JRAI Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

After the red passport: towards an anthropology of the everyday geopolitics of entrapment in the EU's 'immediate outside'

Stef Jansen *Manchester University*

Suggesting building bricks for an anthropology of everyday geopolitics, this text analyses affective engagements with regulation, here of cross-border mobility. Following the logic of the regulation that constitutes them, I conceptualize zones of humiliating entrapment through documentary requirements – experienced by citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia – as the EU's shrinking 'immediate outside'. Using ethnography, I embed bodily experiences in visa queues in people's engagements with changing Eurocentric spatiotemporal rankings, refracting this entrapment against the privileges of certain foreigners (such as me) and against their own remembered mobility with the 'red' Yugoslav passport. I propose that complementing the dominant focus on the role of (national) identity politics in geopolitical affect with one on regulation and ranking is a central task for a critical anthropology of everyday geopolitics in peripheries.

> In 2008, some friends and I were having a beer in Sarajevo when an acquaintance of theirs joined our table. He asked me what had brought me to Sarajevo and I gave him my well-worn, one-minute reply. He then asked me: 'So you chose to be here?' Rising to the bait of his irony I replied that, yes, I had been lucky enough to develop my research project myself and that I enjoyed being there, adding in jest: '*Niko me ne tjera da provodim vrijeme ovdje*' ['Nobody is forcing me to spend time here']. At that moment my friend intervened without blinking an eyelid: '*Da je tako, bio bi Bosanac!*' ['If that were the case (i.e. if he were forced to be here), he would be a Bosnian!'].

Passports are state-issued documents that identify individual bodies as citizens. Yet their function is to allow the bodies they identify – often conditional on other documents, such as visas – to *leave* their state of citizenship. With their effectiveness predicated on webs of circulation involving other documents and on the social relations they shape and reflect, passports and visas thus exist at the point where modern biopolitics – the governance of the life of a population (Foucault 1990 [1976]) – produces 'docile bodies' through a continued concern with sovereignty over territory. Noting this continuity, Agamben argues furthermore that biopolitics and its concern with 'bare life' have always been central to politics, which has invariably presupposed exclusion (1998 [1995]: 17-22). Reasoning that the key to sovereign power lies in the decision over exception from that power, Agamben traces the phenomenon of 'the camp' as a 'state of exception', where subjection to law is not accompanied by any rights (1998 [1995]: 159).

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Salter analyses this exclusion further, conceptualizing the state border as a 'permanent state of exception', justified in law by the constant threat of mobility (2006: 173). Calling for research into the conditions in which individual bodies come to understand themselves as international in an emerging global order of biopolitical regulation, he redresses Agamben's neglect of decision-management in that space of exception, as well as of the 'agency' of border-crossers themselves as structured by it (2006: 170). Salter then reaches for Foucault's notion of a confessionary complex to disentangle the paradox encapsulated in the traveller who presents her/himself at the border:

> We must not simply look at the 'choice' to enter a state, but at how [the] condition of mobility is rendered such that travellers facilitate their own entry into [a] state of exception where their rights are abrogated (2006: 173).

Here I aim to complement Salter's inspiring analysis of the management of individual bodies at border controls. My research, starting not from the perspective of 'the sovereign', but, ethnographically, from the perspective of particular people caught up in mobility regimes, leads me to insert into Salter's corporeal framework the importance of the affective social life of regulation. Analysing engagements with visa regimes, I demonstrate that documentary requirements may be synchronically and diachronically located in spatiotemporal hierarchies both by those subjected to them and by those deploying them.

I then ask: in increasingly standardized global mobility regimes, which forms of affect emerge at the point where individual and collective experiences of the consular process intersect? Navaro-Yashin has proposed to analyse 'interactions between documents and persons', that is, 'the way documents are perceived or experienced as affectively charged phenomena when produced and transacted in specific contexts of social relation' (2007: 80). To me, her ethnography leaves unclear what precisely this 'interaction' consists of – and hovers between insisting that documents 'produce', 'effect', and 'induce' affect and admitting that it is persons who 'perceive and experience' this. However, leaving aside whether her material supports her Actor Network Theory case against 'social constructionism', Navaro-Yashin intimates a promising line of inquiry when arguing that documents 'take the shape of or transform into affect and become part of their handlers in that way' (2007: 95).

How may documents be experienced as becoming part of persons? More specifically, I ask here what happens if we do not represent persons as simply 'handling' documents but as coming into being in particular ways through them. Thus I explore what studying forms of affect emerging from individual and collective experiences of mobility regulation may contribute to an anthropology of everyday geopolitics.

Certifying documents

It is through citizenship that bodies are, or are not, authorized to travel across borders. Throughout my research in the post-Yugoslav states since 1996,[1] citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia have required travel documents for legal entry into most EU states: a passport, and, in it, a visa, the application for which itself involved a cascade of supporting documents. These documents were issued (or not) in order to bestow (or not) certain capacities on the bodies identified by them. I shall refer to this combined process of identifying and thereby collectively imputing capacities as 'certifying'.

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Paradoxically, while passport applications are usually intended as a first step towards cross-border travel, ever since their creation in the 1990s Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Serbian passports actually certified bodies as immobilized. They identified unique individuals, but, in their interaction with EU visa regimes, they immediately dismantled that uniqueness by classifying them into a collectivity restricted by default in terms of cross-border mobility (see Caplan 2001; Hoffmann-Axthelm 1992). Passports, of course, always classify individuals into collectivities whose cross-border mobility is governed in particular ways. Yet I draw attention here to the fact that relations between different passports are hierarchical and that they are experienced as such. In terms of cross-border mobility, I found, Bosnian and Serbian passports were intimately experienced as rendering people collectively guilty until proven innocent (their future 'crime' being the 'threat of mobility' [Salter 2006: 173]). Only a visa could provide an individual, temporary suspension of the default entrapment they certified.

This article traces two interrelated sets of social relations that thus produced entrapped subjects: visa queues in front of EU embassies, with their documentary interactions between aspiring travellers and consular personnel, and everyday engagements with geopolitical hierarchies, forming, I argue, their collective shadow. Visa applications make the bodies of aspiring travellers legible away from the border controls that have been a more common object of study. In Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia, I contend, the EU border, in its spectral sense, was primarily represented by the visa queue in front of the embassy and its geopolitical incarnation in the EU accession process. While undocumented border crossings did occur, I focus on people who took (or would take) the official route and for whom the largest looming obstacle was the consular process.[2] The suspicion with which those who did obtain visas were routinely treated by EU border guards upon arrival was widely experienced as frightening, frustrating, and infuriating – which deserves an analysis in and of itself (e.g. Löfgren 1999; Povrzanović Frykman 2003) – but it came at the *end* of that process. Many never reached that point.

Queues of resentment

In Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia, passports were, of course, issued by government institutions, and visa applications were lodged at the consular sections of embassies. Ultimately, the decision to issue visas was, like the management of mobility between states as a whole, discretionary (Salter 2006: 172), and precise documentary requirements depended on the embassy in question and on the decisions of individual consular functionaries. Documents that visa applications for EU states might require included:[3]

- passport with at least six months' remaining validity;
- birth certificate;
- marriage certificate;
- statement of employment;
- recent, consecutive salary slips;
- proof of real-estate property;
- recent, consecutive bank statements;
- certificates of student registration and exams passed (with grades);
- invitation letter by an EU resident[4] or organization;
- return travel tickets;

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- travel health insurance;
- accommodation reservations.

Recent originals were usually required, sometimes accompanied by multiple, notarized photocopies of official translations. Since it was generally hard to obtain reliable information by telephone, until the introduction of some limited consular internet services all parts of the application process had to be carried out in person. With a few exceptions, consular work was concentrated in the state capitals, implying multiple day-long expeditions for most people. Applicants spent the bulk of their time outside, *in front* of the embassy buildings – a form of bodily exclusion that necessarily preceded any possible inclusion. Owing to restricted opening times, queues outside of EU embassies were often extremely long and many started queuing at night. These queues were part-and-parcel of the weekday outlook of Sarajevo and Beograd. Especially in busy seasons and for popular destinations, people brought chairs, refreshments, or hot drinks, while informal entrepreneurs sold food, beverages, umbrellas, cigarettes, and photocopying services. A profitable endeavour for those who lived in the capital was to join the queue at night and sell their place in the morning. Including documentation and travel to the capital, but excluding travel and accommodation for the desired trip, the total cost could eat up the best part of an average monthly wage.

Since the early 1990s, people in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia had not exactly been short of things to complain about, but they reserved particular venom for the consular process. Far from being joyous gatherings of people looking forward to visiting relatives, going on holiday, or travelling otherwise, the highly visible visa queues crystallized a form of forced instant embodied togetherness through humiliation. Exposed to the elements, consisting of a variety of people who all felt they had better things to do, and pervaded by the dread that comes with not daring to hope too much, these queues seethed with indignation. Yet, especially after entering the building, grudging resignation was more prevalent. Power inequalities were stark here: one side had armed guards, fences, and armoured windows; the other had only its place in the queue to hold on to. The visa queue thus constituted an advance avatar of the (paradoxically hoped-for) future EU border check itself (Salter 2006: 180), requiring a self-disciplined, docile body, immobile but ready to move upon instruction, silent but ready to confess upon request.

Visa issuance was widely experienced as dependent more on the whims of individual functionaries than on transparent criteria. Its discretionary nature – a favour, not a right – and the fact that refusals were not explained encouraged this. Moreover, notification of decisions often arrived very late and there were no refunds for unsuccessful applications. The result was massive resentment and stories of visa applications came to constitute a veritable genre of their own. These angry stories deployed sarcastic exaggerations to cope with what was experienced as 'consular sadism' (International Crisis Group 2005: 9). Simultaneously, as we shall see, documentary requirements were seen as institutional materializations of a wider experience of humiliating entrapment.

While this is hardly a unique phenomenon – think only of EU visa restrictions for many non-white non-Europeans – the sense of entrapment in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia between 1996 and 2008 displayed at least two specificities, gathering significance over time. The first specificity is its location in what I call the EU's 'immediate outside', that is, a (on the whole) locally desired and EU-confirmed status as future member states. The second is the recollection of the document that previously did qualify those

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people for visa-free travel to almost all of today's EU states: the Yugoslav passport. I now dis- and re-entangle those two dimensions of their sense of humiliation, thus calling for an anthropology of everyday geopolitics in the peripheries that complements the predominant emphasis on diversity/otherness (in the Balkans this usually means on national identity) with one on hierarchy (here: of mobility regulation).

Borderless Europe and its 'immediate outside'

With Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia still some way removed from the 'white' list of states whose citizens qualify for visa-free travel in the EU Schengen Zone, visa regimes became an important campaigning issue. For example, in 2006, the Citizens' Pact for Southeast Europe published the collection *Najbolje priče iz reda za vize* (The best stories from the visa queues) and took photos of visitors at the Novi Sad EXIT music festival in front of pictured landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and Big Ben. Made into electronic postcards with the caption *Pozdrav iz Evrope* (Greetings from Europe), they were sent to EU institutions and media. Campaigns often emphasized that visa restrictions failed to tackle criminals while they victimized others, and highlighted contradictions between policies preventing younger citizens from 'getting to know Europe' and EU rhetoric about them being carriers of 'European values' (see Bjekić 2002; Mustafić 2002; *www.needvisa.net*).

Anti-visa campaigns passed without much success. In fact, while between 1996 and 2008 movement *between* the post-Yugoslav states (except Slovenia, which joined the EU) became somewhat easier, overall confinement intensified as governments withdrew visa-free entry with a Bosnian-Herzegovinian passport (e.g. Romania, Italy) or with a Serbian passport (e.g. Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania). Most restrictions occurred as part of these states' EU accession processes. By 2008, citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia could travel visa-free to only about one tenth of the world's two hundred states. In Europe, this was restricted to Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia and Turkey.[5] Few citizens of Serbia, where many now limited their travel to neighbouring Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina, possible with ID only, bothered to take out passports: in 2007, 12.9 per cent, compared to 66 per cent in Croatia (*Nacional* 2007). In Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the war had produced scattered networks of relatives across the globe, estimates were higher, with a passport ownership rate of up to 60 per cent amongst 18- to 30-year-olds (Komisija/Povjerenstvo ... 2008: 85). Opinion surveys in both states systematically returned majorities stating that visa-free travel would be a major advantage of closer relations with the EU (e.g. Popović 2006).

The atmosphere of entrapment was regularly punctuated by announcements of possible relaxations in visa regimes. When coming from EU politicians, these were widely seen as electoral support for local 'pro EU' parties. Yet, in 2006, the EU invested €10 million in a high-tech control point at the Hungarian-Serbian border. This indicates that visa relaxations associated with moves towards EU accession (here, in Hungary) were also conditional on tightening one's own border controls (except of course those towards the EU, whose citizens always travelled visa-free into Bosnia-Herzegovina and, since 2003, into Serbia too). The creation of a borderless Europe was always a doubly constitutive process: removing fences within, it built higher fences around. Citizens of some European states thus found that the much-maligned visa queue at the embassy had its geopolitical shadow: the queue for EU accession. Moving up the second queue could speed up (and, eventually, scrap) the first queue.

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Visa regimes were thus central to the reception of the (conditional) signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between Serbia and the EU, days before the May 2008 elections. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, where many of those who had been at the receiving end of Serbian nationalist violence expressed indignation when the EU first extended its welcome to Serbia, it was quickly announced that the same Agreement would be signed in June 2008. High Representative Lajčak, a foreign functionary with far-reaching powers in Bosnia-Herzegovina, again stressed the Agreement's importance for the liberalization of visa regimes, and, reflecting a parallel process with regard to Serbia (*Blic* 2006), reminded local politicians to raise the outer fence in order to be allowed within it. Conditions included biometric passports, readmission of citizens forcibly returned from the EU, and measures against trafficking and 'illegal' immigration (including asylum centres, one of which had just been built with EU funds) (*Oslobođenje* 2008*a*). The creation of a 'borderless Europe' thus involved the making of its 'immediate outside' – an outside that was to become an inside.

Collective entrapment and 'tax for idiots'

It was in a village just south of the above-mentioned upgraded border post that the *šinobus*, the small local train from Subotica (Serbia) to Szeged (Hungary) on which I travelled, suffered engine failure at a 2005 summer dawn. While the machinist repaired the vehicle, with plentiful 'advice' from the station master, a policeman, and a border guard ready to travel to work, I got into a conversation with a newly embarked passenger. Maja K, a teacher of about 45 with a Serbian name, had married into this predominantly Hungarian-inhabited village. She was going to visit her daughter, who studied in the Hungarian capital. Since we ended up sharing a compartment on the train from Szeged to Budapest too, our conversation lasted many hours, but the tone was set while we were still stuck at the village station. The border guard asked the policeman, in Hungarian-accented Serbian: 'Do you know what we call a visa?' He didn't. '*Porez za budale*,' the border guard replied ('Tax for idiots'). Maja K picked up on this, lamenting the humiliating treatment as 'an idiot' she experienced whenever she wanted to visit her daughter. Her stories refracted a *today* represented as entrapment against a *before* connoting mobility. With her current passport, containing a visa ready for inspection, this very document and its Yugoslav predecessor became the axis around which she spun tales of her previous travels and, crucially, her previous *possibility* to travel.

Even after our relatively smooth crossing into Hungary, during much of our conversation Maja K waved her passport to emphasize her point. The document she held was a blue passport of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), a state that had ceased to exist two years earlier. The State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, of which she was now a citizen, had not started issuing its own passports, and never would, as it turned out. The FRY passport continued to be issued even by the Republic of Serbia, which became independent by default after the proclamation of Montenegrin independence in June 2006. Bosnia-Herzegovina started issuing its own passports shortly after the proclamation of independence in 1992, that is, during the war. Several short-lived editions existed. The first one, of the war-time Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, was used only in the limited government-controlled territories. The second, post-war one, this time without the coat-of-arms of lilies that many had come to associate with Bosniac nationalism, specified which of the war-produced 'Entities' of Bosnia-Herzegovina it was issued by. The third one, still in use in 2008, was adorned with the

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'non-national' coat-of-arms of Bosnia-Herzegovina, designed along the lines of the EU flag (a blue and yellow motif with stars). All those documents had blue covers.

For some people, these new state documents undoubtedly provided a sense of pride. Yet in terms of its power to certify one as worthy of legal mobility, a Bosnian-Herzegovinian or a Serbian (FRY) passport was first and foremost a millstone that would *prevent* crossing borders. These documents were thus experienced as becoming part of persons by classifying them into collectivities, proud or not, certified as unworthy of mobility and requiring visas to overcome this individually. This process of certification was central to the resentment in the EU's immediate outside. Affective encounters with travel documents and with the processes through which they circulated did not usually focus on the considerable financial cost, but on the *humiliation* they constituted. For while a right to cross-border mobility does not exist in international law (the right to departure is not matched by a right to entry), neoliberal globalization – and EU enlargement as part of it – does project self-understandings of potentially mobile bodies as morally and economically desirable (Salter 2006: 168). Yet, since the 'structure of the global mobility regime' simultaneously reinforces border-crossing 'as an exceptional act' (Salter 2006: 174), it produces immobilized 'idiots' too.

Visa regimes were thus not simply experienced as a practical obstacle for individuals wishing to travel. Rather, engagement with mobility regulation was embedded in the ongoing production of collective hierarchies. This is what was at stake when, in the scorching month of August 2008, Željko Komšić, member of the triple Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina, pleaded with the German Ambassador to intervene to make the 'endless, humiliating' visa queues more bearable. He then profusely and publicly thanked the latter for making minor changes (*Oslobođenje* 2008*b*). Komšić's plea did improve conditions for those sweating in the queue, yet the fact that his counter-protocol intervention reflected his inability even to negotiate EU visa requirements themselves humiliatingly crystallized the hierarchy in which he and his citizens operated. The experience of those in the visa and the EU accession queues thus differed from the legal-bureaucratic notion that documents are neutral manifestations of the ratification of a verified status.[6] Instead, we enter the realm of geopolitical affect.

Generalizing ethnographic representation risks reproducing geopolitical entrapment, but the remarkable prevalence of such affective encounters with mobility regulation throughout my research in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia from 1996 onwards leads me to take it seriously. Maja K's contrast between past mobility and present entrapment was replicated by a bewildering variety of individuals of middle age and over with different national (non-)affiliations, socio-economic or educational profiles, political orientations, and hopes for the future. Moving down the generations, to a degree, the sense of humiliation persisted vicariously, whereby the point of reference became the (possibility to) travel that the red passport had granted one's parents. In contrast, the current spectre of travel documentation was so pervasive that, over the years, and much to our displeasure, it conditioned many of my interactions with friends too, partly as a result of my status as a privileged EU citizen. The personal, it is said, is political, but sometimes the geopolitical becomes personal.

The red passport

In Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, the contemporary sense of entitlement to and imperative of mobility evoked past experience. Current entrapment, materialized in the new passports and in the immobilized bodies certified by them, was refracted against

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previous visa-free travel, with its corresponding document: the passport of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. In discussions of life before the wars, this document, often called the *crveni pasoš* ('red passport'), was perhaps the single most common point of reference (Jansen 2005: 237).

Like Maja K, many emphasized that the red passport had allowed visa-free travel to *almost* anywhere, naming, for effect, an exception (often Albania, known precisely for its own closedness during the Cold War). Another common story was that the red passport was the most frequently stolen and falsified passport in the world, and the most expensive one on the black market. The first few times I heard this I was bemused, wondering whether my interlocutors had really been in price negotiations (a standard reference was that it yielded up to DM 10,000). Later I realized that this was simply one of those things that 'everyone knew' – even the Consular Director of the Foreign Ministry in Serbia emphasized it in a newspaper interview (*Danas* 2006). Foreshadowing later patterns, the red passport remained valid well after the state it pertained to officially ceased to exist in 1992. At least until 1996, the new Serbian-dominated Federal Republic of Yugoslavia still issued those passports, albeit in a shorter version, and they remained in use until 2001. Yet, while the document looked exactly the same, it failed to certify anyone as worthy of border-crossing. In contrast, so people recalled, in its glory days this document did not require any further documents, such as visas. Instead, as Maja K put it, it had 'opened the world'.

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the red passport attained a peculiar status in everyday practice and in popular culture.[7] When Café Tito was opened in Kragujevac, Serbia (there is one in Sarajevo too), one of its owners stated that the name reflected 'nostalgia for the times when we were an open country'. 'The red passport,' he specified, 'represented a symbol of free movement and travel, when border guards just glanced at the Yugoslav passport and waved their hand to give us free border-crossing' (*Danas* 2003). Maja K related literally the same description to me from her travels in Western Europe in the early 1980s, as did numerous others, whether they had experienced this themselves or not. In 1999, Đorđe Balašević celebrated the passport in the line of a song: '*Crveni pasoš bez mane što prolazi grane bez puno njakanja*' ('The flawless red passport that crossed borders without much braying').[8] Significantly, though, this song is called *Devedesete* ('Nineties') and is mainly dedicated to deploring the catastrophic situation during that decade. Not unlike the exasperation expressed by British upper-class travellers at newly introduced documentary requirements and border inspections after the First World War (O'Byrne 2001) – but from the other side of the imperialist divide – post-Yugoslav evocations of the red passport thus functioned in retrospective narratives on current constraints.

While such recollections were usually sweeping, they implicitly took the late Yugoslav years as their point of reference. In fact, border-crossings had not always been that easy for Yugoslav citizens. Immediately after the Second World War, they did not travel freely to states either in the US- or in the USSR-dominated zones; this became feasible only after the Yugoslav repositioning in-between the Cold War blocs. From the 1950s onwards some governments reduced restrictions for Yugoslav citizens and the Yugoslav government itself lifted travel permit requirements for its citizens. In the 1960s, partly in order to cope with domestic unemployment through guest work (Woodward 1995), a growing number of mutual agreements on visa-free entry were signed. Eventually this applied to the vast majority of states on the globe, excluding, for example, the USA, Albania, China, Israel, and Greece, but including over a hundred Non-Aligned states,

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and, more importantly in terms of proximity and likelihood for travel, almost all European states in both the Eastern and the Western blocs (Tudurić 2008).[9] In late Cold War times the Yugoslav passport thus certified one for wider and easier cross-border mobility than any other passport I know of.

Reflecting similar practices in other states (O'Byrne 2001: 402; Torpey 1998: 251), the Yugoslav issuing of passports was linked with certain standards of good citizenship, and therefore some persons, such as those who had at some point been imprisoned for alleged pro-Stalinist activities, were unable to obtain travel documents. However, such restrictions applied to a small minority only, and, judging from the prominence of anti-Yugoslav nationalists in emigration circles, policies seem to have been directed rather at letting 'undesirables' leave (with secret service surveillance). Of course, like most of the world's population, many Yugoslavs rarely or never travelled abroad. This could have been due to lack of desire, to financial constraints, but also to administrative-political reasons. For example, those working in the army (even as civilians) were restricted in the use of their passports: some people's documents were kept by the army and, when foreign travel was authorized, they could be called for interviews upon return. Nevertheless, eventually, perhaps half of Yugoslavia's adult population had passports,[10] and could, in principle, travel easily to almost all of Europe and well beyond.

And they did so in large numbers, whether as tourists (especially amongst so-called urban 'middle layers'), as *gastarbajteri* (guest workers – especially from specific [semi-] rural regions), or as shoppers (with Trieste a favourite destination). In any case, after the end of Yugoslavia, the fondness with which the previous possibility to travel was recalled seemed largely unrelated to whether one had actually crossed borders with some frequency. Instead, now that visa regimes made travel very difficult even for those who could afford it, what counted was the retrospective knowledge that the Yugoslav passport had once certified one as worthy of easy border-crossings.

Documentary hierarchies of passage

In striking contrast to the centrality of the red passport as an anchor for recollections that I encountered during the first post-war decade, scholarly literature on Yugoslavia hardly deals with passports or visas (except in literature on guest workers). Moreover, in existing work on passports more generally, their significance is usually approached from the perspective of the regulating sovereign. Such writings trace how the introduction of standardized passports at the beginning of the twentieth century allowed surveillance of cross-border movements and produced increasingly 'legible' subjects (Caplan & Torpey 2001). Passports were documentary materializations of those processes, including a photograph and, often, a physical description[11] – thus constituting modern notions of personal identity (Löfgren 1999; Salter 2006). Analysing the 'monopolization of the legitimate means of movement' by modern states, Torpey has suggested that in order to penetrate (the usual metaphor for increasing state control), states must *embrace* their subjects (1998: 244). Expropriating the capacity to authorize movement, states introduced passports and thus ' "embraced" the potential traveller as a citizen-member of the nation-state' (1998: 250).

I have shown that while it denoted belonging to (and control by) the Yugoslav state, the specificity of the red passport was that this embrace, at least in this dimension, was remembered as that which provided the ability to leave it (and to return to it). Complementing existing writings on passports, we should therefore recognize that passports of

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different states exist in hierarchical relationships according to the degree of *passage* they secure. Indeed, derived from the French, '*passeport*' originally denoted the authorization to pass through a port. O'Byrne locates the origins of the modern passport in eleventh-century Spanish safety guarantees for travellers and traces how, from the sixteenth century onwards, many authorities 'issued "passport letters" to grant safe passage to travellers during wartime' (2001: 400). Historically, we thus see a move from single-purpose passports issued by the authorities of the receiving polity to authorize and safeguard travel (including internal passports, as in much of the Balkans during Ottoman imperial times) to more permanent 'home-state'-issued documents that allow legibility through surveillance of border-crossings. The fact that the red passport was widely remembered precisely for being a *passeport* – a document that had certified people as worthy of cross-border mobility – suggests that passports may engender affective encounters with geopolitics not only through identification (notably through nationalism) but also through rankings of mobility regulation.

The contrast made between current entrapment and the days of the red passport indicates that the latter document, too, was remembered as being part of persons, in their own experience and in that of others. People recalled having been certified as mobile subjects before documentary certification had made them into entrapped 'idiots' – a demotion that elicited much resentment. But why this preoccupation with travel documents and the (im)mobility they certified? Were the advocates of restrictions in the EU right to suspect that these post-Yugoslav citizens were only waiting for a chance to leave? Going by what they *said*, quite a few clearly would like to. Around the bar table mentioned in the anecdote that opens this text, several people were actively seeking ways to leave Bosnia-Herzegovina. Maja K's daughter, who studied in Budapest, was hoping to stay there, while her son had no intention to emigrate from Serbia. In fact, while many people, particularly younger ones, clearly would prefer to make a future at least partly elsewhere, polls indicated that the main object of yearning was collective certification as worthy of legitimate *two-way* border-crossing (Komisija/Povjerenstvo ... 2008; UNDP 2004, 2007). I now analyse such yearnings against the background of broader understandings of spatiotemporal hierarchies.

The world rankings of everyday geopolitical discourse

Affective engagements with the documents of mobility regulation were often embedded in an 'everyday geopolitical discourse', by which I mean a routine, non-official mode of representation of one's collective place in the contemporary world. With regard to entrapment, such everyday geopolitical discourse functioned on the basis of two key assumptions. The first assumption was that all collectivities should occupy 'a place in the world' and that this matters (cf. Ferguson 2006: 6) – in fact, the greatest disaster would be to 'fall off' the world, that is, to fail to be recognized as having such a place (a common complaint in Serbia in the 1990s).[12] The second assumption was that such collective places in the world were ordered in a spatiotemporal hierarchy of movement forward. It is not simply that some collectivities were understood to occupy a static superior place to others, but that they were 'advanced' or 'behind' in a process of ongoing movement. Everyday geopolitical discourse in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia thus entailed a process of subject-formation that relied on a double lack-of-movement: the making, through documents, of citizens as entrapped subjects in precarious collectivities that were themselves seen as failing to catch up.

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Importantly, such notions of rankings in movement were relentlessly confirmed by EU politicians, who deployed them as a lever to shape obliging governments in the shrinking EU's 'immediate outside'. The official term for becoming a member of the EU, 'accession', means, amongst other things, admittance, adherence, and addition, but it also refers to the attainment of a rank. This reflects the notion, prevalent amongst EU functionaries and amongst most citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia (and many others, no doubt, regardless of anthropological deconstructions of linear development models), that joining the EU was an upward movement. Indeed, the entire process was built around progressive fulfilment of conditions, and studies of postsocialist Europe have documented how this was represented teleologically as a staged process (see Verdery & Burawoy 1999; on Bosnia-Herzegovina, see Jansen 2006). Much like a teacher dealing with primary school pupils, politicians from EU states thus told domestic politicians off or gave them house points, depending on performance. Lack of progress led to 'Bosnia-Herzegovina' or 'Serbia' being disqualified as 'not yet ready', whereas good pupils might be complimented for their 'maturity'. Having a place in the world, clearly, implied knowing your place.

In this context, everyday geopolitical discourse – bringing spatial and temporal rankings together in a representation of collective movement – was extremely prevalent in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia. While my presence as a EU citizen may have provided extra encouragement, there is no doubt that the vagaries of one's collective 'place in the world' were discussed in all kinds of contexts and by all kinds of people. But what kinds of collectivities were articulated in these everyday geopolitics? In many local and foreign representations of the Balkans, preoccupied with what is treated as a violent excess of diversity, the default answer to this question would be: nations. Yet the relevant 'embrace' of mobility regulation was in principle one of citizenship – certified through state documents. Still, it did have an (ethno)national dimension as well.

This dimension was partly a result of war-produced inequities in the legal circulation of those documents. Many citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and of Serbia could travel across the EU without a visa, because they were also certified by Croatian passports. Such a privilege mainly involved people with Croatian national backgrounds – who obtained these documents on (ethno)national grounds – and some others who had received them during the wars through regional politics of alliance. Serbian refugees from Croatia, lastly, faced much difficulty in obtaining Croatian documents, but over the years the lack of EU visa requirements still provided sufficient motivation for many to apply. Sometimes citizenship trumped (ethno)nationality in more straightforward ways. For example, the above-mentioned new Serbian-Hungarian border post demarcated two areas, *both* of which were predominantly Hungarian-inhabited, and no dual Hungarian-Serbian citizenship was allowed, so Hungarian (now EU) visa restrictions applied to all Serbian citizens, including those with Hungarian backgrounds (e.g. Maja K's husband). The long multilingual visa queues in front of the Hungarian consulate in the border town of Subotica testified to this situation.

Let me note here that engagements with mobility regulation rarely articulated collectivities on the basis of class. I know relatively affluent, highly educated individuals in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina who, certified only by their domestic passports, found it impossible to obtain EU visas, as they were neither in full-time education nor in permanent employment. I also know jobless, property-less citizens of Serbia or Bosnia-Herzegovina with little formal education and an irregular income who, certified by a Croatian passport, frequently travelled to EU states. The question of occupational

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status, so crucial in the visa queue, did not arise for them. Those who were also certified by a EU passport, of course, could enter through the quicker EU arrival lane. Hence, specific citizenship policies, the EU's proximity, as well as non-elite networks of refugees and *gastarbajteri* in Western Europe rendered the possibility of legal cross-border travel in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia less strictly related to material wealth and status than one might expect.

In sum, in terms of the documentary production of entrapment, everyday geopolitical discourse articulated collectivities predominantly based on citizenship. Yet this was not usually spelled out, remaining instead on the level of unspecified 'we-ness', made possible, as we shall see, by equivalent positions in the EU's 'immediate outside'.

Fallen from grace, stuck in place

I suggest that our understanding of this everyday geopolitical discourse can be enhanced by placing it in a wider experience of a dramatic fall from grace. This purposively diffuse term allows a multitude of contradictory meanings for what constituted 'grace', for what 'the fall' consisted of, for who was to blame (most) for it, and for what would constitute acceptable remedies. On all those accounts there were sharp disagreements – particularly but not exclusively along national lines. For example, in Bosnia-centred discourses, dominant in Bosniac-dominated parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina (but not only amongst Bosniacs), the fall from grace was blamed on expansionist Serbian and Croatian nationalisms and on Western policies, resented for treating 'victims' (loyal citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina) much the same as 'aggressors' (Serbian and Croatian nationalists). In Serbian nationalist discourses, an ultranationalist line saw today's trouble as yet another episode in a mytho-history of Serbian suffering caused by the timeless and tireless perfidy of Serb-haters. Another, so-called moderate nationalist line blamed the fall from grace on those Serb-haters but also on some bad Serbs, such as the 'communist' Slobodan Milošević, who had shamed the Serbian nation with economic collapse and geopolitical isolation. Despite major differences, all those views contained a self-representation of having been *pushed* from grace by national Others.

Yet, as a result of equivalent positionings towards EU documentary requirements, everyday geopolitical discourse on entrapment often contained an understanding closer to the biblical story from which I borrow the phrase 'fall from grace', about temptation and the loss of innocence. Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, where they had lived in God's grace, because, after Eve's seduction by the snake (Satan), they ate the apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Similarly, in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia, people like Maja K blamed the fall from grace not only on nationalist elites (particularly Serbian and Croatian, also Bosniac and Albanian) and on Western policies, but at least also partly on one's own co-nationals who had been enchanted by nationalism.[13]

Importantly, as we saw, the 'embrace' of documentary technologies allowed (ethno)national/citizen distinctions to remain fuzzy for the purpose of everyday geopolitical discourse, and the experience of a fall from grace could therefore not be adequately grasped as a straightforward expression of nationalism. In fact, competing understandings of the fall from grace were sometimes deployed by one and the same person. They were often drenched in cynicism, particularly directed against local and foreign politicians. The key point here is that the notion of a fall requires retrospective references to what constituted grace while it also allows a degree of largely unspecified

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disbelief-in-hindsight ('how naïve we were to take all that for granted!'). Long after the wars, I found, it was still common amongst people of middle-age and older to refract current entrapment mainly, or at least *also*, against the 'normal lives' of the Yugoslav past. This was true even amongst some people who were least displeased with the current context, for example those with strong clericonationalist, anticommunist views and/or closely positioned to the current elites. Generational differences were apparent here: those who had grown up entrapped were more likely also to assert their indignation through collective comparison with their EU counterparts in more general terms.[14]

In such references to 'normal life', the most important characteristic of the past did not lie, as it would do in conventional understandings of nostalgia, in any of its particular positive qualities (although conversations were sprinkled with them too). The key, as for Maja K, lay in the *self-evidence* of those positive qualities in previous everyday life, in contrast to the current context. In terms of cross-border mobility, and notwithstanding its uniqueness on a comparative global stage, it was the *normality* of certification to move with the red passport that was emphasized most. This, I believe, is key to understanding the everyday geopolitics of post-Yugoslav resentment of visa regimes, and for this reason my writings reflect the idiom in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia and speak not about the 'good old days' but about 'normal life' (e.g. Jansen 2008). Through evoking 'normal life', persons with opposing political views could deploy a discourse about the time *before* the fall from grace, and, perhaps particularly when confronted with a Western European like me, this constituted a channel through which to take on the sense of collective humiliation caused by its loss.

In a wider postsocialist European context, the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia was specific in this respect, and not only as a result of the wars. 'Normal lives' in Yugoslavia were commonly recalled in terms of living standards, order, and social welfare, but explicitly related to the dignity of having 'a place in the world'. Here, certification for cross-border mobility – itself an indicator of that place – joined forces with broader geopolitics. Except for those with strong nationalist and/or anti-communist views, many, like Maja K, told anecdotes about travel abroad in which their hosts expressed admiration for Yugoslavia. Likewise, positive memories of Yugoslav President Tito were often phrased in terms not only of international coexistence, anti-fascism, and social well-being, but also of his status as a 'great statesman'. While people might also condemn Tito's authoritarian rule – as well as his policies 'against' their nation – many focused on how he had been a point of reference in the world. Amongst those who respected him, Tito was most fondly remembered as the man who created a place in the world for Yugoslavia and its citizens. He put them on the map. Again, this must be understood as part of retrospective positioning: after 1991, of course, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia were *also* on the map, but for all the wrong reasons.

Recursive Eurocentrism

References to the value of current and previous passports for easy border-crossing, then, were usually geopolitically comparative, ranking the collectivity they certified. Citizens of some other Southeast European states were or had until recently been subject to similar visa regimes as part of the EU's 'immediate outside', and some of them had previously shared the Yugoslav passport. Yet resentment in Bosnia-Herzegovina's and Serbia's visa and EU accession queues drew on the *ongoing*

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development of spatiotemporal hierarchies as, gradually, ever more people in the region were allowed to move up the EU queue and skip the visa queue altogether. Particularly those of older generations pointed out bitterly that, when certified by the red passport, they had been able to travel more freely than even Western Europeans, whereas today they were more entrapped than even most Eastern Europeans. Resentment increased over time with EU enlargement: they now 'even' needed visas to visit Eastern European states that had previously – so I was assured – looked upon Yugoslav citizens with envy, precisely because of their red passport.

For many in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, then, entrapment by EU visa regimes was a blatantly humiliating materialization of the inversion of European geopolitical hierarchies, including a sense of shamefully having to *catch up* with those Eastern Europeans who until recently were not even considered to be in the same league. Rankings of mobility were often couched in anecdotes of previous travel to those states: as our train rode through Hungary in 2005, Maja K, for example, recalled the previous hierarchy as she had experienced it during earlier visits. 'To them [citizens of Hungary]', she stated, 'we were the West!' ('*Za njih, mi smo bili Zapad!*'). While the 1990s had made it possible for former 'really' Eastern Europeans partly to shed their Eastern-ness (and to have this acknowledged by Westerners), many in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia felt that, at the same junction, they had been attributed the stigma of having become Eastern Europeans. From their perspective in the EU's 'immediate outside', it was bad to have to queue with most of your neighbours; it was worse to be amongst a dwindling minority in your neighbourhood that was obliged to queue; and it was worse still to be suddenly made to join the end of a queue that you could previously ignore, while some of your neighbours, who were once at the tail end of an earlier incarnation of that queue, now breezed past.

Yugoslavia's peculiar position with regard to the Cold War divide in Europe had thus allowed Western-supported retrospective self-positionings of superiority towards those who had been considered 'really Eastern' Eastern Europeans (i.e. citizens of Warsaw Pact states). In the words of the protagonist in the significantly named 1992 Serbian documentary *Geto*, by Mladen Matičević and Ivan Markov: '*Bilo je dana kada sam žalio što Beograd nije Amsterdam, ali sam mnogo češće bio srećan što nije Istočni Berlin*' ('There were days when I regretted that Beograd wasn't Amsterdam, but much more often I was happy that it wasn't East Berlin'). Note the paradox: some positive narratives of 'normal life' in socialist Yugoslavia focused retrospectively on its relative *Western-ness* through comparison with other socialist states. Many in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia thus countered humiliating entrapment with a discourse of entitlement with regard to their 'place in the world' and *therefore* in 'Europe'. This put them in a painfully contradictory situation, whereby EU-wide movement was considered a birthright and an imperative, but at the same time, in the waiting room that is the EU's 'immediate outside', they were acutely aware of its conditionality through documentary certification.

I am not arguing that all or even most citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and of Serbia uncritically wished to be counted as 'Western'. Most expressed anger, disappointment, and resentment towards 'the West', and such sentiments seemed actually to increase over time in both states. A variety of opposed reasons existed for this in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia, but with regard to entrapment through travel documentation they displayed a parallel. Persons with different national backgrounds and/or with opposing political views have told me furiously that they would never go through the humiliation of the visa queue again. Yet, with the geopolitical situation as it was, they

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usually grudgingly softened their attitude, knowing that it would only consolidate their entrapment. In any case, such outbursts did not normally result in a complete rejection of links with (including the possibility to travel to) the EU.[15] In fact, with few exceptions, those who considered themselves to be victims of Western Eurocentric Balkanism actually recursively deployed the same mechanism of exclusion towards Others, further removed in Europe's symbolic geography (see Bakić-Hayden 1995). While they might condemn 'Europe', their discourse remained resolutely Eurocentric: only very rarely have I heard someone even compare their predicament in terms of visa restrictions to that of citizens of other states in the world, say in Asia or Africa, other than precisely to prove the point of humiliation. Self-consciously European, and admonished to be more so by an EU that entrapped them in its 'immediate outside', some expressed exasperation at being 'in the same newspaper reports with Rwanda,' and others made rueful comments to me about having become the object of anthropological research, a discipline considered to be about 'primitive tribes'.

Cross-border mobility, then, was not (just) an aspiration, but was overwhelmingly considered an entitlement and an imperative. Yet this was rarely stated to be universal; instead, reflecting the real-political situation, it was always already experienced as geopolitically stratified. In the new, post-Cold War 'rankings', citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and of Serbia, then, resented being mis-stratified. Rather than integrating their predicament into forms of anti-Eurocentric solidarity, most persons in the visa queues emphasized their European-ness and the fact that they had once been certified as worthy of mobility. Such recursive Eurocentrism served as a reply to the humiliation of entrapment by the EU.

More importantly perhaps, in a post-Cold War context where capitalist liberal democracy was projected as the only possible route of development, it resonated with the Eurocentrism so central to the EU project itself. For the relentless calls by EU politicians that 'Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia prove their commitment to European standards' included a demand that the EU's 'immediate outside' distance itself from non-Europeans who might or might not share some of their predicaments. The Yugoslav lands, lest we forget, have the historical experience not of colonizers but of *colonies*, parts of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires. Moreover, through the Non-Aligned Movement, they have been central to a non-Eurocentric, anti-imperialist global alliance. Yet that engagement is part of the region's socialist history, which has been declared illegitimate as a foundation for its future by both local and EU elites (Jansen 2006). When anti-Eurocentrism might be a luxury that those in its 'immediate outside' can only afford at the price of their own exclusion, in this geopolitical moment Eurocentrism became the channel through which they were able to prove their European-ness in terms acceptable to that very EU.[16]

Conclusion

If Salter's inspiring critical engagement with Agamben's work, spurred by the paradox of the traveller who 'facilitates [her/his] own entry into [a] state of exception' (2006: 173), draws attention to the management of individual bodies at border controls, I have aimed here to complement his work with an analysis of everyday geopolitical affect around mobility regulation. Tracing how particular persons come into being through particular documents, I traced how degrees of mobility certified by passports and visas are experienced within spatiotemporal hierarchies both by regulated and by regulators.

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Over the period 1996-2008, as entrapment sharpened through Europe's geopolitical reconfigurations, the visa queues in front of Sarajevo and Beograd EU embassies, with their docile, silent bodies preparing to move and confess upon instruction, increasingly cast their geopolitical shadow. The conditions of possibility structured by EU enlargement – and the emerging international biopolitical order of which it is part – rendered the EU's 'immediate outside' at least partly docile and anxious to 'access' when given permission, and at least partly silent (repressing its unruly voices) in its aspiration to prove its European-ness. The fact that this involved an implicit confession of being still insufficiently European further fanned the flames of resentment at humiliation as entrapped subjects in immobilized polities.

I have conceptualized these zones of humiliating entrapment, tracing the technologies of regulation that constitute them, as the EU's shrinking 'immediate outside'. This has allowed me to uncover affective everyday engagements with geopolitics that cannot be explained straightforwardly as products of 'ethnic conflict', 'trauma', or 'post-war reconstruction'. Nationalist demonstrations and disputes about war crimes may dominate foreign writing about the Balkans, but a critical ethnography of everyday politics in the region must take seriously more prominent phenomena on the level of mundane practice, such as a sense of humiliation and entrapment, that tend to be obscured by the predominant focus on national identity *per se*. As such, this article presents an ethnographic argument for the critical potential of a focus on regulation and ranking for an anthropology of everyday geopolitics in peripheries.

NOTES

I thank the Toyota Foundation, the Leverhulme Trust, the British Academy, and the Nuffield Foundation for supporting some research periods between 1996 and 2008, and *JRAI* reviewers and participants of seminars in Stockholm, Malmö, Bristol, Leuven, and Ljubljana for useful comments. In a bitter twist of ethnographic writing, many of those who helped me research this text have spent much time in visa queues for EU states, amongst which are the one of which I am a citizen and the one in which I work. They deserve special mention for helping me – as someone who travels across 'their' borders at will – to grapple, experientially and theoretically, with an issue that they lose much sleep over already. Still, I refuse to introduce a separate non-EU lane in my acknowledgements, so, for stimulating conversation on the topic and/or comments on the text, I simply thank, in alphabetical order, Aleksandra Bajazetov, Ildiko Erdei, Sarah Green, Staffan Löfving, Slavko Maleć, Michelle Obeid, Alma and Faruk Osmanbegović, Maja Povrzanović Frykman, Melina Sadiković, Ivana Spasić and Ivica Barišić, and Soumhya Venkatesan. Most of all, as they will all understand, I thank Dunja Njaradi.

[1] I rely on insights from long research periods on antinationalism in Beograd (1996-7), on experiences of home in Bosnia-Herzegovina and amongst Bosnian refugees in Serbia (2000-1), and on hope and the state in Bosnia-Herzegovina (2008), interspersed with dozens of other visits of up to three months.

Four notes on language, terminology, and tense. First, all translations are mine. Second, to maintain consistency across my writings, I do not anglicize place names. Third, what I refer to as being 'in Serbia' was technically located in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from April 1992 to February 2003, and in the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro from then to June 2006. I refer to 'Serbia', except where these changes themselves are important. Fourth, when I wrote this article in Sarajevo, Beograd, and Subotica in 2008, promises of visa relaxations were front-page news once more – I therefore decided to write this text, in desperate anticipation, in the past tense.

[2] Many individuals from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia who are undocumented in EU states are overstaying visas and have therefore gone through the consular process.

[3] Students and/or minors needed to submit many of those documents in their parents' names.

[4] In some cases, invitation letters should also include, for example, bank statements of those persons.

[5] Turkish visas for Serbian passports are purchased at entry without consular process. Generally, Serbian and Bosnia-Herzegovinian passports are subject to stricter EU visa conditions than those of China, Russia, and Ukraine (International Crisis Group 2005: 7).

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[6] And resentment at the documentary certification of entrapment thus grew every time a fugitive indicted war criminal was spotted in the EU with a valid visa.

[7] Announcements in 2008 of the new (biometric) passports of the Republic of Serbia included the information that they would be ... red.

[8] From the album *Devedesete* © 1999 Hard Rock Records, Novi Sad.

[9] For the few European states that did operate entry regimes for Yugoslav citizens, I have been told, visas were easy to obtain.

[10] Searching high and low, I have been unable to find exact figures. This is an estimate by someone who used to work in the Yugoslav diplomatic service.

[11] None of the passports discussed in this text contain information on nationality, and neither did the red-covered passports of the first Yugoslavia and of the early post-Second World War Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia, both of which did include a physical description.

[12] Perhaps not without reason. One of the referee reports that accompanied the rejection of my 2005 research proposal to the UK Economic and Social Research Council to study postsocialist transformations in a Serbian town stated flatly that Serbia was unfit for such a study since it 'is obviously a basket case'. I'm not bitter.

[13] While this is not the place to explore this further, let me note that, as in Genesis, such views sometimes also intertwine issues of innocence and ignorance.

[14] In 2005 an estimated half of the population of Serbia and two-thirds of its students had never travelled abroad (International Crisis Group 2005: 11). In Bosnia-Herzegovina, with its extensive refugee networks, 35 per cent of 18- to 30-year-olds stated in a survey that they had never been abroad (Komisija/Povjerenstvo ... 2008). Caution is necessary since, significantly, there is confusion as to whether or not neighbouring post-Yugoslav states are considered 'abroad'.

[15] Even openly 'anti-Western' politicians, while regularly promising they would tell the EU to go to hell, usually maintained an entitlement to visa relaxations.

[16] A more fundamental question is whether equivalent experiences of Western imperialism can provide political grounds for post-Cold War solidarity between persons from postsocialist Europe and those from Asia, Africa, or Latin America. This topic requires an analysis of its own.

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Après le passeport rouge : vers une anthropologie de la géopolitique quotidienne de l'enlisement dans « l'extérieur immédiat » de l'Union européenne

Résumé

L'auteur de cet article entend mettre en avant des éléments pour constituer une anthropologie de la géopolitique quotidienne. Pour cela, il analyse l'abord affectif de la régulation, en l'occurrence celle des flux transfrontaliers. Suivant la logique de la réglementation qui les constitue, il conceptualise sous l'appellation « d'extérieur immédiat » de l'Union européenne des zones, de plus en plus exiguës, où les sujets (en l'occurrence des ressortissants de Bosnie-Herzégovine et de Serbie) sont pris dans le piège humiliant des exigences paperassières. À l'aide de l'ethnographie, il incorpore le vécu physique des files d'attente de visas dans la confrontation des gens aux classements spatiotemporels eurocentriques mouvants, confrontant cette situation d'enlisement aux privilèges de certains étrangers (comme lui-même) et à leurs propres souvenirs de mobilité avec le passeport yougoslave « rouge ». L'auteur suggère qu'une anthropologie de la géopolitique quotidienne dans les zones périphériques requiert de compléter la focalisation sur le rôle de la politique identitaire (nationale) dans les affects géopolitiques par une attention soutenue aux régulations et aux classements.

Stef Jansen is Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester. Co-editor (with S. Löfving) of *Struggles for home: violence, hope and the movement of people* (Berghahn, 2008), he investigates home and hope with regard to nation, place, and state transformation in the post-Yugoslav states.

Social Anthropology, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, UK. stef.jansen@manchester.ac.uk

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