems of Bijelo Polje, a peaceful and industrious people. They, too, were to be convoyed by way of Sahovići under a safe conduct. However, at the last minute a Serbian army officer prevented the treachery and crime.

The destruction of Moslem settlements and massacring of Moslems assumed such proportions and forms that the army had to be sent to intervene; the police authorities were passive and unreliable. The incident turned into a small-scale religious war, but one in which only one side was killed. If, as rumour later had it, Belgrade wished to exert some pressure on the Moslem party, which is not very likely, the whole affair certainly got out of hand. Neither Belgrade nor the leaders of the mob could keep it in hand.

Despite all this, not everyone was massacred. Holding to the tradition of their fathers, the mob killed only males above ten years of age – or fifteen or eighteen, depending on the mercy of the murderers. Some three hundred and fifty souls were slaughtered, all in a terrible fashion. Amid the looting and arson there was also rape, unheard of among Montenegrins in earlier times.

As soon as the regular army appeared, the lawless mob realized that the matter was serious and immediately withdrew. After that the Moslem villages slowly withered. The Moslems of that region began to migrate to Turkey, selling their lands for a trifle. The district of Sahovići, and in part, also, Bijelo Polje, were emptied, partly as the result of the massacre and partly from fear. The Moslems were replaced by Montenegrin settlers.

The affair produced general horror, even among most of those who had carried it out. My older brother and I were shocked and horrified. We blamed Father for being one of the leaders of the mob. He himself later used to say that he had always imagined the raid was intended only to kill a few Moslem chiefs. Expressing abhorrence at the crimes, Father nevertheless saw in it all something that my brother and I neither would nor could see – an inevitable war of annihilation, begun long ago, between two faiths. Both were fated to swim in blood, and only the stronger would remain on top.

Although Yugoslavia at that time had a parliamentary government, the whole crime was hushed up. Had anyone conducted even the most superficial investigation, he might have exposed those who had committed the crimes and their leaders. But there was no investigation of any kind. Two or three guards were given a light jail sentence in Sahovići because they had agreed to hand over some prisoners to the mob. A general investigation was announced, but it turned out to be a travesty of justice.

What especially upset the established mores was not so much the murders themselves, but the way in which they were carried out. After those prisoners in Sahovići were mowed down, one of our villagers, Sekula, went from corpse to corpse and severed the ligaments at their heels. This is what is done in the village with oxen after they are struck down by a blow of the ax, to keep them from getting up again if they should revive. Some who went through the pockets of the dead found bloody cubes of sugar there and ate them. Babies were taken from the arms of mothers and sisters and slaughtered before their eyes. These same murderers later tried to justify themselves by saying that they would not have cut their throats but only shot them had their mothers and sisters not been there. The beards of the Moslem religious leaders were torn out and crosses were carved into their foreheads. In one village a group was tied around a haystack with wire and fire set to it. Some later observed that the flames of burning men are purple.

One group attacked an isolated Moslem homestead. They found the peasant skinning a lamb. They intended to shoot him and burn down the house, but the skinning of the lamb inspired them to hang the peasant by his heels on the same plum tree. A skilled butcher split open the peasant's head with an ax, but very carefully, so as not to harm the torso. Then he cut open the chest. The heart was still pulsating. The butcher plucked it out with his hand and threw it to a dog. Later it was said that the dog did not touch the heart because not even a dog would eat Turkish meat.

It may seem, if one reasons coldly, that it hardly matters, after all, how men are killed and what is done with their corpses. But it is not so. The very fact that they treated men like beasts, that they invented ways of killing, was the most horrible of all, that which cast a shadow on the murders and exposed the souls of the murderers to their lowest depths, to a bottomless darkness. In that land murders themselves are not particularly horrifying; they are too common for that. But the cruel and inhuman way in which these were committed and the lust that the murderers frequently felt while going about their business are what inspired horror and condemnation, even though Moslems were involved. True, there was an already established opinion that one religion must do evil to another, and man must do evil to man. There is the proverb: Man is a wolf to every other man. People seemed to believe that a man who does not act thus is not human. But these crimes surpassed everything that had come down from the past. It seemed as if men came to hate other humans as such, and that their religion was merely an excuse for that monstrous hatred. The times had unnoticeably become wicked, and the men with them. After all, it is the men who make the times. As a final injustice, it was not Moslems who had killed Boško in the first place, but Montenegrins, chieftains from Kolašin.

(Milovan Djilas, Land without Justice, p. 209ff.)

The here depicted events took place in the year 1924. In his interpretation the author stresses that on one hand this was not random murder but all "holding to tradition", on the other hand he asserts that the way in which the murders had taken place "especially upset the established mores". He formulates his model of explanation for the society of blood revenge in the transitional stage of the process of modernisation even more clearly in another passage: "The heroic hatred of his ancestors was turned by different circumstances in to a criminal urge".

zones were populated for the most part by Vlachs, transhumant shepherds from the mountain areas. The chaotic situation created by the Turkish conquests had caused an immense process of migration. In this respect the Vlachs in particular have to be mentioned who left their mountain homes and settled in the newly conquered Ottoman areas. The new areas of settlement of the Vlachs lay in Serbia, Dalmatia and Bosnia, especially though in the regions on both sides of the border between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire.

Most of the Vlachs were orthodox in terms of religion, some, however, were also Catholic. In the process of the forming of nations the orthodox Vlachs became Serbs and the Catholic Vlachs – together with immigrants from other parts of Croatia (their number increased steadily over the century and they became the largest group in the area) who also settled in the area of the Habsburg Militärgrenze – became Croats. This distinction was fairly irrelevant then since there were hardly any differences with regard to the way and organisation of life between the Catholic and the orthodox Vlachs. Here, it is important to stress that only in the last 150 years have the “national” differences gained in significance. Therefore, it would be quite wrong to project such modern differences and definitions into the historical past, as national historians tend to do again and again.

The population of the “Vojna Krajina” or “Krajina”, as the Militärgrenze is called in Croatia and Serbia, respectively, was a full part of the military system and was organised in regiments and companies. Each company consisted of the “frontier guards” from several villages. First, the Krajina men were soldiers against the Ottoman Empire, from the middle of the 18th century, however, when the Turks had become less of a threat, they fought on nearly all the battlefields of the Habsburg monarchy.

The society of this Croatian-Slavonian Militärgrenze was based on the strictly patriarchal principles of the organisation of life in the *zadruga*. These complex households



Shosha warriors from the north of Albania who fought against the Turks. Photo taken in a photographic studio in 1912. (Gjurmë të historisë kombëtare në foto-ken e Shkodrës, Tirana 1982, p. 126)

in the militarised defence zone in exceptional cases could even consist of up to fifty members, although as a rule they were considerably smaller. It has to be stressed that the size and structure of the households changed in the course of the family cycle and time and time again adapted to the economic, social and demographic conditions. The Habsburg monarchy was interested in keeping the households large since after all they formed the basis of recruiting new soldiers. Moreover, the absence of one or more of the male workers was on no account to cause the ruin of farming and stock-breeding and thereby jeopardise the entire system. This Militärgrenze existed until the year 1881 and primarily served the purpose of producing enough soldiers for the military undertakings of the monarchy. The state of economic development

was very low compared to other regions of Austria-Hungary, but also in relation to the neighbouring areas in Croatia. The society of the Militärgrenze, which has once been described as the “largest barracks in Europe”, was made a part of Croatia after the disbandment of the military system. The process of integrating the “frontier people” into civilian society entailed massive problems and led to much unrest and several uprisings which time and time again took their toll of lives. The heavily increased tax burdens and the relinquishment of privileges played an important part in this development. The high taxation of the possession of firearms was – apart from the economic difficulties – one of the reasons for massive unhappiness. In the course of time things seemed to fall into place; even so, the area of the former Krajina remained the poorer part of Croatia.

Heroic traditions and the experiences of war in the 20th century:

The wartime experiences in this century were of decisive importance for the further development of the societies in Šumadija and Krajina. These events proved to be highly influential in the social development but were of effect also on the preservation of traditional value systems.

The Balkan wars of 1912/13, World War I and World War II, all of these were dramatic times for the population of Šumadija. The example of the village of Orašac in Šumadija shall serve as a model, illustrating the sort of wartime experiences and their impacts on this region. In peace-time the economic situation of the villagers of Orašac was not exactly easy, but in wartime the state of things quickly deteriorated even more and led to great poverty and hardship. The participation in a war to most men of the village was the most important time in their lives, and they frequently spoke about it. Workaday clothes and traditional costumes borrowed

heavily from the military uniforms. This goes from the “Čakšire”, the riding breeches, which were well-liked and remained in fashion until the sixties even though the peasants hardly owned horses any more, to the “šajkača”, a cap similar in design to the uniform caps (today, the uniforms of the Bosnian Serbs imitate the style of the Serbian uniforms during World War II).

The pride taken in military service and the participation in a war were also important for the men of Orašac as early as the 19th century, then with reference to the struggle for independence in the clashes with the Turks. This pride has to be seen in close context also to the heroic ideals of the traditional stories and tales which will be dealt with later in this article.

How the population of Orašac felt the impacts of the Balkan wars and World War I, this shall be illustrated by the following extracts from two autobiographies:

I was born in 1880 in the village of Orašac. I spent my childhood in my birthplace. At that time my parents were poor, so they rented some fields and we cultivated them. (...) I lived on our land with my uncles who were together with us in the same household. I was the oldest child so I began to help them very early. (...) In 1889 my father registered me at the school.

I married when I was eighteen, to a girl from my own village, and in a few years after that I had a son and a daughter. I joined the army in 1905 and was put in the infantry. This was during the reign of King Peter I. (...) When I returned home I felt myself to be a mature man. Up to 1912 I worked as a farmer with my brothers and uncles. When the Turkish war broke out I was mobilized in the reserves in the Šumadijan division. We met the Turks at Prepolac, drove them back, and reached Scutari in Albania ... In 1913 I fought against the Bulgarians, and this war lasted about a year. (...)

In 1914 I was released, so once again I continued my work at home.

But in 1914, when Austria attacked Serbia, I was mobilized again (...) I fought near Šabac and Smederevo, and later we were driven out of our country. I retreated through Montenegro and Albania to Skadar, Drač, and Valona. (...) In Valona I boarded a ship and went ashore on Corfu. From there I went to Salonika, where we were engaged in a battle with the Bulgarians in 1916. In 1917 I was in Africa on a rest leave, (...) where I spent six months and was sent back to the war. I was always in the first ranks but I was never wounded. After a few big battles we broke through Bulgarian lines, as well as the Austrian lines, and headed toward home.

I returned home in 1920, and with my brothers I continued my work in the fields. We divided the zadruga in 1921, when I was elected a member of the County Council of Jasenica ...

(Halpern, J.M.: A Serbian Village. New York, 1958, p. 209-211)

Another villager describes the impressions of his childhood in Orašac as follows:

“At this time our zadruga consisted of twelve people. The wheat bread which we can enjoy nowadays was a rarity in those days, we had it three times in a year at most. 1912 was the year when we fought against the Turks, so the school was closed. My father and my grandfather had to go off to war and the five of us, four brothers and a sister, stayed at home alone. Until then we cultivated the land with our bullocks, but now, in wartime, the bullocks were taken away from us, as they were from many others. We sow the grain and worked on the field, but we children knew only little about this kind of work. These were very bad years and people were starving everywhere. There was not much bread, and we were barefoot all the time and had little to wear. Eventually, I got

typhoid fever and was seriously ill for months”.

(Halpern, J.M., Kerewsky-Halpern, B.: *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*. Prospect Heights, 1986, p. 65)

On April 6th, 1941, the Second World War hit Yugoslavia, as the Germans began to bomb the city of Belgrade, and soon their war machine had brought the whole of Serbia under its control. From 1915 to 1918 Orašac was under Austrian-Hungarian occupation, and not quite thirty years later the village was occupied again, this time by German troops. Immediately after the Yugoslav army had surrendered to the enemy the two rival resistance groups, the Partisans and the Četniks, were formed. Šumadija became the scene of bitter and fierce fighting between the German occupying troops, the Četniks and the Partisans. The German army soon began to “avenge” their losses and casualties by shooting civilians (a ratio of 1:100 for each killed and of 1:50 for each wounded German soldier or ethnic German). In Krajujevac, the largest town of Šumadija, thousands of civilians were shot in a reprisal for a Partisan attack on a German patrol.

Orašac, too, suffered heavily from the period of the occupation. At the beginning of the occupation hostages were taken by the German troops because of the slow, in the opinion of some German commanding officers too slow, provision of grain and other food. They were released, however, later on. In another incident some peasants were shot because they were too close to the street when a German military convoy rolled on. The population had been ordered with the threat of death penalty to keep out of sight.

There were, however, also intense fights between Partisans and Četniks in Orašac. In one of these encounters a part of the village burnt down in 1943 and hundreds of people were made homeless. In the aftermath of

this event the majority of the villagers fled to other villages to their kith or kin. In Orašac Partisan and Četnik groups were supported, and more than 100 people were killed in the war. The hostilities within the village remained, even in the time after the war. In most cases these hostilities were the same as between lineage groups. At the end of 1944 the Četnik units were defeated and Orašac and the surrounding area came under Partisan control. At the end of the war a large part of the men who by then did not already belong to the Partisans was mobilised for the final battles against the Germans. This struggle against the Germans occupied a central place in the ideology of postwar Yugoslavia and, holding to the tradition of the wars of independence, was glorified as a “heroic” fight.

In which brutality the war had been waged the following example of a peasant might illustrate. Ever since the end of the Second World War this man could not bear watching as his wife took their chicken and slaughtered them by cutting their throats. When he was asked why he could not look on the man answered that only too often during the war had he seen how people’s throats were slit in the same way.

In Krajina the wartime events were hardly less dramatic. In the First World War the soldiers of the former Militärgrenze had for one last time fought on the side of Austria-Hungary. Many of these former “frontier men” lost their lives in this war, and their home region also suffered heavily from the consequences of the war.

The following biographies of two men from the town of Bobovac at the former Militärgrenze, on the right side of the river Sava, southeast of Sisak, were written down in 1962 and give us an impression of life in this time:

“My name is Mijo Filar, and I was born in 1888. Today, my family consists of seven members. Apart from me, my son, his wife, my grandson

and his wife and both their children live in our house. We are peasants, and our house was built in 1883.... On our farm there are two more one-storey buildings. In the smaller one lives my brother Josip(65) with his son and his son’s wife, and in the other lives my second son Nikola with his wife and their two children. In this part of the village live six families by the name of Filar. They all come from the same zadruga which split in 1936.

My brother Josip and I were in the war since 1914. First, we were transferred to Serbia, where we fought at Crni Vrh. In 1915, we were transferred to the Russian front, where I was injured. In the year 1916 I was in the military hospital and was then sent home. During the war I also was in Galicia and in Russia, but I did not get to know the Russians”.

“I am Alojz Klarič and I was born in 1899. Until the First World War I worked on my father’s farm. At that time my family owned six “jutar” land (approximately 6 hectares), and the family consisted of 18 people (brothers, children, kin). In 1917, I went off to war. First, I was stationed in Karlovac, but then I was transferred to Požega and Debrecen in Hungary. ... I was in the Austrian Army for one and a half years. After the war I was in the Yugoslav Army for one more year... After the war I worked as a seasonal worker on the side of the river Sava while my wife worked on the farm. In 1937, our zadruga broke up, and I shared the possessions with my two brothers.” (Autobiography-collection of the “Halpern Collection” at the Department of Southeast European History, University of Graz.)

In the interwar period the demographic revolution which started very late in the southern Slavonic areas began to yield strong effects on the economic situation of the rural population. The traditional organisation of life in the zadruga rapidly crumbled.

In 1941, World War II hit Krajina. From 1941 to 1945 the former Militärgrenze became a part of the fascist Croatian Ustaša state. This “Independent State of Croatia” (NDH: Nezavisna Država Hrvatska), set up and supported by the German military command, after the take-over quickly implemented a policy of expulsion and eradication of the Serbian population in Krajina. In the same year the excesses directed against the Serbian population were beginning. The concentration camp of Jasenovac, close to Sisak in Krajina, was built. The number of Serbian victims of the Ustaši terror is heavily disputed today and, according to the respective political stance, varies between 100.000 and 700.000 people killed. The harmful consequences of this genocide for the Serb-populated area of Krajina are beyond imagination. Entire villages were destroyed and an enormous wave of refugees followed. A high proportion of the men joined the Partisans and fought against the NDH state and the Germans. Interestingly, most Serbs joined the Partisans and not the Četniks. The experiences of the Second World War were traumatic for the Serbian population of Krajina and today are of crucial importance still in the conflict between the Krajina Serbs and the Croatian state. The end of the war and the victory of the Partisans entailed a series of massacres of the defeated camp. Some estimates show up to 100.000 killed soldiers and sympathisers with the NDH state who had fled to Carinthia, but were turned away there and forced to return by the British troops.

The events in both World Wars forced the former “frontier men” to resort again to the fighter’s role. But this had also been one of the fundamental elements in the development of their society right from the beginning. In the current war, too, they were once again forced to take up arms. On a visit to Bobovac in May of 1994 one felt taken back to the era of the Militärgrenze. Today,

Bobovac lies directly at the border to the “Republika Srpska Krajina” on the Croatian side, the UN restriction zone begins right at the end of town. The majority of the men constantly wear uniforms, even while working on the farms, and carry arms. Every evening the military units of the village gather fully dressed in combat uniforms, and the commands are issued for military assignments (at present for the most part guard or patrol duty) in the town centre. Meanwhile working life on the farmsteads – Bobovac has escaped destruction – just goes on.

New values in the process of modernisation after 1945

After World War II the Communist government began to transform Yugoslavia into a socialist state. The programme of modernisation was designed to reorganise the predominantly agrarian into a “socialist” society. (In 1931, 73,3 per cent of the male workers in Yugoslavia had still worked in the agricultural sector.) As to reach this goal a series of “five year plans” was implemented in order to massively promote and push forward above all the industrial development. The building of industrial production in the cities triggered massive migration to these new industrial centres growing at a lightning speed. In the sixties alone in Yugoslavia more than 400.000 new jobs were created in the industrial sector. Private forms of agriculture, in stark contrast to the former, were strongly restricted on account of the collectivisation of agrarian property. After Yugoslavia’s break with Moscow in 1948 a policy of setting up agrarian co-operatives was initiated. The limitation of the scale of private land-ownership and a structure of taxation which strongly favoured gainful employment in comparison with self supporting, private forms of farming and stock-breeding led to massive migration from the land to the cities. The level of education provided by the

schools also made an important contribution to this development. The entire system of school education was geared towards stressing and conveying the benefits and also the attraction of industrial employment in the city. This was strongly connected to the Communist ideal of a socialist society that was to follow the model of the “progressive” industrial worker instead of the “conservative and retrograde” peasant. Parallel to the building of an extensive system of education, health and, above all, infrastructure which made the urban centres far better reachable the wish, in particular among the young generation, to “break out of this mess” grew more and more urgent. A steadily rising share of the rural population began to combine village life with employment in the city. For many this was the first step towards a permanent residence in the city. Many others, however, stayed commuters and kept a small farm in their home village – a long-term adaptation that was supported by the state, since then the effort of having to provide additional infrastructure for these new workers could be spared.

A factor which increased the attraction of the urban areas were the better educational facilities and prospects offered to the children. In order to take advantage of this opportunity one did not necessarily have to move over to the city. Therefore, a large number of pupils from the rural areas lived with their relatives in the cities during the phase of their education. In return, the family from the land would provide the relatives in the city with food from the own farm.

Another characteristic feature of modernisation in Yugoslavia was the extremely high number of Yugoslav migrant workers in the West. At the beginning of the seventies more than 800.000 Yugoslav guest workers with 250.000 relatives worked and lived in Western Europe, and this number has steadily risen over the past two decades.

The regional disparities in the economic development were enormous. The social transformations accompanied by the economic development were also very different from one region to the other. In the big cities many people lived a life according to Western standards, while in some areas there still existed the traditional forms of the organisation of life.

The relation to war

How does this traditional world of values of the societies in Serbia and Croatia look like? Were some of the elements preserved despite the modernisation in postwar Yugoslavia, and if indeed, how are they connected to the current wars?

When one examines the connection of traditional values in a society and its relation to war, it is necessary to proceed extremely cautiously and be rather sceptical. One of the foremost lessons to be learnt from the Nazi holocaust is that never again can one make simplifying comments on the characteristics of one specific society and its relation to violence. It is certainly permissible, however, to speak about types of violence, and in this respect there is a clear distinction between the legitimised, bureaucratic eradication of a minority in a civilian society, as has happened in the Third Reich from 1939 to 1945, and the victims of a conflict in which both sides seek to harm each other, as is the case in the context of the war in Ex-Yugoslavia. It is also possible to relate the historical development of a society, its notion of heroism, as finds expression in the heroic epics and poems as well as in the traditional stories, to behaviour patterns in the time of a crisis.

For the Serbs in Šumadija individual heroism plays an important part in the traditional stories and tales. This is manifested in the adoration of the hajduke – they were seen as “just” bandits – as well as in the stories about the great wars against Turkish oppression. The feats achieved by the heroes ap-

pearing in these stories were, and still are, glorified in the traditional folk-songs and folk-tales and also in literature and historiography. The ideal hero for the most part is a strong and courageous fighter who is utterly fearless in the face of death and sacrifices his own life fighting for his people. The struggle against a superior opponent and the hero's death are at the heart also of the most popular Serbian legend, the depiction of the battle on Kosovo polje in 1389. What importance and relevance these myths still possess in the political and social reality of today is illustrated compellingly by Slobodan Milošević's speech on the 600th anniversary of the battle on Kosovo polje which strengthened his position in the quest for political dominance in Serbia.

The following verses from a heroic poem shall illustrate these epics. The strong attachment to this tradition in everyday life is evidenced by the fact that in the sixties almost all inhabitants of Orašac, whether children or adults, could recite these verses from memory. They describe the first Serbian revolt against the Turks which began here in this village in 1804:

*“O Lord, what a great miracle,
When in the Land of the Serbs the time
had arrived,
That great change was about to take
place.
That others be the rulers of the coun-
try.
The prefect did not want the fight,
And neither did the Turkish looters,
But this is the struggle of the poor
peasants,
Who no longer can stand the burden
Who no longer can bear Turkish op-
pression.
And the saints, they will it so.
Enough blood has been poured onto
the earth.
The time for fighting has come,
For shedding blood for the holy cross,
And every man shall avenge his ances-
tors”.*

(from: “Početak Protiv Dahija”, in: Stani (ed.): *Srpske Narodne Peseme, Prvi Ustanak*, p. 3)

The following extract from “Starac Vujadin” (literally, the old Vujadin) depicts the hajduke as symbols of challenge to the Turks and of heroism to the Serbian people. It is translated here from the form in which it was chanted by an Orašac villager, accompanying himself with his “gusle”.

*Oh my eyes, that you hadn't seen
All that you saw last night,
When the Turks from Lijevno passed
by
Leading the hajduke down from the
mountains
Leading the old man Vujadin,
Old Vujadin and both his sons.
When they neared wretched Lijevno
Old man Vujadin spoke out,
“My children, my own two sons,
Do you see the cursed Lijevno?
There they will torture and beat us.
Do not reveal the young maidens at
the inn
Where we drank red wine
And where we spent the winter.”
With these words, they reached Lije-
vno,
And the Turks threw them in a dun-
geon.
They remained in the dungeon for
three days,
And when the fourth morning dawned
The Turks led the hajduke from the
mountain
And started to beat and torture them
And break their legs and arms.
“Tell us, you scoundrel, Old Vujadin,
Tell us, scoundrel, who your young
helpers are,
Tell us, scoundrel, the names of the
young maidens,
Where you drank red wine,
And where you left your treasure!”
They crushed his legs and arms,
And when they began to poke out his
eyes
The old man Vujadin spoke out,
“Don't be fools, you Turks of Lijevno –
I didn't reveal them to spare my heroic
legs,
I didn't reveal them to spare my white
arms,
And shall not reveal them to spare my
treacherous eyes,
These eyes which led me to misfor-
tune!”*

(Halpern, J.M.: *A Serbian Village*. New York 1958, p. 18)

It has to be stressed that in contrast to the murderous ethnic conflicts in Bosnia and Croatia the Turks in these heroic epics were portrayed as an enemy of honourable standing that feels sympathy also with the adversary. The following passage from the Kosovo epic illustrates this very well. Both Prince Lazar of Serbia and the Turkish sultan Murad fall in battle, and the dying sultan speaks to his men:

"You Turkish brothers, advisers and vezirs.

I am dying, and I leave the empire to you.

Now, listen intently to what I have to say,

That for a long time the empire may last:

Don't be hard on the peasants,
Treat them in a kindly manner.

They shall pay fifteen denars of poll tax,

Or let them pay thirty denars at the most.

Don't burden them with punishments and taxes

And don't make their lives bitter with hardship.

Interfere neither with their churches,
Nor with their laws and honour".

(Halpern, J.M.: *A Serbian Village*. New York 1958, p. 18)

Not only the Serbs, however, are deeply committed to this tradition of heroism, but also the other peoples in the Balkan area. In Croatia for instance – similar to the hayduke tradition – the heroic deeds of the Uskoke are celebrated in song who are depicted as brave defenders of Christianity against the Turks. What is admired again about these heroes is their daring, their aggressiveness, their capacity for the endurance of great suffering and their preparedness to die in the fight against a superior enemy.

The settlers around the former Militärgrenze also have their historical past as defenders of the Habsburg Empire, respectively the Christian Occident, who sacrificed themselves for their task and had to suffer greatly. This historical role, as

one is frequently told in Croatia, has now repeated itself for the country in the present conflict.

The fostering of heroism was very important also in the Communist era. Generations of Yugoslav children grew up with the stories about the great deeds of the legendary heroes (junaci). The Communist state tied on to this old tradition. The heroic Partisan was celebrated as model and seen to be endowed with the same qualities as the ideals in former times, that is to say for instance with a great capacity for the endurance of suffering and sorrow, so as to liberate the people from brutal heteronomous domination. The glorification of the heroic Partisan war became one of the pillars of the ideology of socialist Yugoslavia under Tito.

Breakdown – orientation crisis – recourse to the past

The breakdown of socialism in Yugoslavia, respectively the ever-increasing acceleration of the decline of this system after Tito's death, led to an orientation crisis in the Yugoslav society. And with the break-up of the political system the world also crumbled in which people – albeit reluctantly – were used to living in. The political infantilisation of the citizens – for that was what the state had ordered – increased the general desire for a different ideology which was to take the place of the failed Communist ideology. These developments were accompanied by a steadily deepening economic crisis whose effects became palpable more and more dramatically at the end of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties. This situation formed the background to the differences of opinion about the question of who was going to control what resources. At the same time a nationalist stance took the upper hand more and more with regard to the entire complex of Yugoslavia's problems, tying on to a tradition of national confrontation which already existed since the

interwar period. After the miserable failure of various attempts at reforms one started to blame the crisis with increasing vehemence on the respective other nation. Beginning with Milošević, who used the "Serbian people under threat" as a vehicle to power the nationalist movements succeeded in steadily gaining influence until eventually seizing political power in the respective republics. They leaned on a propaganda which was aimed strongly at people's fears. This nationalism, however, could never have led to war without conscious steering "from above". This war was preceded by a media war which "prepared" people for the real war. The media permanently picked up and referred to the "great and heroic history of the own people", the historical myths, legends and the national tradition which "for so long had been oppressed by the enemy". Such, the battle on Kosovo polje, for example, was filmed in a bombastic style and shown on Serbian TV as a national spectacle. History was and is misused to get a nationalist point of view widely accepted. Thus, the mutual demonisation of the enemy which later followed is hardly surprising. Here, the adversary was portrayed solely in role images from the time of World War II. The Serbs regarded the Croats as Ustaši, and the Croats saw the Serbs as Četniks. It is interesting that both the Serbian as well as also the Croatian side use the symbolism of these groups. This is shown for instance by the introduction of the new Croatian currency, the "kuna", in May of 1994 which had last been used as a currency by the fascist state of Croatia. The uniforms and insignia of the Serbian and Croatian armed forces also borrowed from this symbolism. Worn as symbols of identity and pride on one side, they signified death and destruction to the other side.

The war in Krajina began with a Serbian insurrection and in the second half of 1991 turned into a real campaign of conquest of the

Krajina Serbs in Croatia, massively supported by the Yugoslav Army with the delivery of arms. This war which then spread into Bosnia was accompanied by horrible atrocities, by massacres, "ethnic cleansings" and plundering and looting, thus gradually creating a new reality. In this context we would like to stress that according to reports by various international organisations such as the United Nations, Amnesty International and Helsinki Watch the major part of the violations of human rights in the crimes against the civilian population in Croatia and then in Bosnia was committed by Serbian troops. In these reports, however, similar violations of human rights from the Croatian and Muslim side are also documented.

Patriarchal traditions in the war

The horrible events of the war transformed many people involved to a

strong degree. Groups of "soldiers" began to live in a "warrior reality" all their own which was shaped by the old heroic ideals. Thus, in the reality of these "warriors" the old heroic myths and patriarchal notions attained a level of importance which ought not to be underestimated. This war was an organized military conflict but also a confrontation of armed groups attacking the civilian population.

The plundering and looting, the rapes, massacres and mutilations perpetrated by this marauding mob are reminiscent time and time again of characteristic elements already appearing in earlier conflicts in the Balkans (in the massive "ethnic cleansings" for example in the two Balkan wars of 1912/13) and also related to historical patterns of reacting in war situations..

In this specific situation of ethnic conflict many young men turned into warriors who fought not only against the enemy warriors but also

against the entire population of the disputed territory. The method of the cruelties was to drive people away from their homes in such a traumatising way that they would never want to come back again.

A further characteristic of this war are the atrocities perpetrated against women. How better to give expression to one's firm hold over the enemy and hurt his honour more deeply in a patriarchal world than to rape the women of the enemy and thereby prove to him that he is unable to protect "his" women? In patriarchal ways of thinking the expectations are that men fall in battle, but the rape, torture and sometimes even the brutal murder of a woman are beyond this world and its notions. Brutal violence against women is aimed also at the male family members as well as at the extended circle of a woman's male kin. The emphasis of this aspect of violence against women is certainly not about establishing sex-specific violence as a

Der Standard, 16. 4. 99, p. 4

It would be better if she were dead

Samir's horny hands are trembling when he talks about his wife. She is in the sixth month of pregnancy and he has not heard anything of her and the rest of his family in three weeks. The family lives in the village of Vragolja near the town of Pristina. "If she is still alive", Samir says, who works as a mechanic in Slovenia, with a forced smile on his lips.

He simply could not stand the uncertainty any more, the man who is just short of his thirtieth year explains to me in good German, he had to go home. So, for a fare of 2100 schillings Samir had obtained a place on the "Hornbeam", a ferry which twice per week leaves the Slovenian town of Koper and heads east for the port of Durres in Albania...

The ferry is scheduled to arrive at Durres on Monday at lunchtime. Samir is sitting in the ship's bar together with other Kosovo-Albanians, they exchange all the latest news about the NATO bombings, the men try to keep each other's spirits up.

The young ones in particular, their hearts invigorated by a fair amount of slivovitz, act belligerently and defiantly. In a corner of the bar they hang up a poster with the letters "UCK" on it and give themselves Dutch courage. What they want to do is take revenge, the Serbs, they say, should not go unpunished for all their horrible crimes. If NATO was to hand them the arms they would sure settle the score with their own hands. Horrible news is passed on, there is talk of tortures and executions by the Serbian militias. Rumours circulate and eventually become factual reports.

Samir does not feel like joining in. He only worries about his relatives, he says. Slowly, he fumbles with his wallet and produces a crumpled photo of his wife. On the photo there is a dainty, young girl with a headscarf. "Her name is Bojana", Samir tells me. It was only in last October that they got married, and Bojana is the great love of his life, the tall man says with tears in his eyes.

He had left her with his parents and his brothers, in the belief that she would be safe and protected there. "It's Bojana's first pregnancy, she is so delicate, so gentle, so fragile", Samir worries, and then falls silent again for minutes. The village of Vragolja by now has probably been overrun by the Serbs. He does not even know about the whereabouts of his wife.

It is a few minutes past midnight. All of the sudden Samir erupts with emotion: "What shall I do if my Bojana has been raped by the Serb swines?" Despairingly he adds: "Shall I leave her then?" His honour, the honour of his entire family would of course be shattered to pieces in this case. I object carefully that after all Bojana alone and not the whole family would have become the victim of such an attack, but all I get is an uncomprehending stare and the reply: "That's the way things are over here, Bojana would remain dishonoured for the rest of her life. It would be better if she were dead". Samir does not say anything else that night, he bites his nails until they start bleeding.

Self-testimonies such as this one are a clear reference to the cultural specific of violence, at least in the subjective perception of those affected. The cultural difference existing in reality is evidenced by the reporter's lack of understanding.

particular characteristic of this war. Violence against women and mass rapes are, as many studies could show, unfortunately documented from many contexts of war, not least also from the Second World War on the part of the German/Austrian soldiers. It is conclusive, however, to reflect this reading as well, presented above, in a patriarchal context.

Generally, it should be stressed that the fighter's ideals which were very strongly propagated in the public in the process of the escalation of this war – shaped by scenarios of threat – clearly represented only one aspect in the intricate and complex process of the escalation of violence. That they are neither the reasons

nor an explanation for the war is just as obvious as it is clear that the traditional notions of fighting and honour in a society – as is evidenced not least by the many forced recruitments and desertions – are often also repudiated. Nonetheless, the aforementioned patriarchal backgrounds have undoubtedly been not without relevance for the male-dominated reality of crisis escalation of the soldiers and participants in this war. For a process-oriented understanding though of how particular traditions have in effect become points of reference in the reality of the war for the soldiers' actions further extensive research work will undoubtedly be needed.

English Version:

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In the last two years it has become obvious that the original publication plan of this book series, comprising a volume in the spring devoted to topics of non-European history and a volume in autumn on European history, cannot be continued. We therefore decided to take up the production of a further series of books, which has been published by Turia & Kant under the series title *Querschnitte*. In the future, the original series, *Historische Sozialkunde (HSK)* published by Brandes & Apsel, will be exclusively devoted to themes in non-European history (Vol. 14 *Globalisierung und Peripherie – Globalization and periphery*; Vol. 15 *Weltwirtschaftskrise – World economic depressions*). The new series *Querschnitte* will concentrate on European topics. The first volume will deal with the revolutionary year 1848 in a European context. Further volumes on the history of the European expansion, the history of sexology, the Industrial Revolution in Europe, the European bourgeoisie and the history of technology will follow.

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