

Call for Papers – Edited book (Miranda Jakiša/Senad Halilbašić)

Contemporary South Slavic Victimhood Narratives and Performances in Arts and Cultures

Founding myths of South Slavic nation-states have been centred around victimhood narratives since the emancipatory struggles within several occupying empires. Rarely have those narratives been stand-alone founding myths – they were interwoven with narratives of the heroic and the oppressed. Notions of being ‘a historic victim’ (or a victim of history) can be found among all South Slavs, not only in the post-Yugoslav region. The political function of such founding myths in the construction of collective identities has been a research focus of South Slavic and South Eastern European Studies for quite some time already. The instrumentalization of victimhood narratives in the process of South Slavic nation-state formations, also in the context of Yugoslavia’s breakup and the Yugoslav Wars, has been explored, yet less attention has been given to victimhood narratives and performances in the very current South Slavic regions and contexts.

Our edited book will focus on contemporary victimhood narratives and performances in South Slavic arts and cultures and follow up on the most recent developments. Our aim is to explore the forms and functions of victimhood narratives today, 25 years after the end of the Yugoslav Wars in a geopolitical space still suffering from the consequences of the 1990s conflicts. Clearly victimhood narratives in this context are entangled with each other and often seem to be even interdependent. How is victimhood narrated, interpreted, staged and functionalized today?

We are interested in narratives and performances of South Slavic victimhood in arts (literature, theatre, performance, film, music and art), in media and in places and performances of remembrance (memorial days, memory in public space, museums and memorials). Therefore, we are inviting scholars from different fields (South Slavic Studies, Film and Media Studies, Theatre and Performance Studies, Art History, Cultural and Memory Studies and other closely related disciplines) to contribute to the edited volume “Contemporary South Slavic Victimhood Narratives and Performances”.

Proposals for research articles will be peer reviewed for an edited book to be published by a reputed publisher in 2022.

Original and unpublished texts are invited (but not restricted to) the following areas and research questions:

- How have already established victimhood narratives changed after the end of the Yugoslav Wars?
 - What new victimhood narratives have emerged in the 2000s until today?
 - How are South Slavic victimhood narratives intertwined and are they mutually dependent?
 - Are new narratives and performances of victimhood changing former constructions of collective identities?
 - Who are perpetrators and victims in new victimhood narratives in arts and culture and what is the role of the spectator (bystander)?
 - What are the aesthetic strategies in various art forms to de-construct and question those narratives?
 - What are the roles of South Slavic victimhood discourses in the diaspora?
- Proposals consist of a short abstract (250-300 words, including 3-4 keywords) and a short bio note of the author.
 - Last date of submission of abstracts to the editors is February 15th 2021, to be sent to: senad.halilbasic@univie.ac.at and miranda.jakisa@univie.ac.at
 - The authors will be notified within 4 weeks
 - The first draft of selected contributions is due in August 2021 (length: 5.000-7.000 words)

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Miranda Jakiša and Senad Halilbašić