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Chapter 4

Cosmopolitan Openings and Closures in Post-Yugoslav Antinationalism

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A recent article calls for more precise operationalisations of cosmopolitanism beyond the 'vague and diffuse' notions that define it 'principally as an attitude of "openness" toward others cultures [sic]' (Škrbiš, Kendall & Woodward 2004: 127). The spelling mistake in this sentence may well have arisen during the editing process, beyond the control of the authors, and, in any case, as a non-native speaker of English working in Manchester, it cannot be my intention to engage in yet another diatribe on the Holy Apostrophe. But let us hypothetically assume that it is a consequence of a discussion between editors and authors on whether it should be 'other cultures' or 'others' cultures'. That issue opens up a wealth of anthropological debate on the concept of culture itself, and particularly on the question whether it should be thought of as a discrete whole that persons 'have' through collective rooting in place (e.g. Gupta & Ferguson 1997). This pertains to cosmopolitanism, for if the latter is usually conceptualised as a disposition of openness towards otherness, implicitly or explicitly, that otherness is virtually always seen as 'cultural'.

But how is the cultural defined in cosmopolitanism? Which grammar of difference underlies its openness? Historically, cosmopolitanism has not been thought of as a generalised open disposition towards *any* difference (cf. Harris 1927; Introduction to this Volume), but rather, the otherness that is considered relevant to its openness is almost invariably conceived of through *localised* notions of culture. Thus cosmopolitanism has been seen mainly in conjunction with mobility between places and with meetings of localised cultural patterns, e.g. through migration, tourism, media, trade or consumption. In contemporary terms, then, cosmopolitanism's most frequent categorical *hostile* Other—that is the Other against which it is closed and against which it defines itself—is a discourse that homogenises and fixes culture in place: nationalism (Lamont & Aksartova 2002: 2). This chapter investigates how 1990s post-Yugoslav evocations of cosmopolitanism projected openness in opposition to hegemonising nationalisms, and which closures were encapsulated within this process.

cosmopolitanism in post-Yugoslav antinationalism

The post-Yugoslav wars of the 1990s fulfilled the dream of nationally homogenised homelands for some, but their violent establishment also involved massive physical displacement and a sense of social, political, economic and emotional dislocation for many who stayed put (Jansen 1998). It was against this background, shortly after the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, that I carried out ethnographic research (1996-8) amongst antinationalist activists in the capitals that housed the governments most responsible for the post-Yugoslav wars, Beograd (Serbia) and Zagreb (Croatia)—in that order.[1] In addition to participating in institutional sites of activism (antinationalist NGOs, media, associations of intellectuals, etc) I also traced everyday practices of resistance, channelling solidarity, care, outrage and indignation. Committed to a critique of nationalism myself, my explicit aim was to learn from such resistance in the immediate context of war-infected nationalist homogenisation. While I would not proclaim myself a 'cosmopolitan', this chapter engages in a parallel exercise: it explores how cosmopolitanism may function as a resource, not in the salons, business class cabins and senior common rooms of Western elites, but in contexts where nationalist war had rendered any breaking of the national ranks a sure sign of treason and disloyalty, and a possible ground for harassment and abuse.

In 1990s Serbia and Croatia violence against national Others was banalised and war criminals were widely celebrated as national heroes. Individuals were continually interpellated in national terms—demanding that they prove themselves to be true nationals, for example, by fighting on the front, using the sanctioned vocabulary, voting for the right party, reproducing the right story lines in front of the neighbours, and, perhaps most importantly, by refraining from dissent. 'Speaking out' in words and deeds, antinationalism reclaimed public space through demonstrations, solidarity actions and publications. The very terminology of cosmopolitanism functioned as a rhetorical resource in these struggles to value certain forms of belonging over others. From a nationalist perspective it stood for the dangers of rootless disloyalty that threatened national unity and authenticity, whereas in antinationalism it could signpost a desirable alternative organisation of social life. I myself was often interrogated on my sense of belonging and loyalty to localised national groups, and in response to my confusing, perhaps seemingly evasive replies I was sometimes categorised as 'a real cosmopolitan' [*pravi kozmopolit*] or 'a citizen of the world' [*građanin sv(ij)eta*]. Clearly, this could be meant as an insult or as a compliment, but even when positively deployed, cosmopolitanism was rarely developed into a programme. In fact, in over ten years

[1] For detailed ethnographic evidence and analysis, see Jansen 2005a. I also rely on insights from later ethnographic research on post-Yugoslav transformations of home and hope. All names in this text are pseudonyms, all translations are mine.

of ethnographic engagement with the post-Yugoslav states, by far the most frequent way in which I have heard the term used is in marked contrast to any kind of manifesto: through decidedly non-revolutionary reference to a past 'normality' that has abruptly and brutally come to an end.

With some exceptions (e.g. feminist activism), antinationalist evocations of cosmopolitanism were thus remarkably 'conservative', in the literal sense of the term:[2] particularly on the everyday level, there was a strong preoccupation with continuity. Counteracting the amnesia and emancipatory discourse of Serbian and Croatian nationalism, which had almost monopolised rhetoric concerning change and renewal, antinationalism evoked continuities of individuality and responsibility. It entailed a refusal to relinquish an alternative narrative of the past and tended to centre around a sense of generalised mourning. Usually, such memory work recalled the time when one had lived 'normally' (Spasić 2003; Jansen 2008). In Beograd and Zagreb (and, famously so, in Sarajevo) one dimension of this remembered normality was a 'cosmopolitan' city life. Here, rather than tracing the historical veracity of such mourning, I analyse it as retrospective self-positioning, holding up images of previous 'open' lives as a critical mirror to evaluate current predicaments of closure. This leads me to question the dominant presumption, regardless of whether one detects empirical evidence of 'cosmopolitanisation', or if one conceives of it as an ideal to aspire to, that, in our day and age, the prevalence of cosmopolitanism is growing. In stark contrast, post-Yugoslav antinationalism contained a deep mourning for a cosmopolitan openness that was, at least retrospectively, associated with *yesterday's* lives.[3] This chapter critically analyses the mechanisms underlying such laments of closure and the antinationalist yearnings for the speedy 're-opening' of life.

from party-led paradox to politicised primordialism

> ''I have always thought of myself as a Croat, but that didn't... I mean, I myself have been married to a *Beograđanka*. A Serb. It never crossed my mind that that was something problematic. [...] You went to the coast, and you met people from Serbia all the time. When I was younger, particularly during summers, we always used to hang out with girls from Beograd.' (Vedran Ivanišević, about 50, academic, Zagreb)

[2] Many felt there had been *too little* change and activism aimed to bring about desirable forms of it, but from an antinationalist perspective, most changes so far had been either catastrophic (nationalist homogenisation, xenophobia, violence, isolation etc) or pointless (ceremonial national euphoria, cosmetic democratic changes, etc). The 1990s were thus seen as a missed opportunity and even the improvements that had occurred had carried too terrible a price.

[3] Also on life 'after' cosmopolitanism, see Ors (2002) on post-Ottoman Istanbul. See also much writing, scholarly and novelistic, on Bombay (e.g. Appadurai 2000).

> 'Before, it wasn't like this at all. Beograd was a very cosmopolitan city and people didn't care about nationality at all.' (Sonja Bjelica, about 30, human rights activist, Beograd)

In the late 1990s, antinationalist activists in Beograd and Zagreb often conveyed the shock they had experienced at the initial realisation that nationalism had 'invaded' their lives. Many felt caught unaware not only by the nationalism of their presumed 'enemies', but also by its sudden rise in their own 'majority' context, removed from military violence. In those capital cities, nationally diverse for centuries, they recalled with horror the sudden nationalist urge to understand and organise social reality through exclusive, discrete national categories. Let me first briefly refract such narratives against the political organisation of the former Yugoslav state.

My informants were aware that, in fact, nationality had been a key variable in the political organisation of the Yugoslav socialist configuration. After the massive inter-national violence of World War Two, the Communist Party's concentration of security and military matters in the federal government, the suppression of those suspected of loyalty to the losing WWII sides, and a pro-Yugoslav emphasis on co-operative, socialist recovery excluded *political* forms of nationalism from legitimate expression. However, in doing so, far from ignoring national affiliation, the government deployed policies of national balance and compromise. Locating itself strategically between the two Cold War camps, it created a federation of more-or-less nationally defined republics and strongly emphasised the equality of all national groups and of all citizens.[4] Constitutional changes and power struggles within the Yugoslav League of Communists—itself organised on a republican basis—actually made it not only possible but also politically expedient to imagine communities in national terms, albeit in a contradictory way on at least two levels. Firstly, through increasing decentralisation, republican Party elites consolidated institutional national power bases (especially after 1974), and the use of nationality 'keys' that governed appointment and allocation policies in areas officially recognised as nationally 'mixed' entrenched nationality as a central parameter of competition. Secondly, after a brief dalliance with attempts to replace the various nationalisms with a Yugoslav one, legitimacy was sought through a celebration of the co-existence of national cultures, made possible through the museumification of public assertions of nationality in the realm of folklore. Hence, the Yugoslav system of *Brotherhood and Unity* deployed certain (now common) multicultural policies in a socialist framework.

The first round of multi-party elections in Yugoslavia, held on the republican level in 1990, brought victories for parties who concurred that any 'transition to democracy' necessarily had to be national. Their shared, if ultimately conflicting commitment to national interests therefore broke the Yugoslav taboo on political

[4] For an overview, see e.g. Dyker & Vejvoda 1996.

nationalism. This process took shape partly through an entrenchment of the national-cum-republican power bases that had grown in the former state. Yet, the new governments dealt with the Yugoslav legacy in diverging ways: for example, the Serbian leadership, headed by Slobodan Milošević, relied on a strategic mix of incorporative Yugoslavism and Serbian nationalism, while its Croatian counterpart, under the helm of Franjo Tuđman, emphasised national liberation from what was represented as a Serbian-dominated Yugoslav past. The war that opposed those two political projects, fought in Croatia, thus confronted local Serbian and Serbo-Montenegrin forces who claimed to 'defend Yugoslavia' with Croatian ones who came to see this 'foreign aggression' as a foundational 'Motherland War'.

The post-Yugoslav nationalisms can be understood as discourses of universalised primordialism, positing nationality, in the ethnic sense, as the ultimate ground for identification—over and above all other lines of differentiation, such as gender, class, age, locality, citizenship, etc—and thus as the legitimate basis for political interests and claims to territorial sovereignty. This required a disambiguation of reality, past and present, into a theatre with discrete, opposed national groups as the only relevant political subjects. Such representations of national bodies as bounded and internally homogenous have successfully permeated many local and foreign views of the conflicts. The competing post-Yugoslav nationalisms then portrayed themselves as the embodiment of rightful claims to inclusion within the 'family of nations'—conceptualised, as in the dominant discourse of the 'international community', as a mosaic composed of discrete units (Malkki 1994). While there were some markedly vicious fights in the South-East European part of the family, the 1990s wars thus included a reflection rather than an aberration of a now globally dominant nationalist worldview.

During my research in the mid-to-late 1990s, retrospective representations of nationality in Yugoslavia were differentially integrated into practice. The dominant narrative followed nationalist discourses in their claim that they had finally allowed the true national belonging of their peoples to emerge from under the lid of Yugoslav communist oppression. Antinationalist narratives, of course, expressed indignation at such representations and at the politics waged on this basis. As the quotations above show, many argued that, while national competition may have governed the political level in Yugoslavia, it had not been important in their lives at all. Yet the emphasis on the sudden interpellation by nationalism was not uniform. In the next section, I disentangle two threads in the antinationalist mourning for cosmopolitan openness with regard to nationality. Firstly, I take a lead from Mr Ivanišević's reassertion of 'open' Yugoslav co-existence in the face of current segregation. Then I elaborate on Ms Bjelica's exclamation, which 'opened up' the status of nationality itself. Importantly, such representations were not experienced as mutually exclusive—and such contradictions will allow us to highlight tensions in cosmopolitan discourse itself.

open boundaries in a mosaic / opening up nationality in a mess

A first understanding of nationality in previous lives that could be summoned to legitimise an antinationalist stance, was to place it in peaceful, interactive co-existence in Yugoslavia. This approach largely reflected the mosaic model of national belonging: it started from boundaries and from the very notion of people with various nationalities existing alongside each other. Unlike the Serbian and Croatian nationalisms of the 1990s, this antinationalist deployment of the mosaic-model stressed harmonious inter-national relations across 'open' boundaries. Mournings of cosmopolitanism such as Mr Ivanišević's thus reasserted the value of openness over *segregation*, over closed borders and boundaries between people of different nationalities. Without necessarily recalling Yugoslavia as a faultless political formation, its (possibility of) mixing was celebrated. As in conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism, bodily or imagined mobility was an important factor here. The previous crossing of national boundaries could be associated with travel to visit relatives or on holidays, neighbourly and work relations, as well as a wider sense of a diverse Yugoslav 'home'. This partly reflected the celebration of Yugoslav unity and diversity in education and propaganda, but more frequently, 1990s antinationalism evoked Yugoslavness through popular culture, sports and consumption.

Many antinationalist recollections emphasised the absence of conflict between local, regional, national, Yugoslav, European and global belonging. Republics and Yugoslavia were often referred to in overlapping terms: at some points 'we' and 'here' meant Croatia or Serbia, and at other points it referred to the whole Yugoslav area. In the 1990s, even people who had never felt a sense of belonging to Yugoslavia still often worked implicitly on the basis of a concentric model with their own republic as the core, then the other post-Yugoslav republics and only then 'abroad'. In over a decade I have never heard anyone refer to citizens from other post-Yugoslav states as 'foreigners', except ironically. Hence many imagined Yugoslavness as a discursive space with a distinct, diverse, open (and only sometimes explicitly 'Yugoslavist') character. This was usually a rather diffuse experiential point of reference that seemed only special in retrospect, in the face of nationalist segregation.[5] In the largely segregated context of the 1990s, antinationalism thus often included a yearning for the open channels of interaction between people of different nationalities, and much activist energy was invested in the maintenance, or (re)creation, of links across the new post-Yugoslav state borders as well as across boundaries within (drastically reduced) local co-existence. Like liberal multiculturalism, this cosmopolitan strategy relied on a universalist cultural grid that

[5] Vast amounts of journalistic, autobiographical and essayistic work documents this process in people's everyday lives. For some examples by women writers during the wars, and an analysis of Yugoslav senses of 'home' in more detail, see Jansen 1998.

allowed for equal recognition of and harmonious relations between existing particularistic differences.

Importantly, recalling a Yugoslavia of open boundaries was neither a sufficient nor a necessary dimension of antinationalist discursive practice. Yugoslavism often functioned as a thinly disguised incorporative Serbian nationalism (deployed as such by the Milošević government), and evidence of past good inter-national relations could be integrated into a discourse of former naïveté and betrayal. Perhaps precisely for this reason, a second manner in which antinationalism deployed mournings of cosmopolitanism was by undercutting the status of nationality itself (Jansen 2005a: Chapter 3). Rather than segregation per se, this strategy aimed to undo nationalist discursive closure by breaking open the status of nationality. It problematised the notion of a national mosaic, even a harmonious one, itself, and presented instead a much more messy picture of belonging.

In a poststructuralist reading we may consider nationalist discourses as modes of representation that articulate certain elements ('differential positions') into moments ('differential positions insofar as they appear articulated within a discourse') (Laclau & Mouffe 1985: 113). A key question is which differences are accorded significance by hegemonising discourses and which ones are not. Laclau and Mouffe understand the social as a struggle for hegemony between various discourses that aim to establish their particular articulation of elements into moments as an implicit body of consensual knowledge. No articulation can ever be completely successful and erase antagonism: elements never turn into perfect moments fully deriving their meaning out of the discourse in which they are articulated (Ibid.: 7, 106). In this way, post-Yugoslav antinationalism can be analysed as a struggle against the drive for closure embodied by nationalist hegemonic projects, retrospectively opening up nationality as an element in a messy universe of belonging.

Hence, while nationality had been articulated into an important moment of Yugoslav politics, and while its everyday importance in rural areas has been ethnographically demonstrated (e.g. Lockwood 1975) and analysed within interactions between local, national-religious and supranational identification (Bringa 1995), some post-Yugoslav antinationalist narrations of nationality radically disagreed. In contrast to dominant nationalist representations of the private persistence of nationality under Yugoslav oppression, and out of tune with their own anti-segregation discourse of open national boundaries in a mosaic, many of my urban informants argued that nationality had been of minor relevance in their everyday lives. In Beograd it was sometimes implied, à la Sonja Bjelica, that it had not been an issue for anyone at all, whereas in the Croatian capital most, regardless of national background, felt that while nationality had been a minor issue for them, it had been a more important factor for many others. To different degrees, then, antinationalism relied on soothing anecdotes illustrating a previous age of innocence

in contrast to the post-Yugoslav environment, where nationalism had achieved such a level of closure through articulation of nationality into a, no, *the*, moment. Nationalist retrospective disambiguation—reorganising the past around nationality categories only—was thus resisted through dissenting idealisations that reflected self-censorship of the opposite variety, aiming to break open nationality itself through 'retrospective ambiguation'.

Antinationalism remembered such open mundane discursive practice as removed from the level of politics and thus narrated the past in terms that matched the contradictions of the official Yugoslav discourse on nationality. Emphasising the shocking newness of nationalism, such exaggerated recollections of the irrelevance of nationality did not effectively deny the previous existence of national lines of differentiation, but they undercut their status by pointing out that their meaning had been relative to context (cf. Jansen 2005b). Rather than a precise and consistent representation of past experience, this provided a mode of resistance on account of remembered multi-layered and ambiguous realities of people's 'messy' sense of belonging. In a context where national categories had been elevated to issues of life and death, antinationalism stubbornly recalled nationality as one element only amongst many differentiating factors in mundane interaction. Rather than adding to the clamour of voices on nationality per se—a topic that already saturated the public sphere—the more common way of doing this was through emphasising the relevance of these *other* differences. Let us now trace such lines of division beyond the national.

after cosmopolitanism: waking up in the isolated, suffocated city

In their 1992 documentary *Geto*, by Mladen Matičević and Ivan Markov, the narrator deplores the loss of an icon from Beograd's subcultural scene, SKC (Student Cultural Centre). He blames the Milošević government for:

> 'destroy[ing] the places where we used to meet. The worst case is SKC [...] That place had to suffer [...] They knew that rock 'n' roll and exhibitions can teach kids to say "no" tomorrow [...] Instead of urban types, the main positions are now occupied by shepherds [...] SKC has become a village cultural centre filled with flute players, amateurs from Užice [town in South-West Serbia] and dubious diarists, instead of Cave [Nick, Australian singer], the Brejkers [Partibrejkers, a Beograd rock band] and Šerbedžija [Rade, a mainly Zagreb-based actor]. Of course, kids don't go there anymore, except for a piss.'

In this context, many urbanites attempted to maintain some continuity of their 'normal lives'. As I would learn during my frequent visits to their Beograd flat, my friends Nataša and Aleksandar, a lecturer and an NGO-worker, had experienced a socio-economic catastrophe since 1990. Yet they framed their predicament primarily as a *cultural* disaster, mourning the open, cosmopolitan lives they felt robbed of. In

defiance to what they called the 'primitivism' around them, they attended events and discussed developments in the world of fine arts, social theory, film and popular music. And despite the imposed isolation, they maintained a network of friends abroad and their slow, unreliable internet connection provided a crucial opening to 'the World'. Aleksandar and Nataša had travelled widely before the wars and continued to do so whenever the scarce occasions arose through NGO and academic projects. Notwithstanding financial restrictions, they returned from these trips with bags full of books, reflecting the household policy of sacrificing socio-economic comfort for intellectual and aesthetic stimulation. Regular theatre and film goers, they also circled their agenda dates for lectures, concerts and DJ sets, and exhibitions. Such discursive practices of distinction also structured their everyday lives in other ways. For example, whenever their reduced budget allowed them, they chose to eat food stuffs that had cultural capital attached to them, such as Asian vegetarian products, often imported via Western states.

Meanwhile in Zagreb, a 1997 controversy broke out about the reasons for the electoral success of the ruling Croatian nationalist party (HDZ) in the countryside and its loss of appeal in the cities. Armed with nationality statistics, the pro-government daily *Vjesnik* argued that HDZ performance was weaker in cities exclusively because non-Croats there voted for the opposition. In contrast, the oppositional Zagreb weekly *Tjednik* described the urban population as 'younger, better educated, more tolerant, with a mind of their own, better informed and intellectually curious'. Then it argued:

> 'A population with an urban sensibility, an upbringing and the habits of a citizen's home—and they do not only live in cities—will find it hard to live with the HDZ's decrees of Croathood [...] and the medieval state-building mystique [...] For those with the city in their heads it is not enough to have lunch and a blanket, but they also want quality schooling, they want to live decently, do their job, listen to classical music, jazz or rock and travel abroad.' (*Tjednik* 25/04/97: 28)

Due to propaganda and social control in small-scale communities, *Tjednik* continued, rural folk were conformist and 'afraid of any dissonant decision'. This was then embedded in an evolutionist approach ('All that which the city thinks today, the village will think in ten or fifteen years, not before that'), which, in contrast to *Vjesnik's* articulation of nationality as a moment, relied on an alternative articulation around the urbanity/rurality division.

If the discourse of cosmopolitan openness, as we have seen, was evoked in resistance to the exclusionist hardening of nationality boundaries, these vignettes indicate it could also be deployed against other forms of closure. Antinationalist narratives reconstructed a Yugoslav past in which nationality had been only one amongst many lines of division, and they evoked a range of such alternative differences (party membership, gender, age...). Yet there was an overwhelming

tendency to specify that the most important distinction in those days had been that between cities and villages, between citizens and peasants, between open, nationally heterogeneous, modern, urban life and closed, nationally homogenous, backward, rural life (cf. Brown 2001). Elsewhere I have investigated this urban-centric discourse, organised around the concept of 'culturedness', through a detailed ethnographic analysis of balkanist distinction in a domesticated modernisation format (Jansen 2005a: Chapter 2; 2005c). Here, my more schematic argument will be two-pronged, exploring how remembered cosmopolitan openness was deployed, firstly, against *isolation* from the outside world, and, secondly, against *suffocation* by 'primitivism'.

membership of 'the World' vs. isolation

Lamont and Aksartova argue that the 'opposition of nationalism to cosmopolitanism conveys the fundamental tension between moral obligations to one's local origins and group memberships, on the one hand, and to the rest of the world, on the other' (2002: 2). Yet post-Yugoslav antinationalism actually emphasised the reassertion of the very links between the 'local' and the 'global', both of which were understood in particular way. This was exemplified in a central slogan of the 'Winter Protest' against the Milošević government that brought up to hundreds of thousands of people onto the streets for months on end in 1996/7.[6] In Beograd, the student section was invariably headed by a gigantic banner saying *Beograd je svet* [litt. 'Beograd is the World']. This message conveyed at once the city's worldliness and the desire to end isolation from 'the World' (Jansen 2000). The 'local' was thus the city, and, while the demonstrators waved state flags from around the globe (as well as e.g. Ferrari and rainbow flags), the frequent references to 'world standards' and to 'how things are done in the world' left no doubt which 'world' was meant here: the very world that the Milošević government tended to defy and that had imposed sanctions on Serbia—the liberal democracies of the West.

Resentment at isolation was widespread far beyond antinationalist activism, and it could convey different things to different people. In fact, isolation had come to be seen increasingly not simply as a symptom of the losses suffered during the 1990s, but as a *reason* for them. Complaints about Serbia being closed off from 'the World' were commonplace and a similar, if much less prominent, discourse pervaded dissatisfaction in Croatia under Tuđman. In such laments, remembered cosmopolitanism functioned as a yearning for openness towards 'the World', with a prominent place reserved for travel, whether through bodily movement or through flows of ideas and goods. Particularly in Serbia, the contrast between current visa restrictions and the previous freedom to cross borders with the Yugoslav passport

[6] Sparked by the government's refusal to accept local election results, these demonstrations were not antinationalist per se: while some protesters did blame Milošević's nationalism for the wars, others reviled him for losing them (hence, for his failure to *complete* the nationalist project) (Jansen 2000, 2001).

structured many narratives of loss in everyday life. People also frequently argued that popular culture in Yugoslavia had been on a par with 'the World', in marked contrast to neighbouring Eastern European states under the Soviet umbrella. Hence, the mourned 'openness' with regard to 'the World' had two mutually constitutive dimensions: on the one hand, it referred to the fact that flows from 'the World' had relatively freely entered everyday lives in Yugoslavia, and on the other, it conveyed a sense of legitimate 'membership' of that World. In addition to better socio-economic standards and travel abroad, people thus often recalled sporting performances and events (the Sarajevo Olympics. Yugoslav basket or ski-jump medals, etc) which had, as it were, put Yugoslavia *on the map*. Such narratives resonate with what Dević calls Yugoslav 'urban cosmopolitan lifestyles' (1997: 131), pervaded by an ethos that, while based on the anti-fascist WWII legacy, grew to be staunchly individualist and centred around western-inspired consumption patterns. Therefore, in those 1990s mourning of cosmopolitanism, Yugoslavia's significance was related less to its socialism than to the remembered comparative Western-ness of the lives people had led in it.

Antinationalism blamed the loss of these cosmopolitan lives on nationalist policies. And with nationalism emphasising cultural authenticity and particularism, the antinationalist universalist emphasis on re-establishing social, material and moral links with 'the World' was in fact overwhelmingly pro-Western in outlook. With few exceptions (e.g. some feminist, anarchist and other alter-globalist initiatives) there was hardly any antinationalist opposition to, or even critical reflection on, integration processes into NATO or the EU.[7] Membership of Western-dominated power blocs was seen as the self-evident manner to break isolation and to finally take up one's place in 'the World' again. The much larger non-Western part of the globe was usually ignored. The Yugoslav government's important role in the Non-Aligned Movement, for example, was almost only referred to either ironically or in order to specifically emphasise Tito's stature as a global politician who had put Yugoslavia on the map in the eyes of the West.

In the 1990s, then, replacing isolation with an openness to 'the World' often came to mean catching up with the West. With the nationalist governments waging a relentless campaign of harassment and abuse against 'domestic traitors and foreign mercenaries', Western funding and pro-European discourses of legitimacy were crucial to organised antinationalist opposition (cf. Chen Xiaomei 1996). For example, much activism was made possible through funding by the Open Society Foundation, which derives its name from the early Popperian notion that truly democratic systems should always provide room for dissent. Like Popper's political thought, the Foundation ended up promoting a strongly pro-Western, liberal model of openness. And if, in principle, such 'European-ness' (Jansen 2002) was accessible to all post-

[7] Opposition to these processes was seen as the exclusive domain of ultranationalist parties.

Yugoslavs by default, with the real-existing political configurations of Europe unfavourably inclined, many, particularly in Serbia, came to accept that there was some way ahead before their societies could ascend to their rightful European-ness. In this context, Western-led and -funded institutions functioned as important channels for the creation and reproduction of a pro-Western elite in postsocialist Europe.

In addition to a variety of small groups working on shoestring budgets, post-Yugoslav antinationalism worked through sophisticated institutions for campaigning, education, publishing and conferences, largely Western-funded and steeped in liberal-democratic discourses of legitimacy (cf. Bruno 1998). These organisational vectors of antinationalism permitted some persons to accumulate different kinds of capital: salaries, kudos, contacts, travel opportunities, media space, and so on. Some activists themselves denounced the elitist, cliquish dimensions of certain dissident circles and, paraphrasing a much more lucrative post-Yugoslav industry, some individuals who had channelled such engagements into economic privilege were referred to as 'anti-war profiteers'. However, for most, the possible material rewards were much less obvious than the risks of harassment, exclusion and abuse that came with the decision to speak up against injustice done to others.

Post-Yugoslav nationalisms keenly pointed out the *red bourgeoisie* background of some antinationalist activists to underpin their policies of intimidation. Such nationalist representations of communist nostalgics turned capitalist mercenaries, failed to add that this class was also prominent in the new nationalist elites, alongside the offspring of anti-Yugoslav families. Moreover, the social differentiation underlying antinationalist activism was actually more complicated. Writing on NGO work in Croatia, Stubbs (1997) suggests that the engagements of local and foreign professionals culminated in the formation of a globalised professional middle class, mainly around cultural and social capital. Many activists, now in mature middle-age, were highly educated and well-travelled, and their previous status had also been guaranteed more by cultural than by economic capital, reflecting to a certain extent Bourdieu's dominated fraction of the dominant class (1979: 321ff). Efforts by the Open Society Foundation and other Western organisations to create a vanguard of 'leaders' of the transformation of Eastern Europe were thus integrated into internal hierarchies of social distinction (Spasić 2006). And it was precisely an open, 'cosmopolitan' disposition that these persons themselves tended to see as setting them apart from those implicated most clearly in the nationalist order (ruling politicians, war profiteers and their supporters). In what follows, we take a closer look at this and at the closures of its own it entailed.

open city lives vs. suffocation by primitivism

In his analysis of the 'decosmopolitanisation' of Bombay, Appadurai states that until the 1970s Bombay was 'well-managed' and, despite its explosive population growth,

'a civic model for India' (2000: 628). Mentioning housing, employment and basic services, he then recalls that trains previously

> '[...] seemed to be able to move people around with some dignity and reliability and at a relatively low cost. The same was true of the city's buses, bicycles, and trams. [...] People actually observed the etiquette of queuing in most public contexts, and buses always stopped at bus stops rather than fifty feet before or after them (as in most of India today). Sometime in the 1970s all this began to change and a malignant city began to emerge from beneath the surface of the cosmopolitan ethos of the prior period.' (Appadurai 2000:629)

It is only after deploring the end of dignified public transport and queuing manners, seen as signposts of a 'cosmopolitan ethos', that Appadurai moves on to discuss the politics of the ultranationalist Hindu party Shiv Sena. In this section, I trace a similar tendency to associate cosmopolitanism with certain practical aspects of 'modern civilisation' in post-Yugoslav antinationalist mournings of previous lives, now suffocated by 'primitivism'.

Let me start with an example from the Beograd weekly *Vreme*, which has over the years critically documented war crimes, corruption and nationalist euphoria, and served as a prominent voice in an urban discourse of resentment at the loss of cosmopolitan city life. In 1997, under the large title *They Hate Beograd*, *Vreme* juxtaposed a photograph of a government limousine with one of a crowd struggling to climb on an already packed city bus. The accompanying text linked such contrasts to isolation as well as to the rural closure of the city:

> 'They travel from their houses in Požarevac, Kolašin, Vranje to work and back by helicopter or Mercedes. Meanwhile, Beograd citizens suffer like cattle in dilapidated city transport. The federal government has not approved the import of buses from Berlin, a present to this city. They hate *Beograđani* and they hate this city.' (*Vreme* 16/08/97)

Laments about the state of city transport, followed by references to the humiliating conditions that made 'cultured behaviour' a challenge for even the most upstanding citizen, were rife in both Zagreb and Beograd. Like Appadurai, people framed this as a key symptom of the loss of a wider 'ethos', blamed on the city's political-economic and cultural occupation by peasant newcomers that had imposed primitive nationalism. Such resentment at the suffocation of an open, cosmopolitan city life was prominent amongst broad layers of urbanites. For example, the only large street protest in Croatia against the Tuđman government occurred not with regard to displacement, war crimes, neo-fascist revivalism or even corruption, but on the occasion of the 1997 clampdown on *Radio 101*. Under the slogan *Možete nam uzeti sve, ali Stojedinicu ne!* ['You can take everything from us, but not *101*!'],

Zagreb folk decided to take to the streets in numbers on this and on no other occasion, representing the station a bastion of Zagreb's urban spirit. Its announced closure was experienced as one step too far in the city's closure under peasant primitivism.

Radicalising early sociological analyses of urban life (e.g. Wirth 1938), many believed that by virtue of its heterogeneity and size the city was per definition politically 'open' too. Parallel to the abovementioned Zagreb example from *Tjednik*, the oppositional vote in the central Beograd boroughs was also put down to the fact that they were inhabited by educated people whose families had lived there for generations. The sociologist Sreten Vujović argued that these autochthons supported policies of 'modernity, democracy and the future' as opposed to the regime-voting 'workers, clerks, non- or less educated, often half-illiterate newcomers in Beograd's extended suburbs' (1992:63). Moreover, he stated that 'all great cultures are born in cities' and that 'world history is actually the history of urban people' (Ibid.: 62). Eat your heart out, hunters-gatherers of the world... Asserting that 'the only real distinction in modern times was: peasant/citizen, or even better: cosmopolitan vs. provincial' (Ibid.; cf. Bogdanović 1993; Kangrga 1997), antinationalism thus inverted the moral evaluation of nationalist representations of rural purity and authenticity. Heterogeneity, condemned by nationalism as promiscuity, was celebrated and contrasted with the suffocating and unchanging backwardness of village primitivism, now imposed onto the city by peasant newcomers.

Cosmopolitan dispositions have long been associated with cities (Featherstone 2002:1). Often this is based on the Kantian notion of hospitality—cities as spaces allowing the reception and mutual recognition of Others (Derrida 1999; Dikeç 2002). Yet, post-Yugoslav antinationalism relied on a *memory* of cosmopolitan city life and was rather hostile to the other that was actually arriving in its cities now: this other, namely, was not defined nationally but rather with reference to their attributed national*ist* political profile and (lack of) cultural competence. And s/he was destroying cosmopolitanism. Conditioned by long-standing social patterns in the region, by the influence of socialist development policies, and by the nationalism it opposed, antinationalism thus came to define an ideal of urbanity (Buden 1996: 50) as pro-Western or European (vs. Balkan), educated (vs. illiterate), autonomous-individualist (vs. conformist-collectivist), gender equal (vs. patriarchal), tolerant (vs. exclusivist), peaceful (vs. violent), heterogeneous (vs. homogenous), sophisticated (vs. boorish), connected (vs. isolated), welcoming towards otherness (vs. xenophobic), going forward (vs. standing still), etc. This entire series could then be subsumed in a dichotomy, embedded in an evolutionist paradigm, that opposed the openness of past city life to its current village-like suffocation. Note that the past was thus remembered as modern (cf. Ors 2002), and the current predicament was conceived of as a relapse into pre- or anti-modern primitivism.

In response, the 1996/7 Beograd demonstrations deployed city-space as a terrain of resistance and articulated their political subject around urbanites, robbed of their cosmopolitan lives (Jansen 2001). An important mode of self-recognition amongst the protesters crystallised around educated sophistication and etiquette, coming up for air after having been suffocated by primitivism for years. Slogans, chants and stories in the crowds insisted that the spirit of the city had finally risen to show 'the World' that Serbia did not only consist of primitives (Jansen 2000). Amongst younger persons, these assertions of distinction, reintegrating their Beograd into 'the World', attached considerable importance to active engagement and conversational fluency in popular culture. Some recalled the city's status as the 'second clubbing city in Europe after London', and many cherished the resilient coolness of its nightlife, expressing satisfaction at Western magazine features reaffirming that the Beograd beat had refused to die during the dark 1990s (cf. Collin 2001; Gordy 1999).

Such urban resentment at the loss of cool modernity, as well as defiant assertions of its resilience, could be integrated directly into cosmopolitan attempts to 'mess up' nationality's status as *the* moment. For example, many men referred to their military service in the former Yugoslav army, which, with its policy of nationally heterogeneous groups of recruits, served as a primary experience of inter-republican contact for many. Conscripts from Zagreb and Beograd, it was then argued, had always socialised more with each other than they had with rural soldiers from their own republic (and thus more probably of the same nationality). They were, as one thirty-something man remarked, rock 'n' roll kids, regardless of nationality.[8] Urbanity/rurality could also crosscut nationality in other ways, as exemplified by the story of Biljana Nušić, a literature student from a Serbian Zagreb family who had fled to Beograd, with whom I volunteered in a refugee organisation. Biljana patently distanced her own Zagreb background from that of the other refugees, mostly hailing from around Knin—a centre of aggressive Serbian nationalism when Croatia proclaimed its independence in 1991. She recalled the euphoria, the flag and gun waving and the nationalist songs there as 'typically peasant' and attached more blame to those fellow-Serbs than to most Croats when assessing her own fate. In Croatian nationalism, of course, such assertions distorted the dichotomy between barbarian Serbs and civilised Croats (Buden 1996: 92), particularly when juxtaposed with stereotypical images of the focus of Zagreb urban resentment: Croats from Herzegovina (a proverbially 'backward' area in Bosnia-Herzegovina). Many Zagreb people complained that their city had been overrun by a powerful 'Herzegovinian lobby' within the elite, consisting of hard-line nationalists, warlords and business

[8] Not coincidentally, the story line of the first big budget post-Yugoslav cinematic co-production, Rajko Grlić's 2006 *Karaula*, focuses on the rock 'n' roll friendship between a Croatian recruit from the city of Split and a Serbian one from Beograd, set off against a faceless harmonica-playing peasant soldier.

tycoons, as well as by the cultural 'degradation' they had brought with them. This was reflected in graffiti that appeared in Zagreb only shortly after the war that had seen massive violence between Serbs on the one hand and Croats (including Herzegovinian Croats) on the other:

> *VRATITE NAM NAŠE SRBE, EVO VAM NATRAG VAŠI HERCEGOVCI*
> ['GIVE US BACK OUR SERBS, YOU CAN HAVE YOUR HERZEGOVINIANS BACK']

When mourning previous cosmopolitan 'normal lives', post-Yugoslav antinationalism thus tended to organise itself around the articulation not of nationality but of urbanity/rurality.

conclusion

If cosmopolitanism can be considered a 'moral commitment to universals' and analysed in terms of grounded, particular 'cultural repertoires of universalisms' that confront nationalist particularism (Lamont & Aksartova 2002: 4-5), what was the grammar of difference underlying its post-Yugoslav antinationalist avatar? Antinationalism revalorised universalist understandings of humanity around the moral imperative to treat 'a person as a person', regardless of nationality (Ibid.). Such moral cosmopolitanism emphasised individual autonomy, integrity and responsibility, contrasted with the collectivist conformism of the hegemonising nationalisms that had recently caused so much suffering and that continued to underlie widespread injustice. To this end, antinationalism relied heavily on strategies of continuity with remembered 'normal' cosmopolitan lives. Firstly, remembered cosmopolitan lives were deployed to resist nationalist closure by insisting on the previously open nature of national boundaries or by refusing to articulate nationality into a moment, doggedly insisting on its open character as an element of messy everyday life. In the latter representation, other-than-national differences were crucial to point out the relativity of nationality, and the most important one in post-Yugoslav antinationalism was the contrast between isolating and suffocating peasant primitivism and worldly urban cosmopolitanism. Such evocations of past cosmopolitan lives allowed an assertion of continued attachment to open 'normality', both as membership of 'the World' and as a characteristic of an urban, modern sense of self. This was itself constituted through discursive practices of distinction that incorporated 'openness' as a defining self-ascribed characteristic. Such claims formed the basis for important activism against nationalism, but, particularly through its urban-centrism, the creation of antinationalist openings was premised on alternative closures. While it never led to anything like the sort of violence and discrimination that the nationalisms engaged in, to an important extent this alternative discursive closure, articulating the element of rurality/urbanity into a moment, supplanted that around nationality. Antinationalist openness, then,

successfully welcomed certain differences, but it closed off others. As much universalist discourse, it thus ended up flattening the cultural-national difference it was programmatically open to, through emphasising (in this case, urban) sameness across its boundaries.

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