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Kristine Elisa Kotecki

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**After the Archive:
Framing Cultural Memory in Ex-Yugoslav Collections**

Committee:

Ann Cvetkovich, Co-Supervisor

Mia Carter, Co-Supervisor

Neville Hoad

Tatiana Kuzmić

Snehal Shingavi

**After the Archive:
Framing Cultural Memory in Ex-Yugoslav Collections**

by

Kristine Elisa Kotecki, B.A.; M.A.

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**After the Archive:
Framing Cultural Memory in Ex-Yugoslav Collections**

Kristine Elisa Kotecki, Ph.D.

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Supervisors: Ann Cvetkovich and Mia Carter

Upon Yugoslavia's breakup into five successor states in the 1990s, its national archives also divided according to the new national borders. This re-ordering of institutional history took most dramatic form in the systematic destruction of the archival records held by Bosnia-Herzegovina; incendiary shells destroyed the holdings of its National Library in 1992. In contrast to the national divisions that "balkanized" and obliterated the archives, ex-Yugoslav compilations draw works from and about the region together. This dissertation analyzes the collections that formed as "alternative archives" in response to Yugoslavia's dissolution and tracks how individual works within these collections are translated and reframed as they circulate internationally. It argues that distinct texts gathered together into the unit of the collection can effectively convey the complexity and contradiction of ex-Yugoslav cultural politics. Whereas compilations of texts of texts identified as representing various nationalities approximate international alliance through unities such as "international women's solidarity," "European unification" and "Yugoslav reunification," close reading of the texts juxtaposed within the collections can also complicate the progressive solidarity that frames them. Ex-

Yugoslav collections of print and film, and the situated interpretations they engender, provide a rich archive of responses to the post-Cold-War transition toward globalization and Europeanization in the midst of ethnic and religious extremism. In this project, I describe the “collection” as the product of gathering individual texts together, arranging them, and framing them with a unifying narrative. Literary anthologies, library archives, museum exhibits and film programs at festivals thus all function as collections, or archives, of cultural materials formed during and after Yugoslavia’s dissolution. I argue that the works in these collections reflect forms of organization and alliance that disrupt the common sense of existing geopolitical alignment and put pressure on normative desires for a post-Yugoslav future based on European attachments.

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Introduction

The film archive resides in a hollowed out building among the smoking wreckage of Sarajevo in the 1990s. A character named A., played by Harvey Keitel, waits for the city's film archivist to develop the lost reel that he has spent the whole film seeking: the first recording by the Manaki brothers, pioneering Greek filmmakers who recorded ethnographic scenes and political events throughout the Balkans at the beginning of the 20th century. Thodōros Angelopoulos' *Ulysses' Gaze* (1995) tells of the fictional search by A., a Greek-American filmmaker, for this reel. The protagonist imagines that by viewing what he calls "the first gaze," he can experience the Edenic unity of the first filmed moment of his homeland: a moment before experience in the Balkans was mediated by cinematic technology. In contrast to A.'s search for a unified Balkan experience, the film's montage is a fragmented collage of historical settings and random encounters. The contrast between the character's search for unity and the film's fragmented aesthetic culminates in Sarajevo, where A. finds the lost reel and has it developed in the dimly lit sanctum of the film archive. The reel does not provide the unmediated turn-of-the-century Balkan life that A. had hoped for, however, as it is destroyed by fire before he can view it. The fragmented montage and disjointed narration of *Ulysses' Gaze* replicates the effects on memory of fragile media for remembrance, which are prone to distortion and erasure.

The film's themes of lost records and incomplete historical memory, which culminate in 1990s Sarajevo, point to the destruction and re-organization of recorded memory that took place during Yugoslavia's dissolution. Upon its breakup into seven successor states, Yugoslavia's national archives also divided according to the new national borders. This re-ordering of institutional history took most dramatic form in the systematic destruction of the archival records held by Bosnia and Herzegovina (heretofore shortened to Bosnia); incendiary shells destroyed

the majority of the holdings of its National Library and Oriental Institute in 1992. The library had held the newly declared nation's collection of Bosnian written culture: five centuries' worth of bound manuscripts and other print documents from the region. The print documents that legitimized Bosnia as a nation with a history were destroyed in a violent disruption of the archive.

In contrast to the national divisions that "balkanized" and obliterated the archives, ex-Yugoslav compilations draw works from and about the region together. This dissertation analyzes the collections that formed as "alternative archives" in response to Yugoslavia's dissolution and tracks how individual works within these collections are translated and reframed as they circulate internationally. My textual analyses and field work suggest that distinct texts gathered together into the unit of the collection can effectively convey the complexity and contradiction of ex-Yugoslav cultural politics. Ex-Yugoslav collections of print and film, and the situated interpretations they engender, provide a rich archive of responses to the post-Cold-War transition toward globalization and Europeanization in the midst of ethnic and religious extremism.

During and after Yugoslavia's dissolution, the cultural form of the collection proved a salient form for articulating the nation in fragments and the cobbled together communities that resulted. In this project, I address a range of texts loosely categorized as "collections," a term I use both descriptively and heuristically. Here, a "collection" describes the product of gathering individual texts together, arranging them, and framing them with a unifying narrative. Literary anthologies, library archives, museum exhibits and film programs at festivals thus all function as collections, or archives, of cultural materials formed during and after Yugoslavia's dissolution. I draw on both theories of the archive and theories of the collection because, although they

overlap, each brings different emphases to bear. The archive connotes preservation more than selection, even though its construction is based on an often unseen process of selection. In contrast, the collection more overtly connotes selectiveness. It also straddles the line between institutional and personal more than is implied in “archive,” which is commonly associated with institution and authority. Both the holdings of the national museum and the contents of the child’s shell collection are included in the term “collection.” The category of the “collection” is too broad to institute as a standard form for literary analysis, comparable to the novel or the short story, however. Its usefulness for this project stems more from the interpretations it generates as a heuristic for thinking about the social implications of the processes of gathering, selecting and arranging than from the category of text it defines.

To collect means to set aside and invest energy in objects or texts as receptacles of meaning. It involves gathering simulacra that can stand in as more manageable representations of one’s world. The term “collection” has been applied to a range of creations, from the contents of the Pharaohs’ tombs in Egyptian antiquity to those of the gentility’s cabinet of curiosities in early modern Europe to those of the imperial museums of Victorian England. Scholars have critiqued such collecting practices as tied to acquisition and control. Influenced by Pierre Bourdieu’s thesis in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* that consumer practices are a way of fashioning the self within social systems of hierarchy, Susan Stewart describes collecting as the bourgeois practice of manipulating desire (163) and, similarly, Jean Baudrillard calls collecting an “escape and regress” game that mimics mastery of the world (“The System” 16). It is also the mode *par excellence* of the imperial looter, plunderer, and hoarder. The museums, monuments, and palaces of Western Europe attest to the acquisitive impulse that underlies imperial conquest. Collections thus also result from the re-naming and re-organizing of society according to the

epistemology of the victor. Edward Said and Benedict Anderson, among others, have associated collecting more specifically with the colonial practices of definition and categorization.

Collections are indeed based on both acquisition and categorization. They are nonetheless also the product of imaginative work. As Susan Pearce argues in *On Collecting*, “the collecting process is a form of fiction through which imaginative constructions can be expressed” (32). The work of fashioning collections can thus potentially create models of ownership and categorization that are not tied to capitalist exploitation or to positivist determinism. It need not exclusively propagate dominant ideologies about national identity, power or consumption. The creative potential of collecting processes leads me to reclaim the term to talk about critical cultural practices after Yugoslavia. As Walter Benjamin argues and Dubravka Ugrešić shows in *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, which I analyze in Chapter Four, collecting can challenge consumer ideologies by, for example, rescuing the discarded and useless, the refuse of consumer culture. Collecting is furthermore, as the narrator of Ugrešić’s *Museum* muses, an ideal mode of remembrance for displaced people whose lives have been shattered. Post-1989 collecting practices reflect national identity based on fragmentation, not homogeneous identity, and concentrates on the random and contingent work of retrieving refuse and fragments in order to put them back in relation.

Susan Stewart critiques the process of taking objects out of economic circulation to make of them collections, arguing that this practice imposes a new kind of exchange value on them rather than providing an alternative to commodity exchange (152). However, I argue that the object’s re-contextualization is itself the precursor to reinvention, as seen in Ugrešić’s *Museum*. Like the “archive” broadly understood, the “collection” broadly understood can be a resource for opposing more oppressively normative ways of imagining the world and for imagining futures

from the fragments. For example, separate stories framed as being a “collection” of related works can trouble the tendency toward the totality of national and global narratives. The breaks, contradictions, and disruptions between the stories can emphasize their separateness even while the unifying themes that frame them suggest a coherence underlying their relation. Through the categories in which they are organized and the ways in which they are juxtaposed, the works in these collections reflect forms of organization and alliance that sometimes disrupt the common sense of existing economic and geopolitical alignment. They also sometimes put pressure on normative desires for a ex-Yugoslav future based on neoliberal and European attachments. The montages of texts that I analyze do not foreclose alternative modes of thought. Instead, they provide a complex record of the unresolved dilemmas of cultural politics during and after Yugoslavia’s dissolution.

Critiques of collections and, more generally, the critiques of dominant epistemologies that occur in fields like postcolonial and critical race theory, queer theory, and cultural studies, draw attention to the foundational structures that alternative forms of knowledge work to undermine.¹ Recent scholarship on archives and cultural memory provides a useful model for recognizing the activist potential of an otherwise oppressive form like the collection. Scholars like Marita Sturken, Avery Gordon, Ann Cvetkovich, Diana Taylor, and David Eng and David Kanzanjian respond to the authority and finality of dominant sources of history by looking to

¹ Some of the most well-known theories of the archive, that institutional collection of traces from which historical narrative is constructed, present it as being a site of authority and censorship. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said critiques the imperial archive of the “Orient” for domesticating knowledge about geographical spaces in order to justify physically conquering them. In *Archive Fever*, Jacques Derrida characterizes the interpreter of the archive as a patriarchal official with authority to determine correct topology and institutionalize it into truth. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Michel Foucault argues that the archive is the source of discourse and thus determines what can be articulated. Gayatri Spivak argues in “Can the Subaltern Speak” that archives are based on erasure of that which does not fit into the hegemonic order sustained through language and institutions of remembrance. Taken together, these critics make clear that the archive can be used as a tool in the exercise of power.

alternative archives comprised of performance, personal artifacts, ephemera, and detritus.² By redefining what “archive” or “cultural memory” can mean, their work models ways of approaching unconventional archives of cultural texts, such as ex-Yugoslav film festivals and literary anthologies. The cultural works that circulate through these collections do not always reinforce established social structures but sometimes challenge them. The imaginative texts gathered together in these collections can express the details and textures of life in the ex-Yugoslav Europeanizing Western Balkans in critical and creative ways that open the door for more culturally specific and satisfying alternatives to a future of Eurocentric global modernity.

I approach the collections that I analyze in this dissertation as heterogeneous compilations of social memory by considering both the recurring themes and the contradictions that emerge. My foundational questions are the following: what affective politics shape ex-Yugoslav texts that are collected into literary anthologies and film festivals? How are the collected texts framed by each other and by metatextual descriptions of unity? How does this framing enable and delimit social memory? If the collected texts also appear in other contexts, how are they reframed, and how are the reframings and omissions that occur politically, economically, and culturally consequential? The case of the former Yugoslavia opens a window to a broader understanding of the formal limits and possibilities of collections as a way of organizing imaginative thought about history and community; it also enables me to address more generally the relation between politics and aesthetics in contexts of crisis and transition.

² Sturken terms “cultural memory” the personal effects and memories that become public sources of meaning and thus become entangled with more official sources of history (3). These sources of knowledge allow the forgotten and suppressed to inform meaning in the present and visions for the future. Eng and Kanzanijan follow Benjamin in attending to the ruins; the remains of that which has been incorporated into teleological narratives attest to what does not fit into the dominant order. Gordon explores the immaterial ghosts that haunt the present by exposing its façade of order, and Cvetkovich attends to memory, personal collections and ephemera as resources that can be shared when more standard archives as source of knowledge are lacking.

A key case holding the texts in this dissertation together, the Sarajevo Film Festival sits at the intersection of archive and collection. As an inventory of media documents arranged into programs, it displays elements of the archive that is another of my cases, the Susan Sontag papers. This festival and archive both attest to war, cultural activism, and the processes of a “Europeanization” tied to European-Unification. As an event based upon memory both of the wars and of Southeast European alliance, the Sarajevo Film Festival also displays elements of the collection seen in Dubravka Ugrešić’s gathering together of the dispersed residue of the former Yugoslavia and Balkans. As the hinge upon which the collection-archive comparison swings, the film festival is the starting point for an exploration into how processes of self distinction and gathering together are formalized and used to imagine future relationships.

The Sarajevo Film Festival is also an exemplary case for thinking about the role of international, and especially Western, investment in post-Yugoslav cultural reconstruction. As a space that facilitates both cultural production and distribution, it plays an important role in two of the processes crucial to the very existence of cultural works after war and in “small” locales. As an event with strong sponsorship from Western European nations and institutions, it draws to the fore the influence that “Europeanization” has on spaces at the borders of the European Union. Furthermore, the prevalence of the English language at the festival, both at the scheduled events and in informal exchanges, brings attention to the power of English as a diplomatic language but also as a language shaping Western Balkan film and literature production.

My dissertation builds on the analytical approaches of postcolonial and world-literature studies to address the influence of Western investment and Anglophone communication in the Yugoslav successor states. It follows postcolonial theory in attending to the relationship between global structures of power and cultural forms. In contrast to a postcolonial theory that limits its

insights geographically and temporally to the “after” in colonized territories, however, I argue that the civilizing narratives that postcolonial theory critiques are also used to justify the pressure currently on the Yugoslav successor states to prove their “modernity” for inclusion in the “European.” This dissertation follows world-literature theory in attending to the value of an expansive alternative to the literary canon, but it expands the tools of the field by proposing a cinematic way of reading world-literature collections as dialectical montages. It argues that the montage of texts that appears in ex-Yugoslav collections can put pressure on the civilizing narratives being told about the region. This methodology acknowledges the worries in world-literature studies about linguistic difference and the effects of translation, but pays more attention to the effects of the textual juxtaposition that result when works are extracted and re-contextualized. It argues that montages of texts can critically and creatively reflect extant categories for defining the globe. As texts that express memories of the past and desires for the future circulate internationally, their visions of the past and for the future may intensify through convergence with similar texts from elsewhere but may also be altered through this meeting.

My study of collections contributes to scholarship on the public role of cultural memory and social archives by analyzing the formal limits and possibilities of collections as a way of organizing imaginative thought about history and community in the ex-Yugoslav case. In this introduction, I contextualize ex-Yugoslav collections in relation to a history of pejorative stereotypes of the Balkans, the Yugoslav Wars of Succession, and a globalizing present. In the dissertation chapters, I analyze how these understudied collections are produced, organized, and packaged to claim that they reinforce certain distinctions between groups of people while simultaneously articulating unifying elements. I attend to how the juxtapositions of the texts with

each other in the collections stage contradictions and produce ambiguity; I also examine how the texts are reframed in other collections.

The Region in the International Eye: Balkanism, Balkanization, Europeanization

A brief overview of Yugoslavia and its dissolution will help establish the context for the ex-Yugoslav cultural sphere that is the focus of this dissertation. The complex history of what is now called the “Western Balkans” is often submerged under debates about what identities and, consequently, what names the region should espouse. What eventually came to be known as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was established during WWII and led by the leader of the Partisan resistance, Marshall Josip Broz Tito. In 1948, Yugoslavia was expelled from the Communist Information Bureau and became a “non-aligned” country that sided with neither the Soviet Union nor the West. As a result of a variety of political and economic pressures that accumulated in the decade after Tito’s death, several of the republics began declaring independence from each other and the Wars of Succession ensued. Ethnic identity was invoked as the logic for homogeneous national identity and war crimes in the interests of “cleansing” ethnic minorities from regions claimed by another entity were perpetrated by all sides, but in significantly greater numbers by the better armed Serb forces backed by Slobodan Milošević’s populist regime. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia, the Yugoslav successor states, are now referred to as “the Western Balkans” or as part of “Southeast Europe,” plus or minus a few countries. Both terms imply belonging to the “West,” either by articulating belonging to Europe, albeit in a southern eastern way, or by articulating a more occidental leaning Balkan than the eastern variety. They are neither unqualified West nor

unqualified Europe, but they are nonetheless grouped together even after the dissolution of the nation-state of Yugoslavia.

The complex forces leading to dissolution were poorly understood in the international media coverage of the dissolution.³ The thesis that primordial ethnic hatreds and Balkan mentalities made the war inevitable gained traction through repetition in the news coverage until it became a widely accepted interpretation informing even policy decisions (Allen and Seaton 2, Todorova 138, 185, Duffield 176).⁴ The currency of the “ancient ethnic hatreds” explanation reflects the persistence of what Maria Todorova, in reference to Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, has called a “Balkanist” discourse about the region.⁵ This often pejorative discourse about the Balkans characterizes the region as a place of intolerance, provincialism, and persisting Byzantine and Ottoman influences, in opposition to the purported European characteristics of tolerance, plural democracy, and progress. As with the “ancient ethnic hatreds” line during the Yugoslav Wars of Succession, Balkanist discourse has historically been shaped more by journalism, political rhetoric, and travel writing than by a body of scholarship (Bjelić and Savić 7). As a discourse, Balkanism performs two functions in relation to the more dominant Western

³ The power vacuum left by Tito’s death and the fall from power of the League of Communists who had controlled the Yugoslav People’s Army (JNA), as well as a weak economy, high unemployment rate and media that blamed problems on disparities between the republics instead of on the leadership were among the contributing factors (Lampe *Yugoslavia*). The election of nationalist parties in the early 1990s within an atmosphere of heightened chauvinist rhetoric and a renewed emphasis on how each ethnic group had been persecuted during World War II played a defining role (Lampe *Yugoslavia* and *Balkans*, Burg and Shoup).

⁴ Allen and Seaton quote several examples of this, including the following two: “The death of President Tito and the end of communist domination of the former Yugoslavia raised the lid on the cauldron of ancient hatreds. This is the land where at least three religions and a half-dozen ethnic groups have vied across the centuries... It has long been a cradle of European conflict, and it remains so today” (Warren Christopher, US Secretary of State, Department of State Dispatch, 4: 81 (Feb 1993); and “The most intransigent conflicts of all have arisen in regions of ancient mixed ethnicities, as in former Yugoslavia and Caucasia. In both places, the withdrawal of superordinate authority has cast the populations back into a condition that, though anthropologists disagree over whether what they call primitive warfare is primordial or not, is certainly a regression from civilized order. // The practices of territorial displacement, massacre, deliberate desecration of cultural symbols and systematic mistreatment of women, all evidently rife in recent non-state warfare in the Balkans and Trans-caucasia, undeniably resemble those of the surviving Stone Age peoples of the world’s remote regions – at their most savage” (Daily Telegraph, 7 May 1998).

⁵ The intersection of a Foucauldian concern with systems of knowledge (institutional and discursive) and a Gramscian concern with cultural hegemony/consensus undergird Said’s *Orientalism*, and these same concerns also intersect in what is termed “Balkanism.”

Europe's interests. First, it distinguishes "Balkan" disorder from "Enlightened European" order and rationality (Allen and Seaton 4, Todorova 184, Bjelić and Savić 3). Secondly, it interprets the presence of an active folk culture and of more pastoral lifestyles as reflecting the region's belated entry into a modernity it must inevitably develop towards (Todorova 129, Goldsworthy 76-7). This tendency to represent the Balkans as "backwards" informs my decision to draw on postcolonial theory as a model for critiquing the effects of this tendency, which I discuss in further detail later in this introduction.

"Balkanism" and "Balkanization" are two separate concepts that are both important to discussions of communities in the regions; the first refers to the pejorative discourse and the second alludes to the Balkans to describe any process of fragmentation. "Balkanization" was coined to describe the fragmenting effect of the dissolutions of the Habsburg and Romanov Empires after World War I, and it was later popularized in the 1960s as a term to describe the newly independent African states that had broken away from colonial France (Todorova 35). The term was, predictably, revived to describe the wars that divided Yugoslavia into smaller and mutually hostile units in the 1990s. Much research about the Wars of Succession—some of it convincing and some less so—focuses on the political failures and distortions of history that drove the country's fragmentation.⁶ Whereas "balkanization" appears to be an objective descriptor, its negative connotations reveal it to also be filtered by the stereotypes of Balkanism. A foundational concept underlying political and historical scholarship on the Wars of Succession, balkanization also became an organizing concept for interpreting the arts produced during that period; the existing humanities research on ex-Yugoslav cultural productions tends to

⁶ See, for example, work by Renéo Lukić & Allen Lynch, John Lampe, Steven Burg & Paul Shoup, and Andrew Wachtel.

address how cultural works reinforced separatist nationalism or reacted to the traumatizing excesses of the violent dissolution.⁷

At the other end of the spectrum from research emphasizing the fragmenting effects of the Wars of Succession is that advocating the alliance-building power of Europeanization and globalization. The belief that the region should develop toward European and North American economic and political formations has gained local support even as it simultaneously perpetuates stereotypes of Balkan backwardness and Western European progress.⁸ The civilizing and developing projects performed by colonial European countries throughout the world were also Europeanizing projects, for all practical purposes. What makes the Europeanization of the Balkans distinct is that it is ubiquitously named as such even while aimed at a region that is geographically already a part of the contiguous European continent. Leading up to Yugoslavia's dissolution, Europeanization most explicitly meant conforming to the norms of the European Commission (EC), which is now the European Union (EU).⁹ Negotiations for a peaceful dissolution of Yugoslavia were initially brokered by the EC, which established that it would recognize the successor states if each would conform to the standards for EC membership (Lampe *Balkans* 263; Burg and Shoup 86). This strategy ultimately failed because of escalating violence and because Germany broke with the EC position and recognized independent Slovenia

⁷ See, for example, work by Tatjana Aleksić, Xavier Bougarel, Elissa Helms & Ger Duijzings, Jasmina Husanović, and Dubravka Ugrešić.

⁸ After World War I, bringing the Balkans into modernity was presented as being a process of Europeanization (Todorova 13), and it continues to be presented as such. Maria Todorova describes modernization of the Balkans as follows: "... the process of 'Europeanization,' 'Westernization,' or 'modernization' of the Balkans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries included the spread of rationalism and secularization, the intensification of commercial activities and industrialization, the formation of a bourgeoisie and other new social groups in the economic and social sphere, and above all, the triumph of the bureaucratic nation-state. From this point of view the Balkans were becoming European by shedding the last residue of an imperial legacy, widely considered an anomaly at the time, and by assuming and emulating the homogeneous European nation-state as the normative form of social organization" (13).

⁹ These norms include standards for minority rights, sovereignty within borders, multi-party elections, and other such democratic expectations, but also include regulations on production and a push toward privatization, in a reflection of more neoliberal economic expectations.

and Croatia before an acceptable policy on minority rights had been written into Croatia's constitution (Lampe *Balkans* 263; Glenny 164; Burg and Shoup 93; Stokes 5). Dissolution was nonetheless set up as a path to EC membership, and the requirements for ascension to the EU continue to set the standard for political and civil processes in the Yugoslav successor states. Slovenia entered the EU in 2004, Croatia in 2013, and the remaining successor states are currently at various stages of candidacy for membership.

The portrayal of Yugoslav dissolution laid out in more recent explanatory histories is complicated by a longer view historical narrative that includes histories of shifting empires, Ottoman presence, and a legacy of liberal humanist intervention in the region. The “civilizing mission” that has been at work on the region in recent years is part of a much longer running project of shaping the remains of “European Turkey,” or “Turkey in Europe,” of the Ottoman empire into proper European nation-states. For dissolution is a misnomer – Yugoslavia was not a federation of previously independent nation-states but rather a federation of republics with some histories of distinction but much longer histories of commonality. “Progress” means leaving behind the political and cultural legacies of an Ottoman past, as Todorova argues (13), including its unities, in favor of a fragmented front better suited to being unified by the EU's mantra of “unified in difference.” The Yugoslav successor states are thus a rich case for exploring the limits and possibilities of collections, a form exemplifying the “unified in difference” concept. Focusing on the collections of works presented as unified thus draws attention to the complexities of “transition” as a process presented as being civilizational progress rather than as a shifting of unities and creation of difference for better assimilation into the European status quo.

Postcolonial Temporality and World Literature

The stereotypes of Balkanism often filter how “balkanization” and “Europeanization” are interpreted as socio-political movements in the Yugoslav successor states. Fragmentation is interpreted as demonstrating insufficient civilization and Europeanization is interpreted as being a path to civilization.¹⁰ Because such civilizing narratives frame current discourse and policy about ex-Yugoslav spaces, the critique in postcolonial theory of similar narratives provides a useful theoretical and methodological model for approaching the region. A strain of work in postcolonial scholarship argues that the civilizing missions that accompanied Western European colonialism were based on a teleological narrative of progress to “modernity.” This ideology assumed Western political and social formations to be the model for the rest of the world. Civilizing narratives were used to justify colonial conquest by categorizing the new subjects as being insufficiently civilized to participate in political modernity.¹¹ The rhetoric around and implementation of European normalization in the Yugoslav successor states sometimes plays out as a reformulation of civilizing narratives.¹² Within this progressive developmental structure, the

¹⁰ I discuss both of these phenomena in greater detail in my chapters. See, for example, the description of international activism for Sarajevans in Chapter 1 (e.g., Joseph Biden’s characterization of the Serbs as “barbarians”) and the description of language around Europeanization in Chapter 3 (e.g., the strictures on the festival’s themes and content required to secure sponsorship). A review of news articles further exemplifies the connections drawn between civilization, fragmentation, and Europeanization and include repeated characterization of Europe and the US as the “civilized world” during the wars and ascension to the European Union as “progress.”

¹¹ See, for example, Said *Culture* 273, Chatterjee, Chakrabarty 4, Ashcroft 179, 216.

¹² For example, the Office of the High Representative and EU Special Representative (OHR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina was instituted at the Dayton Peace Accords as the highest authority in the country on matters of the implementation of the Accords and the processes required for Bosnia’s ascension to the European Union. It is 53% funded by EU and 22% by US (“OHR General Information”). The OHR has final authority on all political processes in Bosnia, including the ability to impose or veto laws and to remove officials from office. Between 1995 and 2004, the OHR implemented, changed, or vetoed over 100 laws and removed 150 elected officials from their positions (Majstorović 629). Danijela Majstorović argues that the OHR has been critiqued for disrespecting the nation’s sovereignty, for authoritarianism, and for “colonial” behavior. David Chandler argues in *Bosnia: Faking Democracy after Dayton* that the “democratization” of Bosnia by international institutions revived “the divisive colonial framework of the ‘White Man’s Burden’ in the liberal language of international ‘ethical’ rights based foreign policy,” even while in practice it “restricted democratic rights and freedoms, cohered ethnic and regional divisions and prevented any lasting solution based on the needs of the people of the region.” Overall, he argues that international intervention primarily benefited international institutions and governments by establishing the legitimacy and functioning as a testing ground from them to integrate their policies (200).

Balkans and the Yugoslav successor states are mapped as developmentally prior and subordinate to Western Europe.

I draw on postcolonial and world-literature studies to theorize collections that imagine gathering together in ways other than the civilized end-goal of Western European integration. I ask what forms civilizing missions take in works representing the Wars of Succession and their aftermaths. Does the region's economic and political marginality influence the form that cultural productions from the region take? How do the hierarchies and demands of world-literary circulation enable works from and about the successor states to become public? How do they delimit the publicity and significance of these texts? What pressures does it create for authors to write in dominant languages or allow their works to be translated?

As a field of inquiry, postcolonial studies has primarily focused on colonialism and responses to it in South Asia, the Caribbean, and Africa. Its scholars have discussed the economic and discursive contexts that led to and developed out of colonialism and the alternative economic and discursive models that the "Global South" or "Third World" might offer the "West." As a region in Europe not subject to settler colonization by modern nation-states and populated mostly by people who are generally racialized as white in current discourse, the Yugoslav Successor States do not obviously gain from and contribute to postcolonial studies. And while 19th-century British travel writers and pamphleteers, including William Gladstone, perpetuated Balkanism in their representations of the Balkans and campaigns for humanitarian intervention against the Ottoman Empire, a civilizing mission was only weakly instituted during the era of colonialism proper. The media coverage of the Wars of Succession in the 1990s, however, revived and multiplied the Balkanist discourse that described the region as defined by primordial ethnic violence and medieval social structures. An array of international

governmental and non-governmental organizations have since saturated the region. Furthermore, the region's complex subject history within the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, its stance against USSR and US alignment during the Cold War, and its more recent experiences with institutions like NATO and the EU enrich understandings of the forms domination takes. The current machinations of a civilizing mission, including the steps towards the successor states' inclusion in the European Union, situate the region as character within a progress narrative. Studies of the region exceed a narrower binary of "West" versus "Third World/Global South" to add to a more nuanced conversation about contemporary civilizing missions.

This dissertation contributes to the work that Gayatri Spivak calls for in *Death of a Discipline*: inquiry informed by postcolonial theory but not limited to its more narrow historical and regional focus (81).¹³ Civilizing missions are carried out within many different power dynamics and historical contexts. In the case of Yugoslavia and its successor states, the condition of moving toward civilized modernity is represented as being that of *transition*. Along with the former Soviet states after 1989, the Yugoslav successor states are represented as being places "in transition." In addition to the process of conforming to EU legal norms and replacing socialist institutions and practices with capitalist ones, which "transition" most commonly refers to in this context, the Yugoslav successor states are also transitioning to more ethnically homogeneous nation-states and to more Western-European focused foreign policy. Yugoslavia was a federation of republics that each provided special representation for one of the federation's ethnic identities, whereas now the republics, with some changes to their borders and with the exception of Bosnia, are separate nation-states with a clear ethnic majority. Yugoslavia also based its Cold-War foreign policy on "non-alignment," siding with other Third World nations on the international

¹³ She advocates study of "the older U.S. marginalities: Hispanic, African; and the heritage of older empires: Russian, Ottoman, Habsburg" and attention to other media such as "First National orality" (81).

political stage and establishing student, cultural and trade credit exchanges with African, Arab and Asian countries (Griffith 121, 125). Yugoslavia's violent dissolution resulted in its successor states being expelled from non-aligned membership in 1992, and the policies of its successor states are now focused primarily on conforming to the standards for inclusion in the European Union, with some exception in Serbia, Bosnia and Kosovo.

At the nexus of multiple transitions—to more capitalist economies, more homogeneous citizens more likely to arrive at consensus, and more European-focused policies—the Yugoslav successor states appear to be moving on a progressive path to “civilized modernity.” Not always stated in the somewhat passé terms of “civilization” and “modernity” (although these terms do show up more often than one might imagine), a neoliberal Europe whose structures benefit the Western countries is nonetheless the foundational value echoing throughout the much more common catchphrases of “transition” and “Europeanization.” What the collections I analyze in this dissertation demonstrate, however, is that this characteristic of being “in transition” need not lead to a predetermined consensus; the cultural expressions that emerges in societies in “transition” does not necessarily reflect a move from a more backwards past to a more neoliberal European future. Instead, such culture may be in “translation,” to use Dipesh Chakrabarty's alternative historiographic category that emphasizes difference. They may offer visions of the future nuanced with elements not conventionally found in conceptions of an idealized European future. They may also problematize “translation,” literally understood, as a mode required for entry into global circulation but entailing profound transformation of the text and culture.¹⁴

The critical preoccupations of postcolonial theory can carry through to sharpen the ethical impulse of a category that the texts in this dissertation more easily fall into: World Literature.

¹⁴ The Anglophone emphasis of world literary and film study severely limits its scope, as it involves ignoring texts not originally in or translated into English.

New cultural works respond to evolving expressions of the civilizing narratives critiqued in postcolonial studies. These creative critiques are filtered, however, by the cultural institutions through which they become public and take formal shape. Studies in World Literature provide an instructional example of the hazards of institutional sponsorship of texts. On one hand, world-literature studies could be seen as a way of reading literature that shakes up hardened conventions for determining what a collection of serious literature entails. Like collections, literary canons are produced through discriminatory selection and categorization, after all. Recent scholarship in World Literature advocates attending to texts that might not otherwise be recognized in more traditional canons; it pushes beyond a study of “classic” texts concentrated in Europe to propose a broadly outlined range of works, such as David Damrosch’s “literary works that circulate beyond their culture of origin” (4). On the other hand, world-literature studies also sometimes manifests as a limitless project of incorporation and categorization, closer to the systematic mapping and positivist categorizing that underlay imperial conquest than the finite, focused and sometimes even whimsical characteristics of the collection. In *The Death of a Discipline*, Gayatri Spivak critiques the expansive scope of inquiry advanced by some world-literature scholars. She points to the tendency toward a systemic mapping of “global” literature that Franco Moretti, following Marx and Goethe, advocates in “Conjecture on World Literature” (107, n1). She calls those who practice this systematic inclusiveness “Encyclopedists” (87) and criticizes the “arrogance of the cartographic reading of world lit. in translation” (73).¹⁵ Such approaches lose the detailed and careful reading of texts in their cultural contexts that Spivak advocates. Attenuated calls for a more systematic approach to literature continue to arise,

¹⁵ Such encyclopedic reading of world literature has been rendered imaginatively in fiction such as Jorge Luis Borges’ “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius,” in which intellectuals create a world by imagining it or “The Aleph,” in which a viewer can see everything in the universe from one point in his home, or Danilo Kiš of Yugoslavia’s “The Encyclopedia of the Dead,” in which a secret archive hold detailed records of the lives of all of those not recorded in other histories.

however. For example, Theo D’haen proposes an open-access electronic collection of world literature in English translation enabled through government funding, and Reingard Nethersole calls for an inventory of world-wide library holdings and subject categories in order to identify patterns of shared meaning in this “receptacle of the world’s scriptural memory” (314).

Moretti, D’haen, and Nethersole’s schema aim for an inclusive approach to literature, but their proposals do not adequately address the cultural and discursive hierarchies that overdetermine what works from peripheral and less respected literary locales will come to mean when placed next to works with more cultural capital. As systems theorists from Marx and Engels to Immanuel Wallerstein, Samir Amin and David Harvey argue, global human belonging to a world of integrated institutions and markets does not ensure even access to resources and opportunities. Uneven distribution and access applies to discursive resources as well, as scholars like Michel Foucault, Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak have shown; often those with the least access to capital are also least well positioned to influence how they and their world are represented, politically or imaginatively. This systemic silencing of those “on the periphery,” to use the language of world-systems theory, has been a key problem towards which theorists and writers of postcolonial and minority literatures have aimed their thinking. More assimilation to the content and style of more dominant traditions, with enough difference added to provide exoticism, may make circulation more likely for small literatures. For example, the reception and canonization of Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* in the West may result in part from its form as a realist novel, one familiar to many readers in the West and one with established markets. Furthermore, when differences do exist, these risk being obscured within the new cultural context, as exemplified in *Things Fall Apart* when the district commissioner misreads Okonkwo’s suicide as exemplifying his pacification instead of as his protest against such

pacification. Furthermore, texts written in or translated into dominant languages like English or French are more likely to become representative texts regardless of how well or poorly they convey the nuance and complexity of their “home” cultural tradition.

The literature of “small nations,” as Franz Kafka designated texts from less economically, linguistically and culturally influential contexts (193), is easily crowded out by more dominant languages and literary centers. The case of *Things Fall Apart* exemplifies how historical timeliness and appeal to larger audiences can make the literature of less powerful regions visible. In addition to being written in English, the language of Nigeria’s former colonizer, and in the marketable form of a realist novel, *Things Fall Apart* also benefited from currency in the West. It was published at the height of decolonization in Africa and at a time when the existence of institutional racism was also being brought to the forefront in the United States. This timeliness accentuated the political implications of Achebe’s decision to write in English rather than in African language or in an Africanized pidgin English, which writers like Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o and Obiajunwa Wali would later choose to do instead. The debates around form and language in decolonizing Africa provides an instructive, if limited, comparison for thinking about the literature of the Yugoslav successor states. The translation and anthologization of Ferida Duraković’s *Heart of Darkness* poems, which I discuss in Chapter Two, exemplifies the timely visibility that writers receive when they come to represent a location in the international eye—in this case because of Yugoslavia’s dissolution in the 1990s. Like Chinua Achebe’s novels, Aleksandar Hemon’s English-language publications, which I discuss in Chapter Four, exemplify the power of global languages and literary markets to shape writers. They also demonstrate the power of linguistic dispossession to unsettle a dominant language like English and its hierarchies, as Achebe’s and Kafka’s writing arguably also do. Dubravka

Ugrešić's work, which I also discuss in Chapter Four, brings to the fore the authoritative power of one Europeanizing nation-state, Tuđman-era Croatia, and the homogenizing tendency of systems based on consensus and capital, in a critique of the hegemony of Europe perhaps indebted to the work of the writers of decolonization.

Duraković, Hemon, and Ugrešić's works, which have been incorporated into dominant language and distribution networks, critique "global" systems and call for fairness within existing hierarchies. Coming from a region that is almost Europe, almost white, and whose subjecthood to various empires and, more recently, to EU and NATO intervention do not quite qualify it as having been colonized, these writers trouble too neat categories for analyzing global power divisions. The Yugoslav successor states contribute cultural works that do not fit smoothly within colonizing/colonized, West/East, Europe/not Europe, and white/not-white binaries used to articulate the politics of a postcolonial inflected world-literature studies.

Although I argue that world literary and filmic collections can enable productive interpretive work at the structural level, my analyses also put pressure on the structural emphasis of a world-literature theory based on world-systems theory. The texts that I analyze remember the past and dream up futures in a layered expression of feeling and desire that cannot be reduced to sales and distribution figures. Such texts require attention to how the emotional charges and bodily inscriptions of memories of past and imaginings of future forms of belonging shape texts, both in their original contexts and as they are reframed elsewhere. Memories of Yugoslav, ethnic-national, folk, and Balkan identities overlap with the forces that shape belonging in European, Muslim, women's, and human communities. The designation "ex-Yugoslav," which is used more commonly in BCS than "post-Yugoslav," better articulates these residual and emergent feelings of affinity. Although the designator "former Yugoslav" may be more neutral,

it less effectively conveys the complicated and sometimes ambivalent feelings that attend former, and possibly future, relations.

My project also examines cultural expressions beyond the printed materials that are the disciplinary focus of world-literature studies. World-literature projects like the worldwide inventory of library holdings run into the problem of unequal distribution of resources and cultural capital; they are also limited by their focus on print media. Such inventories follow the model of the archive as repository of written record, and they do so at the expense of more visual, performed, and ephemeral forms of cultural expression.¹⁶ The written text is the foundational medium for what is defined as literature, yet older media like oral narration and newer ones like film invariably shape and are shaped by literature. Furthermore, other media are often shaped by the same historical and cultural conditions as is the literature contemporaneous to it; comparing and contrasting the ways different media express and challenge these conditions can enrich the analysis of any singular medium. I argue that the collection of short works emerges as a defining form during and after Yugoslavia's dissolution, and this phenomenon occurs across forms (e.g., short story and poem) and across media (e.g., print and film).

I analyze the medium of the collection by putting collections of different media in comparative context. By comparing print and film in anthologies, festivals and archives, I draw attention to how media differently shape works into the alternative archives I join under the term "collection." Reading these forms and media side-by-side proves instructive for analyzing the effect of circulation and changing contexts on individual works. For example, circulation is an important process underlying "world" literature. The production, exhibition and distribution of

¹⁶ Jacques Derrida critiques the authority attached to archival record in *Archive Fever*. Diana Taylor argues that performance studies can work as an antidote to the logocentrism of writing focused archival epistemologies in *The Archive and the Repertoire*, and Ann Cvetkovich similarly attends to the ephemeral and personal archives of feelings as counter to the documents of dominant culture in *An Archive of Feelings*.

films through the Sarajevo Film Festival, an institution now more powerful and better funded than libraries and publishing houses in Sarajevo, dramatically displays the benefits of regional collaboration at the material level. Furthermore, the regional program at the festival has developed and changed over almost twenty incarnations of the event. As a producer of culture, more visible and prolific than the houses publishing print anthologies or poetry collections, the film festival functions as an influential performance of regional identity against which the work of other identity-defining collections gain distinction and nuance. However, even though the celebrity associated with the very public festival makes of it a key event for developing film careers and enabling collaboration, its finite location in space and time limits the more unexpected and indeterminate uses to which an anthology of print texts might be put.

Comparing and contrasting film and literary collections also allows productive conceptual borrowing and overlap between the theories of cinema and the theories of print. As an example key to the method of this dissertation, the “montage” in film theory supplies a metaphor for thinking about collections at the formal level that captures its visual elements in ways more apt than do the terms of narrative theory. When a plurality of frames are ordered into collections, they can either be arranged into something like what film studies calls a continuous montage or into a disjunctive montage. Continuity editing makes the shift in frames imperceptible through their streamlined arrangement into a closed narrative with the appearance of verisimilitude. On the other hand, disjunctive montage, also called discontinuity or dialectical montage, draws attention to the change in frames in ways that can emotionally or viscerally affect viewers and that requires of them additional mental effort in order to orient themselves. Specifically, Sergei Eisenstein’s theory of montage as dialectical collisions between images, shots, and thoughts, which itself comes out of a reading of war and revolution, presents a productive methodology for

analyzing the translation, curation, and anthologization of shorts works, such as poems and films, for international collections. When ideas that conflict are superimposed, the contradiction becomes more evident (Eisenstein 49, 82).

When “small” literatures circulate to more powerful ones, they invariably lose some of the specificity they had in the contexts of their emergence. On the other hand, they also take on new meanings and resonances in their new contexts. In response to critiques of what a work loses when it circulates internationally, I suggest reading international collections of texts as discontinuous montages. The idea that a continuous or disjunctive arrangement of frames can differently affect how easily a film is digested translates to analyses of collections of stories, films and artifacts. For example, although each individual film exhibited in a film festival program is composed of a multitude of frames arranged into either a continuous montage, discontinuous montage, or blend of both, the films themselves are also arranged into a series of screenings arranged into categories, such as “Documentary Films” or “Southeast European Films.” The films in these categories may fit seamlessly together into a homogeneous reification of what constitutes documentary filmmaking or a region’s cinema, but they may also result in discontinuities with each other that disrupt conventional narratives. The superimposition of texts within multi-text collections adds dimension to the individual works, but it can also draw out contradictions that trouble the collection’s paratextual framing.

This methodology of reading collections for dialectical montage attends to the details of how individual texts are juxtaposed. It also takes a more macro focus on textual circulation by analyzing continuities between texts in their original cultural and linguistic contexts and those same texts when they have travelled to new contexts. The translation and anthologization of a text multiplies the frames through which it can be understood, as the different languages and

different anthology focuses filter the text in different ways. Reading Ferida Duraković's Bosnian-language poem "A War Letter" that appears in a collection named *Heart of Darkness* alongside its English-language translation in an anthology named *A Map of Hope*, for example, produces a juxtapositions of difference that puts pressure on the more dominant epistemologies of the new context. When works circulate outside of the context of their emergence, the local structures of feeling registered are altered, amplified or exceeded by structures of a larger scale. Attention to what can be gained through reframing and re-assembling calls attention to the more productive effects of the translation and anthologization of works. Reading for the insights produced by juxtapositions of decontextualized texts is an important supplement to reading for the loss produced when these texts become "global." Although the world-literature project entails some flattening of linguistic and cultural difference, there is something productive in the alternative contextualization that a text receives when included in an international collection of works, particularly when the new linguistic and paratextual frames are acknowledged and analyzed alongside the new ones.

Collections: Alternative Collectivity

This dissertation argues that analyzing collections as dialectical montages can draw out visions for publics not articulated in more singular cultural forms. Walter Benjamin's "collector" in *The Arcades Project* highlights the emancipatory potential of a radical collecting process based on dialectical montage. In Convolute H of Benjamin's "literary montage," the collector pulls commodities out of circulation and imposes a non-economically determined order on them. He claims that "what is decisive in collecting is that the object is detached from all its original functions in order to enter into the closest conceivable relation to things of the same kind. This

relation is the diametric opposite of any utility, and falls into the peculiar category of completeness” (205 [H1a,2]). The object may no longer have use-value, although in the case of a story or a film it may continue to be used, but it also is no longer fetishized as commodity. Instead, it enters into the enchantment of the collector’s world, into its logic and totality. There are problems with the collection; its encyclopedic impulse toward completeness and its disassociation from its larger contexts are commented on in the montage of quotes in Benjamin’s convolute. The collection can nonetheless also function as a tool for imaginative work. In reference to Baudelaire, Benjamin represents the collector as an allegorist who spins meaning from the affinities invented between the objects. By reincorporating the refuse of capitalist modernity into collections with a logic different than the prevailing capitalist one, the collector can construct an alternative to the hierarchies of dominant narratives and taxonomies (*Arcades* 205). Benjamin demonstrates this process through *The Arcades Project*, which is itself a collection of quotations juxtaposed to stage their contradictions and intersections. As I argue in the chapters of this dissertation, alternative hierarchies that challenge those presented by the collector him or herself can also emerge from the chemistry of texts brought into proximity. If the work of the collector can produce irresolution about existing ways of imagining the world and conjure alternatives, such collections are alternative sources of knowledge and imagination.

In this dissertation, I analyze literary anthologies, film festival programs, and library archives as collections of works. The texts composing these collections and the ways that they are framed and ordered create structures for imagining relationships that sometimes challenge more linear narration of national identity. The multi-republic federalizing project of Yugoslavia and the more homogenized ethnic national projects of its post-dissolution successor states are based on differing visions of citizenship and belonging. For both Yugoslavia and its successor

states, however, archives of print culture stand as legitimizations of the nation's status. The Archives of Yugoslavia ("Arhiv Jugoslavije") in Belgrade, which were established a few years after the nation in 1950 and included records relating to a range of phenomena, including the Yugoslav volunteers in the Spanish Civil War, Trade Unions and Workers Organizations before 1945, a poster collection from 1953 onwards, and a collection of memoirs, turned into the Archives of Serbia and Montenegro after Yugoslavia's break up ("Arhiv Srbije i Crne Gore").¹⁷ Furthermore, the collections that each of Yugoslavia's constituent republics had housed turned into the state archive of the each successor state. For example, the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina's library, which had been established in 1945, became the nation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's national library in 1992.

In contrast to the authority associated with these print culture repositories, the more fragmented archives of films, texts and events that formed during and after Yugoslavia's dissolution re-imagine ethnic national, regional and global belonging. Collections of works, whether anthologies of previously published texts or miscellanies of new ones, are produced by a selective gathering together of multiple texts from multiple authors into a whole framed as being coherent even while composed of multifarious parts that do not necessarily arrive at consensus. As Barbara Benedict argues in relation to 18th-century British publishing practices after the Restoration, the genre of literary anthologies can express tendencies in the public sphere. Alice Te Punga Somerville takes this argument a step further in relation to 20th-century Pacific Literatures. She argues that the anthologies of Pacific writers assembled by prominent Samoan poet Albert Wendt exist as such because the infrastructural and financial limitations for writers of color in the Pacific constrain the publication of longer free standing works, but these

¹⁷ In 2009, after Montenegro separated from Serbia, the Archives of Serbia and Montenegro were once again renamed the Archives of Yugoslavia, in what is perhaps a reflection of a decline in the nationalist role of the archives and a move toward a more historically precise reflection of their contents.

anthologies nonetheless create a regional community of writers united by the “Oceania” Wendt advocates. As with 18th-century British and 20th-century Pacific anthologies, the coherence that frames ex-Yugoslav collections is the foundation for the community imagined therein, whether that community is national, regional, or identity based; when the texts become framed as being coherent based on a theme (e.g., “human rights”) or an identity category (e.g., “women”), the texts inside are also filtered through this defining category. For example, when a collection’s paratextual matter, such as its title and editor’s introduction, labels the text “post-Yugoslav,” it is arguing that each included text fits the unifying category of having been Yugoslav but having now moved beyond that. If texts are labeled “ex-Yugoslav,” an argument is being made that relations other than a progressive moving-on exist, ones that include the residual desire and repulsion that ambivalent feelings after a break-up might include.

On the other hand, the collection can also disrupt total unities through the multiplicity represented within. Separate stories framed as post-Yugoslav, ex-Yugoslav, or any other label appear within *collections* of works that can play out as a disjunctive, or discontinuous montage; the breaks, contradictions, and disruptions between the texts emphasize their separateness at the formal and thematic levels. Unexpected moves and twists in their contents and arrangement can produce alternative meanings between the folds. The collection form can simultaneously trouble the tendency toward totality of the unifying labels that frame the texts. The works contained within collections have the potential to thematically and stylistically put pressure on the categories that define them, due to the character of the works themselves as well as to the multivalent heterogeneity structural to the form. They sometimes disrupt the common sense of existing geopolitical alignment and sympathy and sometimes put pressure on normative desires for a ex-Yugoslav future based on European and global attachments.

Knowledge about the world is formed within systems of language and thought that delimit what phenomena come to mean. It is thus important to pay attention to how collections are framed in order to analyze the narratives about the world that they tell. Whether presented as being a text about women's solidarity or ex-Yugoslav relation, collections are delimited and focused by how they are framed.¹⁸ I argue that compilations of texts identified as representing various nationalities approximate international alliance, through unities such as "International women's solidarity," "European unification" and "Yugoslav reunification," but close reading of the texts juxtaposed within the collections can also complicate the progressive solidarity that frames the texts. For example, I analyze how the siege era poems from Sarajevo writer Ferida Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* collection, which allude to Conrad's text to critique contemporary civilizing missions to the Balkans, are anthologized in an international collection of women's human rights writing. The poems lose some of their critique of progress narratives when they become part of the global progressive "human rights" narrative, but they also gain from the critiques of imperial and ethnic violence in other writings in the collection and challenge the pat claims about Bosnian Muslims present in another text by a Balkan writer in the anthology.

An emphasis on the process of compiling texts, with its modes of compartmentalizing, categorizing, reordering, and compiling follows the dominant modes of theorizing the ex-Yugoslav spaces as either "balkanizing" (becoming compartmentalized) or "Europeanizing"

¹⁸A 'frame', in this chapter and in the dissertation as a whole, is defined according to two of the word's related senses. First, to frame is to create a framework (conceptual system) that gives form. To formulate and to frame are thus related, as they both suggest that something is being given shape to (form, framework). Secondly, to frame is to metatextually introduce a text and suggests its significance, in the narratological sense a frame story. This sense of the frame story is related to the framing that occurs with image, including the frames in a film montage. There are important distinctions between the kind of frame that encloses a framed story and the kind of frame that encloses an image; for the purposes of this chapter, however, I draw on the delimiting and focusing roles that frames play in both narrative and image. Delimiting in that they enclose and therefore fence off whatever is not in the enclosure. And focusing in that the greater context is fenced off, bringing attention to whatever is within the frame.

(being compiled into a larger whole). However, the attention in this dissertation to both the compartmentalizing and unifying modes keeps the two in tension. It takes seriously Dipesh Chakrabarty's call in *Provincializing Europe* to trouble universals even while using totalities as a way of thinking. By inquiring into what logics of unity frame the separate texts gathered together, I explore the various forms of ex-Yugoslav cultural memory and allegiance advanced in the collections. By inquiring into what categories of difference arise, I explore the pressure exerted on the generalization that unifying projects require.

Ex-Yugoslav texts gathered together into montages of works can provide pathways for imagining futures other than normalized integration into European economic and political unity. The logic of gathering together in these collections reflects and responds to the ethnic nationalism and contentious separatism of the Wars of Succession and the Europeanizing project for EU inclusion. Rather than parroting the hegemonic ethnic nationalist or EU agendas, these collections formalize unexpected collaborations and alternative forms of allegiance to the national or European. Bringing together works identified as, for example, "Southeast European," "ex-Yugoslav," or "Global South" enables the formulation of other kinds of allegiance than the national, European, or global identity. Other avenues for solidarity and satisfaction are sometimes explicitly articulated in the language framing the texts, and sometimes they appear as a result of the meanings produced when the texts are placed side-by-side. The meaningful effects of these juxtapositions may or may not be intended: the festival programmer, anthology editor and collector all arrange disparate pieces into montages with some kind of order and story, even when the taxonomies they work with are fluid and the teleologies they imply frayed.

Questions about how belonging and memory are articulated in ex-Yugoslav collections require attention to arrangement. Rather than understanding the collection simply as object, this

dissertation attends to how compiling works, ordering them into montage, and framing them with unifying categories can produce unexpected expressions of multiplicity and irresolution. The collections that I analyze acknowledge dominant narratives, such as neoliberal economic circulation and European political unification. However, they also dream up alternative futures, such as a Europe that protects its minorities and a world free of human rights abuses against women. And they acknowledge the residual emotional register of the past, such as the power of “yugo-nostalgia” and the shame of being labeled “Balkan.” The multiplicity and fragmentation of the collection form can communicate subtle expressions of hope, nostalgia, imagination and memory at odds with more dominant narratives of what progress toward a better world entails. These collections sometimes produce social worlds imagined otherwise, but they are nonetheless grounded in the contingencies of material conditions on the ground that can disrupt the cleanness of these visions. The effects of scarce funding for the arts, publishing and production companies with minimal influence, awkward translations, and the pressures for politically correct language and themes also play into the expressions of hope and future articulated in the collections. The politically saturated terms “balkanization,” “Europeanization” and “globalization” come up against messy, sometimes contradictory, but ultimately hopeful forms of articulating identity and belonging.

Chapters

The first chapter, **An Image of Europe’s Future: Sarajevo Siege Arts in the New Century**, focuses on the siege-era Sarajevo Theatre and Film Festival as a key cultural genre in the early ex-Yugoslav era and one strongly influenced by the West through the participation of

Susan Sontag. I build my analysis of the festival from primary research of festival ephemera in the Susan Sontag Papers at UCLA and field research at the Sarajevo Film Festival, the festival's more recent incarnation. The documents provide details about the process of developing a national identity during crisis. These details complicate the claims that American writer Susan Sontag made during her staging of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* for the festival about Sarajevo's model Europeanness. I argue that the archive and the festival, as collections of multiple texts ordered for exhibition in ways that do not completely clear out contradictions or excess, better display the ongoing dilemmas of cultural politics in Sarajevo than does the more singular image of a European Sarajevo as framed by Sontag's political advocacy.

Contemporaneously with the development of the festival in Sarajevo, the poetry collection emerged as an important political genre for Bosnia and, for international publishers, about Bosnia. Ferida Duraković published a collection of poems titled *Heart of Darkness* in reference to Joseph Conrad's work of the same name. The second chapter, **Textual Montages as World Literature: The Anthologization of Ferida Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* Poems**, argues that these poems thematically resist the desire for inclusion in a symbolic "Europe" and advocate instead a future based on alternative models of memory and alliance. The collection's "heart of darkness" metaphor, which provides an intertextual reference point for articulating ambivalence to the ideologies of European modernity, puts pressure on oversimplified visions of global modernity advanced in the world-literature anthologies in which the poems circulate. The poems' translation and publication alongside works by writers from around the world mark their entry into the utopian global modernity of Anglophone world literature at odds with their challenge to fantasies of European modernity.

In the nearly two decades since the end of the Yugoslav Wars of Succession, the goals and structure of film and literature production have changed to respond to the political and economic pressures of Europeanization. The third chapter, **The Production of Ex-Yugoslav Southeastern Europe at the Sarajevo Film Festival**, treats more recent festival programs in order to assess the effect of changing pressures on the arts after Yugoslavia. A cultural institution established during the war, the Sarajevo Film Festival has adapted since the war to the current climate of “Europeanization.” This chapter argues that the festival’s more utopian role as an example of peaceful and productive transnational collaboration sometimes conflicts with its more practical role of securing the Western European sponsorship upon which much film production in the region depends. This sponsorship often requires evidence of Balkan normalization toward becoming “modern European.” The festival’s films suggest alternatives to this progressive goal toward a normalized ex-Yugoslav European future by instead mining the past. Based on analysis of the films programmed and field notes, oral histories and festival ephemera from the 2010 festival, I argue that that the collection of films programmed draws out memories of past attachments as models for alternatives to Europeanization.

One of the effects of the Wars of Yugoslav Succession was to scatter a large percentage of its population outside of the geographic borders of the former nation. Writers who continue to work outside of the former country bring a specific experience of displacement and fragmentation to their representation of the former country. Furthermore, they must negotiate the contingencies of publishing in languages other than their first for audiences for whom they often stand out as token authors representing a country that they never actually lived in. The fourth chapter, **Museum Novels and Story Montages: The Poetics of Cultural Memory in the Literature of Ex-Yugoslav Exile**, addresses two diasporic ex-Yugoslav writers who critically

engage the poetics of cultural memory in relation to Southeast European identity. *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, a “museum-novel” by the prolific Dubravka Ugrešić, and *Love and Obstacles*, a short-story collection by multiply awarded and *New Yorker* staple Aleksandar Hemon, represent the curatorial process of collecting fragments of ex-Yugoslav culture into meaningful ensembles. I argue that these works simultaneously represent the fragmentation of balkanization and the gathering together enabled by ex-Yugoslav curatorial and collaborative arts production to express ambivalence towards Europe’s past and to the future it promises. They attend to the material and human debris left in the wake of progress in collections of memory objects and stories to draw out the tensions between residual identities and future collectivities. By inquiring into what logics of unity frame the separate texts gathered together, I explore the various forms of ex-Yugoslav cultural memory and allegiance advanced in the collections.

In the chapters of this dissertation, I analyze how the juxtapositions of texts in ex-Yugoslav collections stage contradictions and produce nuanced ways of remembering and belonging. My method in these chapters draws heavily on the close reading practices of literary and film analysis, but it does so in a way informed by cultural and historical context. It follows Gayatri Spivak’s call in *Death of a Discipline* for close readings of “the everyday cultural detail, condition and effect of sedimented cultural idiom” (16) in their ex-Yugoslav historical and cultural setting. It also takes seriously the Frankfurt school, and especially Walter Benjamin’s, attention to socio-political implications of form; collections can do something in the world precisely because of their formal characteristics. In keeping with my attention to the formal implications of multiplicity in this dissertation, I also formed each chapter into a montage of cases; each chapter has two to three cases, each offering a slightly different (and sometimes contradictory) negotiation of memory and hope for the future after Yugoslavia. I furthermore

replicate this method in the mini-montage of quotations that function as epigraph in most of my chapters.

Chapter One - An Image of Europe's Future: Sarajevo Siege Arts in the New Century

“Sarajevo is the city of the future and of the life in the post-cataclysm”
(Miroslav Prstojević with FAMA, *Sarajevo Survival Guide* 89, 1993)

“*Sarajevo Film Festival: Beyond the End of the World* is an artistic action directed against physical and mental violence. . . What are the movies of the New Age which can challenge the reality of war and disaster? . . . Are there movies which can test their artistic power and philosophy here, in Sarajevo, in front of the New Spectator?”
(Sarajevo Film Festival program, 1993)

“The twentieth century began in Sarajevo. The twenty-first century has begun in Sarajevo, too.”
(Susan Sontag “Spring in Sarajevo” 1994)

She steals rolls from the breakfast buffet at Sarajevo's Holiday Inn for her starving Bosnian actors. She walks the city's sniper targeted streets without the protective flak jacket ubiquitous to foreigners. She defies the Beckett estate by casting three Estragons, three Vladimirs, and a female Pozzo in her Sarajevo production of *Waiting for Godot*. Susan Sontag is big news in Sarajevo, summer of 1993. Accused by some of exploiting besieged Sarajevo's misfortune to draw attention to herself, Sontag instead blames the unwanted media attention on circumstance: “I was also surprised by the amount of attention from the international press that *Godot* was getting. . . I forgot that I would be living in a journalists' dormitory. The day after I arrived there were a dozen requests in the Holiday Inn lobby and in the dining room for interviews; and the next day; and the next...” (Sontag, “Waiting” 102).

According to some, her attempts to deflect such attention proved unnecessary, short-sighted even. When Sontag remarked on this media onslaught to Haris Pašović, the play's Bosnian producer, she learned:

. . . that he had scheduled a press conference for me and that he wanted me to admit journalists to rehearsals, give interviews, and get the maximum amount of publicity not only for the play but for an enterprise of which I had not altogether taken in that I was a part: the Sarajevo International Festival of Theatre and Film, directed by Haris Pašović,

whose second production, following his *Alcestis*, was my *Godot*. When I apologized to the actors for the interruptions to come, I found that they too wanted the journalists to be there. All the friends I consulted in the city told me that the story of the production would be “good for Sarajevo.” (Sontag, “Waiting” 102)

Sontag had thought the play’s significance lay in providing the people of Sarajevo with “something that mirrors life” to “affirm the depth of their feelings” (Sontag qtd in Munk “Only” 35). She learned from Pašović and others that its importance was instead that *she* was directing it; the renowned Susan Sontag could attract much needed attention to cultural productions calling for Western intervention on Sarajevo’s behalf. *Waiting for Godot* could be called *Waiting for Clinton*; so went the inside joke between Sontag and the actors (Sontag, “Waiting” 100). And the festival culture that developed around her play, perhaps opportunistically, continues in what is now the predominant film event for the region, the Sarajevo Film Festival.

A well-connected public intellectual who took up the cause of the wars of Yugoslav succession in Bosnia in the early 1990s, Susan Sontag helped to assemble an international community whose focus would center on besieged Sarajevo. The attention that Sontag generated during her staging of *Waiting for Godot* in Sarajevo turned her into the promotional face for what became a *cause célèbre*, and she continued to participate in many artistic and humanitarian projects for Bosnia after the play. In her published work, Sontag championed a Sarajevo that she portrayed as being an island of secular Europeans at a turning point in history. The Susan Sontag Papers provide a less resolved record of her activity in Sarajevo than does her published writing, however. The boxes dedicated to her “Bosnian Involvement” preserve traces of the dilemmas of cultural politics in and for Bosnia; these dilemmas continue to play out today at the Sarajevo

Film Festival (SFF). The conflicting approaches to identity and art that shape Sarajevo's emerging culture are ongoing at the SFF, which was formed during the siege and now takes place annually in Sarajevo on the theatre square dedicated to Sontag.

In this chapter, I consider Sontag's well distributed publications about her staging of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in Sarajevo in comparison with the "Bosnia Involvement" files at the Susan Sontag archive and the Sarajevo Film Festival. I argue that the archive and the festival's more diffuse collections of texts, which are ordered in ways that do not completely clear out contradictions or excess, better display the ongoing dilemmas of cultural politics in Sarajevo than does the image of the city advanced by Sontag. She represented besieged Sarajevo as being an exceptional cause because of the Europeanness of its secular identity and progressive cultural sphere. In contrast to this strategically framed image of Sarajevo, the ensemble of works in Sontag's archive and the film festival display a messier rendering of Bosnian cultural politics. These works exhibit the complexity Sontag more generally advocated in her critical oeuvre, where she promoted a dialectical mode of thought based on "radical juxtaposition" and "unresolvable [*sic*] complexity" ("Happenings" 269, "Melancholy" 77).

By juxtaposing the more established and recognized (Sontag, Beckett) with the ephemeral and marginal (film festival, archival documents), I follow Sontag methodologically, if not ideologically, to comment on globally uneven systems for the circulation of arts. I base the argument in this chapter on a historical narrative of Sontag's activism for Sarajevo during the Wars of Yugoslav Succession that I have reconstructed from a variety of archival sources. The chapter is structured into three "exhibits," in a case-study style of writing informed by Walter Benjamin's reflections on the insights that can arise from juxtaposing different perspectives on a common theme. From the specificities of its geographical and historical context, each case study

contributes to a critical understanding of Bosnia's position on the peripheries of a symbolic Europe. Furthermore, each exhibit illustrates how its respective technology of remembrance—image, archive, or film program—shapes the stories it mediates.

The exhibit structure approximates film programming at festivals: works with some connection are exhibited as part of one program, in a argument for coherence that nonetheless leaves the work of establishing connections to the audience members. The Sarajevo Film Festival, which I investigate as the final exhibit in this exploratory chapter, displays the complexity of cultural memory in ways parallel to the Sontag archive. As collections of works, both the festival and the archive contribute to an understanding of “collection” as an open-ended and cluttered form expressing contradicting ideas and feelings. The term “exhibit” also connotes a text's entry onto the market, however. Trade fairs, including book fairs and film festivals like the SFF, are also exhibiting works for sale. Ending with the film festival as space where co-production relationships are made and distribution networks established enables me to highlight the stakes of cultural production and exhibition as processes of cultural reconstruction in an economically and politically “small” region influenced by relation with West.

Exhibit One: Susan Sontag, Sarajevo, 1993

“Living here with just the contents of a small suitcase focuses one on what is really important and necessary for life. It's like camping in hell,” said Sontag in an interview during her second stay in Sarajevo (qtd in Narayan 2). Several months earlier, in April 1993 and a year into the Bosnian War (1992-5), she had accompanied her son David Rieff on a research trip to Sarajevo for his book about the war. He had suggested that Bosnians would appreciate a visit from her, so “I came and I was hooked. I know that suffering is the same all over the world but

these people are European” (qtd in Eagar13). Framing the Bosnians as European thus established their crisis to be exceptional.

In addition to being exceptional, this European crisis was also personal for Sontag, who traced to the continent her intellectual genealogy and European-Jewish heritage. “They belong to my culture. So the question was, what could I do?” As a writer invested in her “European roots” and as a “citizen of [international] literature,” as she had noted in “The Idea of Europe” four years earlier, she had a duty (and desire) to intervene on behalf of “the diversity, seriousness, fastidiousness, density of European culture” (“Idea” 285, 289). In this earlier essay, she had established her ideal model of culture, “the Europe of high art and ethical seriousness, of the values of privacy and inwardness and an unamplified, non-machine-made discourse” to be under threat from the consumer pan-Europeanism of the European Communities (EC, soon to be EU) (289). With the breakup of Yugoslavia, however, Europe was no longer only threatened by its “progress” toward a pan-European capitalist future but also by what Sontag identified as a return to the barbarity of a fascist past. She based her appeals for international support for Bosnia on the claim that Sarajevo stood out as belonging neither to the barbaric fascism of Europe’s past nor to the capitalist Euro-kitsch of its inevitable future. She pointed to its secular and multicultural populace as proof of its diversity and to its reception of *Waiting for Godot* as proof of its seriousness (“Waiting,” “Idea”).

As a literary figure invested in ethically serious European art, Sontag intervened symbolically in the Bosnian crisis by directing a classic of avant-garde theatre for a Sarajevo audience she represented as cultured and European. A conversation with theatre producer and director Haris Pašović during her first visit encouraged her to return that summer to stage *Waiting for Godot*, accompanied by partner Annie Leibovitz, who would photograph Sarajevo

for *Vanity Fair*. Sontag admitted that her choice of Beckett's play was impulsive; Pašović had asked what she would direct, and she had answered on the spot. However, she later endorsed the work as "a great European play" that for the Sarajevo theatre audience was "a serious expression of normality" and represented "their ideal, their passport to a European identity" ("Waiting" 90-1). Sontag publically represented Sarajevo as being a civil and artistically sophisticated urban center for whom Europe was both its norm and an ideal in need of legitimating.

Sontag's celebrity lent her production of *Godot* additional cultural capital; a community of writers and activists engaged with the role of the arts, and the West, in conflict zones congealed around her vision of Sarajevo's diverse and serious European culture. Sontag's iconic status amplified her representation of urban Sarajevo as the secular, urbane and cultured antithesis to the "tribal" Serb periphery into an unequivocal image of the city, however. It made of Sarajevo a model for Europe's future at the expense of the actually existing contradiction and nuance evident in her archive and the festival that her work was a part of.

Sontag as icon

In the 1960s, Sontag's reputation as what Benjamin DeMott termed the "Lady on the Scene" established her to be a figure attuned to the cultural present (qtd in Rollyson *Reading* 71). She wrote astute analyses of timely phenomena, such as camp sensibility, the war in Vietnam, and AIDS. Her insights, combined with her striking looks and charisma, also made of her "the Dark Lady of Letters," an exotic (read: Jewish) intellectual who was frequently photographed by fashion and celebrity photographers (Rollyson *Reading* ix). Sontag's active participation in political and cultural efforts for Sarajevo in the 1990s propelled her once again into the public eye. She was much sought after in Sarajevo itself. *New York Times* journalist John F. Burns reported, "To the people of Sarajevo, Ms. Sontag has become a symbol, interviewed frequently

by the local newspapers and television, invited to speak at gatherings everywhere, asked for autographs on the street.” Her *Godot* also received widespread international media coverage; major publications like *the New York Times*, *the Guardian*, *the Washington Post*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais* covered the production.

That Sarajevo became a *cause célèbre* cannot be fully attributed to Sontag, but she became its celebrity face. As a glamorous object of the public gaze, Sontag attracted a community that gathered around not only her intellectual intervention but also her publicity.



Figure 1: Photo of Sontag in Sarajevo published with a *New York Times* article by John Burns about her production of *Godot* (Chris Helgren/Reuters)

Images of Sontag show her posing by the debris of war, with *Godot* actors, in fatigue-style clothing. The photos published at the time focus on Sontag and her presence in Sarajevo at the exclusion of the local participants, however, and even the photos that include the actors have been criticized for drawing Sontag into the foreground and only captioning her name (Clancy). In contrast, the “personal” photos that Annie Leibovitz took at that time and published only after Sontag’s death emphasize the cultural context Sontag worked within; shots of Sontag in the underground offices of the Sarajevo newspaper *Oslobođenje*, in the background of the cast of

Godot, and in conversation with various Sarajevo cultural figures present her as immersed in the local cultural scene (Leibovitz 2).

Whether the images and articles set her up in the foreground or immersed in her surroundings, Sontag came to stand for engaged arts and the conscientious West in Sarajevo. To use the word “celebrity” for Sontag stretches the term’s more conventional association with the entertainment sector, as exemplified by celebrity activists for Bosnia like Vanessa Redgrave and U2’s Bono during the Bosnian War, or, more recently, Angelina Jolie. However, in addition to “celebrity” connoting the one who is the face of something (a film, a product, a cause), it also means a figure around whom “a large assembly gathers”; it implies that a public has formed through audience responses to this figure and his or her actions (Boone and Vickers 903, 905). Sontag attracted crowds, not only of theatre-goers but also of journalists eager to cover this famous figure and her cultural work in Sarajevo. In this sense, those assembled around Sontag’s *Godot*—the players, theatre audiences, media representatives, international commentators and activists—formed a community centered on Sarajevo. And the creative and activist projects that ensued—whether the poems, opera, films and accordion score dedicated to Sontag for her Bosnian involvement, or the many activist organizations that gained credibility through association with her name—expanded the public reach of her involvement.

Sontag as a figure garnered more critique than her artistic productions did in Sarajevo, however. She was no stranger to personal attacks; she had begun her career writing in the polemical style of the mostly male New York Intellectuals who wrote for *Partisan Review* and had made controversial pronouncements throughout her career (e.g., “the white race is the cancer

of human history,” “communism is. . . fascism with a human face”).¹⁹ Her claims often elicited equally contentious responses; she was challenged for critiquing the Old Left, advocating the “new sensibility,” and speaking on political topics outside of her expertise (Penner). Misogyny pervade many of these critiques, (e.g., Sontag as one who prefers “to revel in concepts, treating them as if they were form-fitting silken garments” (Rubin 504)), but Sontag was also accused of not focusing enough on feminist issues.²⁰ Responses to Sontag’s Sarajevo work followed in this tradition of critiquing Sontag’s projects by critiquing her ethos. Hilton Kramer argued that she misused her “literary prestige” to pronounce on politics; even a more favorable review by Charlotte Eagar designated Sontag “radical-chic,” thus also undermining the seriousness of her intervention by suggesting it to stem from political dilettantism. Others presented her as “the artist-moralist of the Western World” (Grenier E3) and, in a more explicitly sexist attack, as a “queen of the arts” who was “swanning around” Sarajevo (Clancy 10). Sontag’s critics generally also expressed valid concerns about the implications of her project.²¹ However, these critiques were couched in attacks on Sontag’s publicity that dismissed the project by dismissing her.²²

The articles and images that followed Sontag make evident the workings of a network of international communication more attuned to spectacle, snapshot and sound byte than to the difficult cultural work of staging *Godot*. Jean Baudrillard criticized Sontag’s work in Sarajevo based on this environment: he argued that she failed as an intellectual because she operated

¹⁹ The first appeared on pages 57-8 of “What’s Happening in America (A Symposium),” *Partisan Review* (Winter 1967): 13-82. The second was part of her speech at a Town Hall rally, reprinted in “Poland and Other Questions: Communism and the Left.” *Nation* (27 Feb 1982): 229-31. The quote appears on page 231.

²⁰ See, for example, Adrienne Rich’s response to Sontag’s “Fascinating Fascism” in *The New York Review of Books*.

²¹ Richard Grenier pointed out that Sontag naming Bosnia “the moral failure of the West” arbitrarily excluded many other such failures (e.g., Cambodia, Liberia, Moldova); Hilton Kramer questioned Sontag’s emphasis on the literature that resulted from international writers’ involvement in Spain rather than the effect of their presence on the Spanish people; and Luke Clancy claimed that a US writer directing an Irish play in Sarajevo distracted from local arts.

²² The media responses to *Godot* were mixed, and included views that Sontag was grandstanding, manipulating the play, displaying courage and artistic boldness, had rapport with Sarajevo audiences, was held in suspicion by Sarajevo audiences (Rollyson *Reading* 71).

within a highly mediatized intellectual order that used Sarajevo to symbolically justify its own status and values. Rather than rupture this information continuum, Sontag became implicated in it (“Vivisecting” par. 26). In response, Sontag emphasized that she had resisted her publicity, as seen in her statement at the beginning of this chapter. She also downplayed the “intellectual” elements of her work. She claimed that she did not go to Sarajevo “to function as a typical public intellectual,” which she claims would have been impossible. “I’d have been happy simply to help some patients get into a wheelchair. I made a commitment at the risk of my life, under a situation of extreme discomfort and mortal danger... This is not ‘symbolic.’ This is real” (cited in E. Chan, par. 30). Her emphasis on the materiality of her intervention, the risk to herself and the value of non-intellectual work (if not the practice, in her case) underlined the “real” intervention she rebuts Baudrillard’s “symbolic” rupture with and downplays any ideological motivation for her work in Sarajevo.

Sontag represented her intervention as being behind the scenes and practical, which may indeed have been her intent. She was nonetheless cast into the role of icon for a cause. As she stated in her defense of her work in Sarajevo, “Waiting for Godot in Sarajevo,” the media attention could also be an end in itself if it helped to raise awareness about the cause she defended (102). She more thoroughly addressed the activist potential of media a decade later in *Regarding the Pain of Others*, where she argues that photographs could motivate toward reflection and action: “the ideal effect of photo would be to spark recognition of systemic complicity in atrocity through self’s privilege” (102) and “[Compassion] needs to be translated into action, or it withers” (10).²³ If a photograph’s value is dependent on what reflection and

²³ Ariella Azoulay suggests a more productive way of thinking about the task of the viewer. Rather than focusing on the ethics of seeing, which is based on the aesthetics of the photograph, she suggests the “civil contract of photography” as being a contract between photographed-photographer-spectator, whereby the spectator, as the

action it incites, by extension Sontag's iconic status would be of value only in so far as it contributed to the cause of Sarajevo. Although the image of Sontag in Sarajevo certainly raised awareness about besieged Sarajevo, the content and effects of that awareness were emptied of much of the nuance of the actual cultural work occurring via *Godot* and the Sarajevo Theatre and Film Festival, which I address later in this chapter.

Lawlike temporary universals

Although Sontag claimed not to function as a "typical" intellectual, she defined her involvement in Sarajevo as intellectual work; engaged intellectuals should care about a Bosnia that she claimed represented Europe's social and cultural ideal.²⁴ Sontag characterized the war in Bosnia as an opportunity for engaged intellectuals and artists to speak up on "issues of conscience," as the Spanish Civil War had been for Simone Weil and George Orwell ("There" 819). She argued that the loss of coherent enemies like "fascism, imperialism or Bolshevik-style dictators" had caused the lack of intellectual activism in response to the war in Bosnia ("There" 820). She therefore modeled her public intellectual activism in Bosnia upon dissent against fascist and Soviet (i.e., "fascism with a human face") enemies. She identified figures like Orwell and Weil, as well as anti-Soviet activists like André Gide, Norberto Bobbio, Andrei Sakharov, and Adam Michnik, as the ideal public intellectuals. These intellectuals exemplified "putting themselves on the line" and "responsibly taking sides," in contrast to intellectuals she listed as irresponsibly taking sides from a distance (e.g., Jean Baudrillard) ("Answers" 296).

Sontag labeled the Bosnian Serb forces "fascist" and thus created a correlation between the right-wing nationalism of the Karadžić-Milošević's regimes and the fascism of the WWII

addressee of the photograph, has an ethical responsibility to enter into dialogue with the photographed and photographer (122).

²⁴ She presents versions of this argument in "Waiting for Godot in Sarajevo," "'There' and 'Here': A Lament for Bosnia," "Answers to a Questionnaire," and *Regarding the Pain of Others*.

Axis powers, overlaying mythical roles from the past onto current events.²⁵ Following the model of liberals in the 1930s and 40s who advocated military intervention, Sontag actively promoted US military intervention against the Serb forces because they threatened European Sarajevo (“Waiting” 93, 100). In addition to publishing this position in her essays, she campaigned for Bosnians through an array of public channels. She joined Margaret Thatcher, Joseph Brodsky, Czeslaw Milosz and others in signing an open letter to President Clinton calling for NATO air-strikes against Serbs (Williams A23). She endorsed Senator Joseph R. Biden’s “superb” July 29, 1993 pro-intervention statement before Congress (“Waiting” 100), which included claims about “the extremes of Serb bestiality,” “the rabid Serb fascism,” and “Serb barbarians” (Sontag papers: Biden). She encouraged the dissemination of Nicole Stéphane’s documentary about her staging of *Godot* at places like Berlin’s Topography of Terror Documentation Center because of her “indignation and dismay that the so-called international community (the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the United States) has refused to protect free democratic secular multicultural Bosnia from being destroyed by Serb ethnic fascism” (Sontag papers: “Letter to Helma Schleif”).

Sontag advocated military intervention by setting enlightened Sarajevo against Serb barbarians, in an invocation of the discourse historically assigning barbarity and lack of civility to the Balkans but now applied selectively to those segments of it not allied with Sarajevo.²⁶ After designating Bosnia as the cause of Europe, Sontag marked its crisis as the birth pangs of this future Europe: “Europe has yet to be born: a Europe that takes responsibility for its

²⁵ The “fascists” have also been the prototypical enemies within the “Brotherhood and Unity” ideology of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, whose rule began when the Partisans defeated the Axis powers and their Ustaša subsidiary in the region.

²⁶ In her article about the play, Sontag noted that she had informed people in Sarajevo that “Europe is and always has been as much a place of barbarism as a place of civilization” in response to their claims that they espoused Europeanness in their “secularism, religious tolerance, and multi-ethnicity” (“Waiting” 90). However, later in the article and in most of her other publications and public statements, she advocated the Bosnian cause as being precisely about Sarajevo representing “the secular *anti-tribal* ideal” of Europe (93). It was the world’s responsibility to protect Sarajevo’s diversity because “the Bosnian cause is that of Europe: democracy, and a society composed of citizens, not of the members of a tribe” (“There” 819).

defenseless minorities and for upholding the values it has no choice but to incarnate (Europe will be multicultural, or it won't be at all)" ("There" 820). This vision of multiculturalism is tied in with the debates about minority rights within the newly founded European Union.²⁷ This statement represented a more nuanced ethical impetus for Sontag's pro-Bosnian advocacy than did opposing European civilization and barbarism. It nonetheless evaluated the war in Bosnia based on its significance as a test of Europe's values and survivability, in a repetition of the Balkanist history of defining Europe in relation to the Balkans. Furthermore, Sontag's representation of Bosnia assumed its Europeanness without addressing the widespread beliefs to the contrary that drove much of the cultural work to "civilize" Bosnia and the Western Balkans.

In response to social injustice and economic disparity, Sontag directed, wrote and organized in favor of the constituency she believed to be the most in danger of being wronged and silenced. She believed that she was responsibly taking sides in advocating NATO military intervention against the Serb forces in Bosnia. She may well have been correct; in light of the UN Security Council imposed sanctions prohibiting any of the successor states from acquiring new weapons and the Bosnian Muslims' vastly inferior supplies in contrast to those held by the JNA (Yugoslav National Army) supplied Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Muslims were at a distinct disadvantage and were the victims of the greatest number of war-crimes (Lukić and Lynch 246).²⁸ However, rather than basing her claims on a careful analysis of the political and military context, she instead drew her authority from the fact that she had been physically present in Sarajevo. She ended both *Regarding the Pain of Others* and "Answers to a Questionnaire" with warnings against those who take positions on issues without having firsthand experience: "you

²⁷ As scholars like Fatima El Tayeb have shown, the idealized "tolerant, secular European 'we'" has provided uneven and inadequate space for racial and religious minorities (xxvii).

²⁸ The UNPROFOR "peacekeepers" were also ineffectual; they were under strict orders not to intervene in the military situation but only to enable the delivery of humanitarian aid (the mass killing of Muslims at the UN "safe area" Srebrenica being only the most notable of their more general failure to protect) (Lukić and Lynch 291, 247).

have no right to a public opinion unless you've been there, experienced firsthand and on the ground and for some considerable time the country, war, injustice, whatever, you are talking about" ("Answers" 298). By privileging firsthand experience as the fundamental source of authority, she established her own generalizations about the war in Bosnia, as impressionistic and sometimes explicitly incorrect as they may have been, to be unassailable by anyone who had not been there.

Sontag asserted her public opinion based on firsthand experience with enough certainty to request that it be backed with military action. In respect to the confidence of her claim, Sontag followed in her characteristic intellectual mode of making statements with a "lawlike generality," as Elizabeth Bruss termed the tendency in Sontag's critical writing for transforming instances into ubiquitous and even universal principles (267, 272). These seemingly unequivocal claims are nonetheless subject to change and complication; in both her cultural criticism and political advocacy, Sontag exemplified reading and writing as process by performing a series of reversals.²⁹ Just as thought must continually shift and adjust to the complexities of the present, so writing should reflect the process of navigating conflicting and sometimes "unresolvable" ambiguities (Bruss 272-5). Bruss argues that Sontag's "true theme is the cultural present tense and how best to move with or against it. Her proposed 'laws' therefore take the paradoxical shape of a series of temporary universals" (474). Her claims in individual essays were subject to reversal, whether in essays included in the same collection or in later works.³⁰

²⁹ Sontag's "reversals" occur not only in her critical work. Sontag had similarly advocated for the people of North Vietnam her 1968 *Trip to Hanoi* based on her direct experience in its capital, although in that case she condemned the US intervention being carried out. However, she later acknowledged that her support had been misguided and admitted that she had chosen not to address the occurrence of torture in the POW camps in *Trip to Hanoi* because she could not reconcile that fact with her political position against intervention (Rollyson *Reading* 96).

³⁰ For further analysis of Sontag's characteristic reversals, see Cary Nelson's "Reading Criticism" and "Soliciting Self-Knowledge", and Barbara Ching and Jennifer A. Wagner-Lawlor's introduction to *The Scandal of Susan Sontag*.

Sontag's characteristic reversals, which kept her positions fluid and acknowledged actually existing complexity, did not nuance her claims about Bosnia, however. She published two critical works, *Where the Stress Falls* and *Regarding the Pain of Others*; a novel, *In America*; and several essays between the end of the Bosnian War in 1995 and her death in 2004. *Where the Stress Falls* includes two essays she had written during the war ("Waiting for Godot in Sarajevo" and "There and Here"), as well as her treatise on Europe written not long before ("The Idea of Europe (One More Elegy)") and her essay on intellectuals written not long after ("Answers to a Questionnaire"). In these, the ideas of "Europe" and "intellectual" gain nuance, but the image of Bosnia remains mostly static, except for a brief acknowledgment in *Regarding the Pain of Others* of the widespread belief that the Balkans never really belonged to Europe (72). Unlike in Sontag's previous theoretical and political work, she did not reverse or seriously complicate her Bosnia claims in these publications.³¹

Sontag's presence at the scene of besieged Sarajevo and status as a cultural icon enabled her position on the war to circulate widely but without the depth and ambiguity that she valued as critical practice. Later, in *Regarding the Pain of Others*, she warned that "images" of such crises may produce only shock and sympathy rather than understanding, alluding perhaps to the

³¹ Although Sontag called for engaged intellectuals to contribute to the cause of European Sarajevo, her own role does not fulfill that of the kind of public intellectual advocated by prominent intellectuals like Antonio Gramsci and Edward Said. Whereas the *ideal* "public intellectual" spots social and economic injustice and responds by speaking truth to power in favor of those most vulnerable to it, the public intellectual *in practice* invariably performs this role imperfectly. Rather than fulfill what Edward Said lists as one of the roles of the public intellectual, to offer "a dispassionate account of how identity, tradition, and the nation are constructed things, most often in the insidious form of binary oppositions that are inevitably expressed as hostile attitudes to the Other" ("The Public" 32) and "to present alternative narratives and other perspectives on history than those provided by combatants on behalf of official memory and national identity" (37), Sontag reifies the ethnic nationalism at play in the newly declared Bosnian nation. She sets up the Serbs as the barbaric and fascist Other to the European Sarajevans she determined to defend by calling for military intervention. Furthermore, she did this in the name of an ideology of "Europe" that she was strongly committed to, one that did not acknowledge the "New European Order" (Baudrillard, "No Reprieve") of the emerging European Union or her personal investment in preserving that Europe's place for "intellectuals" such as herself. In practice, she played a role much closer to the established "traditional intellectuals" that Antonio Gramsci critiqued for advocating timeless and unified truths rather than the "organic intellectuals" that engage the historically contingent contradictions of social struggle.

sound byte and snapshot circulation of her own Bosnia advocacy in addition to images of the war itself. If her intervention during the crisis supported her claims that a “real” and “present” situation required her to take a position, it also led her to produce an unambiguous image of Sarajevans as model Europeans, Serbs as barbaric fascists, and Sarajevo as the exceptional location of art and history.³² Her published work does not provide the complexity to which she was committed, but her archives suggest ways she could have nuanced her claims. In contrast to the overly simplistic vision of the besieged Sarajevo associated with Sontag as public icon, the more diffuse range of beliefs and desires evident in the archive of her personal papers displays a messier version of Sarajevo, Bosnia, and the world.

Exhibit Two: The Susan Sontag Papers, University of California, Los Angeles, 2002

A librarian monitors the locked entrance to the reading room in the basement of UCLA’s Charles E. Young Research Library. Once inside, the locked exit is also controlled by an attendant, who sits on a podium and watches over the visitors below. I am authorized to view one folder at a time from the boxes I had called up from the Susan Sontag archive and am kept under surveillance as I peruse their contents. Ten years after Sontag’s first trip to Sarajevo, she sold her book collection and papers to UCLA for over a million dollars (“Sontag Sells”). The archive is held by a public institution and available to the general public, but its holdings are guarded and kept underground, as if in a vault. The controlled environment of the reading room emphasizes conservation and safeguard, fitting for documents whose cultural and financial value grew in their transformation from private papers to archived source of historical record.

³² Although Sontag did not complicate these claims prior to her death, her ethos as a writer committed to reversal and resistant to foreclosure suggests that she might have, had illness, other projects, and public work allowed.

An archive's major function is to preserve; in Sontag's case, it safeguards a massive compilation of texts that indicate her collector's tendency. In addition to her personal library of over 20,000 books, the archive contains 332 boxes of personal journals, correspondence, and drafts of Sontag's writing. This vast repository of texts, evidence of an active and engaged life, includes several boxes categorized as "Bosnian Involvement." These boxes, along with some in the "Journals," "Writings" and "PEN Involvement" categories, make clear Sontag's central role in the cultural activism for Bosnia carried out in the US and Europe. Correspondence and other documents about her board memberships, speaking engagements, petitions and open letter signatures, fundraising activities, visa sponsorships and refugee resettlement work, and relationships with cultural figures in Bosnia and internationally indicate the extent of her involvement and the breadth of her influence.

In her discussion of the photographs of US soldiers torturing Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib, "Regarding the Torture of Others," Sontag claims, "the Western memory museum is now mostly a visual one" (24). In order to identify memories of besieged Sarajevo that challenge the image-like characteristics of the strategically framed Sarajevo associated with Sontag as icon, I turn to another form of memory museum: the archive of Sontag's personal papers. In this section, I argue that the documents preserved in Sontag's archive complicate her slogan about Bosnia being a model of secular European modernity for whom the West was obligated to intervene militarily. The theory on archives generally affords them the conservative function of creating and enforcing a dominant historical narrative that forecloses alternatives. In contrast to such characterizations, the Sontag archive contains wide ranging and contradictory documents open for the public to re-interpret. As examples of how the contents of the archive can be interpreted to trouble Sontag's image of Bosnia, I analyze the treatment in her documents of

Bosnia's practicing Muslims and discuss the other texts programmed alongside her staging of *Waiting for Godot* at the theatre and film festival. The carnivalesque, ironic and creative new visions displayed in these other works trouble representations of Sarajevans as victims and arguments that military force is the best solution to the impasses of Yugoslav dissolution.

The archiving of Sontag's papers at the UCLA libraries makes publically available a more complex record of the dilemmas of cultural politics around Sarajevo than suggested by Sontag's problematic public representation of the city. The archive neither provides a transparent imprint of cultural politics around Sarajevo in the early 1990s, however, nor an exhaustive overview of the era. It is a collection of texts framed by its association with Susan Sontag, the renowned literary figure who was consecrated as cultural legitimator when her personal papers were archived at UCLA. Furthermore, her curator's hand is apparent in the kinds of texts included and their categorization; the events and theoretical currents that she was shaped by and responded to become the organizing logic for documents grouped around her.³³

Although framed by their association with and arrangement by Sontag, these documents are only preserved because she invested energy in them; the archive's institutionalization in California attests to Bosnia's loss of many of its own cultural and historical records. In May of 1992, incendiary shelling targeted Bosnia's Oriental Institute and destroyed thousands of irreplaceable Islamic and Jewish manuscripts and records from the centuries of Ottoman rule in the region. Three months later, the National and University Library was similarly destroyed.

Working under sniper fire, rescue workers saved some works before they burned but an

³³ After acquiring the papers of what UCLA library spokeswoman Gloria Werner calls "one of the most important American literary figures of the second half of the 20th century," the collection was processed to be accessible to the public ("Sontag Sells"). In preparation for their new function as source of historical knowledge, the documents that Sontag had accumulated and ordered according to her investments and idiosyncrasies were transferred to archive boxes and folders, but their order and labels were kept intact. The files added in 2005, after Sontag's death, were reorganized to fit the order of the 2002 batch, however. The folders categorized as "Bosnian Involvement" were part of this later batch; enough folders shared in common a connection with Bosnia to be grouped together and named as such during their processing at UCLA (McDaniel).

estimated 1.5 million books, including rare books and special collections, were destroyed (Bakarsić, Riedlmayer 111). These institutions had held the newly declared Bosnian nation's primary print culture archive, which included five centuries' worth of bound manuscripts and other historical documents from the region. As a repository of culture and history distinct from that kept in the archives of Yugoslavia's capital Belgrade, the now *national* archive in Sarajevo had also stood for the sovereignty of the newly declared Bosnian nation being challenged by the city's besiegers. As with many national libraries, it was housed in an imposing building originally built by the Austro-Hungarians to be the city hall, and served as a cache of cultural achievements and print treasures upon which Bosnian identity had been and could continue to be built.³⁴ The destruction of cultural and historical traces was thus one element of the ethnic cleansing campaigns that characterized the Wars of Yugoslav Succession.

This rubble of the national library was much photographed—an Annie Leibovitz shot of Sontag in the ruins is one of many such images—and Sontag's papers include correspondence about the many international efforts to help Bosnia recover some of its library holdings. Sontag's most significant effort toward the cause of replenishing Bosnia's archives may not have been her support for such fundraising projects, however. By personally "rescuing" documents from besieged Sarajevo, where paper was scarce and most valued as kindling, Sontag began to produce a new archive for the new nation.

³⁴ For more on how national libraries can be used to analyze how imagination and memory are recorded and ordered, but also how they can be used to shore up national status and authority, see Reingard Nethersole's "World Literature and the Library."

The UCLA libraries act as trustee to documents that Sontag herself had kept safe in New York, far from the shelled cultural institutions of Sarajevo. However, the warmth of the UCLA reading room, the security of its intact walls and locks, and the orderly systematization of the texts underscore the disparity between the resource-rich institutional preservation of American literary figure Sontag's legacy and the much more precarious conditions for producers of culture in Sarajevo, during the siege and today.³⁵



Figure 2: Vedran Smailović in the remains of the National Library in Sarajevo (Evstafiev)

Sontag's literary significance establishes *all* of her papers to be part of the public cultural record, including the traces of Sarajevo's siege-era arts she collected. These traces of the Sarajevo focused cultural scene in the 1990s are thus institutionalized into cultural record. The authority associated with this institutionalizing process has been the subject of critique by theorists of the archive like Edward Said and Jacques Derrida. In Said's critique of Orientalism, he argues that Oriental specialists created a textual simulacrum of "the Orient" that domesticated

³⁵ The building that housed the National and University Library is in the process of being rebuilt with funding from UNESCO and with the goal of reopening as a museum in time for the centennial of the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The library's remaining holdings are housed in a building at the university but receive little funding – the building sometimes runs without amenities like heating during the winter because the library is so behind on its utility bills. The Sarajevo Canton has provided several emergency grants to forestall the library's closing. However, in January, 2012, the library's heat was cut off for lack of funding. In the two months before that, the Art Gallery and Historical Museum both closed their doors for similar reasons (Ainadzić).

it to the West through a “process of selective accumulation, displacement, deletion, rearrangement, and insistence” that then authorized the exercise of power (*Orientalism* 176). In *Archive Fever*, Derrida locates in the archive the production of official history based on desire for unified origin and unambiguous truth.³⁶ In both cases, the institutionalizing process of ordering and interpretation produces an authoritative body of knowledge that, although constructed and delimited, is used to justify dominant modes of thought and governance.

The Sontag archive is an ordered and delimited collection of incomplete traces. Unlike the colonial and patriarchal archival authority that Said and Derrida respectively critique, however, it does not produce the final word on Sarajevo siege arts or 20th-century American literature. Although organized according to the categories Sontag divided her life into, the variety of texts enable different interpretations of the activities recorded. Said’s later concept of “contrapuntal reading,” whereby an imperial text that continues to be read, analyzed and contextualized becomes an event whose meaning is as yet unfinished, offers a productive way of thinking about the archive (*Culture* 18). Rather than the archive being an authoritative record sanitized of all traces that do not fit, the collected texts are instead subject to reinterpretation by librarians and the public, the readers who access the collection to research 20th-century American literature, Sontag’s biography, or, like myself, affiliated topics like cultural and political activism for Bosnia.

Walter Benjamin’s reflection on the “collector” helpfully illustrates the unfinished quality of an archive like Sontag’s. For Benjamin, conceptualizations of the world depend on how its

³⁶ In Derrida’s archive, an official has interpreted all included items to belong together as of the same kind and thereby consecrates them into a privileged topology, law (truth) that must be preserved (3). “Archive desire,” that preservational instinct based on nostalgia for a singular and unified origin, drives this patriarchal act of interpretation, but is in continual contest with “archival violence.” As a finite and curated collection of historical traces is also anarchivistic, in that it reduces the fullness of history to these authorized traces. Together, archive desire and anarchivistic drive create archive fever, a tension that unravels the archive even as it is being constructed and undermines its authority.

objects and ideas are interpreted and ordered. By reordering objects and thoughts according to a logic that differs from the dominant one, the collector envisions an alternative world (*Arcades* 205). Sontag referenced Benjamin often in her work and defended the unorthodox sense of order (“freeze-frame baroque”) that structured his methodology as a collector, both of things and of concepts; “a Surrealist-inspired eye for the treasures of meaning in the ephemeral, discredited, and neglected worked in tandem with his loyalty to the traditional canon of learned taste” that kept him “at the crossroads” and “his many ‘positions’ open” (“Under” 129, 121, 133). If Sontag as collector³⁷ curated her files according to her priorities and concerns, and, like Benjamin, included neglected works alongside a more traditional canon, she provided a personally inflected order for the world that leaves room for other perspectives on the events she participated in. The multiple perspectives and positions, both public and private, present in the Sontag archive trouble a homogenous and seamless narrative about Sarajevo as the secular, urbane and cultured site of Europe’s future. As in Benjamin’s work, where, as Sontag noted, “one position corrects another,” so her position on Sarajevo is corrected, or at least complicated, by the other positions possible from this ensemble of documents.

When compared with Sontag’s public representation of Sarajevo, the contents of the archival boxes present a more wide-ranging and contradictory glimpse of the ideologies and desires circulating in and around the city during the siege. Although ordered according to Sontag’s logic, the contents of the archive include alternatives to her argument that the future of European values depends on the West’s willingness to militarily intervene on European Bosnia’s behalf. Sontag’s marginalia, her asides in correspondence, and the personal and promotional writing produced by Bosnian and other activists that she filed with her papers complicate her

³⁷ In Daniel Mendelsohn’s review of Sontag’s journals, and life, he describes her as “an aesthete and an accumulator of experience” for whom “the metaphor of the collector is the perfect one” (7).

public statements on the Bosnian cause, either by reversing elements of them or by exemplifying their excesses. Bosnia's categorization as "Europe" sometimes becomes overly Eurocentric and sometimes comes up against its categorization as "Balkan" or as religiously defined ethnic "nation." Furthermore, Sarajevo's designation as the "real" future of ethically serious art sometimes becomes a claim for Sarajevo's exceptionalism (as the exemplar of the world's future) and at other times as the site where otherwise multivalent art finds its specificity.

Sarajevo's Europeanness

The Europe that Sontag hoped for was one that would be a secular and cultured location for historically and ethically significant art production, which underlined her advocacy for military intervention on behalf of the location she identified as its exemplar, Sarajevo. The promotional materials for the theatre and film festival, and for other cultural programs associated with Sontag and her sponsor, the Soros Foundation, emphasized Sarajevo's urbanity and civilized cultural sphere. For example, Zdravko Grebo's "Radio Zid" ("zid" means "wall," in a reference to the Berlin Wall) project was promoted alongside the theatre and film festival and its documents filed in the festival folder. The radio station was presented as being a way to maintain "the urban and civilisational [sic] spirit" and "rationalism and urban mentality" for "the townspeople with developed civic habits and mentality which is characteristic for the mid-European cities, where Sarajevo authentically belongs to," a project for which the "cultural sphere" is better equipped than the "political sphere" (Sontag papers: Grebo May 9th, 1993).³⁸

As with assertions about Sarajevo's importance as part of Europe (and the world's) future, Grebo's characterization of Sarajevo depends on an ideology of "Europe" as exemplar of civilized modernity. In her journal, Sontag communicated discomfort with an over-reliance in

³⁸ Grebo became Soros's Bosnia (Open Society Fund) director, won the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Freedom Metal, and received a Helman-Hammet grant from Human Rights Watch with Sontag's help.

Sarajevo on the idea of civilized Europe. In addition to her acknowledgment of the existence of “barbarity” in Europe, she scribbled “all of the talk of ‘Europe’ and ‘civilization’” in her journal during her first visit (Sontag papers: “Sarajevo”). Although she treated with some skepticism the widespread appeal to the ideology of civilized Europe, this idea was just a more extreme version of the position she publically took that Sarajevo was part of an ideal Europe that was culturally sophisticated, secular and fastidious.

Bosnia’s Balkanness

The insistence on Sarajevo’s Europeanness demonstrates just how much its inclusion in “Europe” was in question. Bosnia’s contentious relationship with its supposed Europeanness was pointedly illustrated in the Bosnian Association of Independent Intellectuals’ (Circle 99) ambiguous declaration for a free and undivided Sarajevo, which was filed in the “Bosnian Involvement” boxes. It claimed Sarajevo to be within Europe immediately after addressing Europeans in the second person: “[the current neo-fascism is] endangering Europe of *your* ideas about freedom, democracy and human rights. We are an inseparable part of *that* Europe...” (emphasis added, Šantić). This hesitant claim to “Europe” betrays the existence of a conflicting characterization for Sarajevo as belonging to the “Balkans,” a descriptor denoting opposition with Europe.³⁹

The distinctions drawn between “European” post-Yugoslav nations and their Balkan others reinforced pejorative Balkan stereotypes against Serbs, whose position during the wars was less pro-Europe than identified with its Byzantine past. Balkanist stereotypes turn up throughout promotional materials for events that Sontag participated in and advocated for. For

³⁹ Belonging to Europe was important to establish during Yugoslavia’s dissolution, however. As Slovenia and Croatia’s independence had demonstrated, establishing a legitimate rapport with Europe and its institutions proved a more productive international relations move than maintaining ties with the stereotype-charged Balkan (Byzantine or Ottoman) or dissolving Yugoslav identities.

example, soon-to-be Sarajevo Film Festival director Mirsad Purivatra organized the “Witnesses of Existence” exhibit for the Venice Biennale. The exhibit travelled to New York, Switzerland, France and the UK and was presented as being a testament to Sarajevo’s European progress and civility as it opposed barbarity and tribalism. In the introduction to “Witnesses,” Sarajevo intellectual and literary editor Nermina Kurspahić claimed “wild Balkan Nazis fascists” caused the war and Biennale director Achille Bonito Oliva described Sarajevo as being besieged by “regressive, tribal ferocity” (Sontag papers). Sontag did not characterize uncivilized and tribal behaviors as Balkan, *per se*, but her polarized naming of Sarajevo Bosnians as ideal secular Europeans and Serbs as “tribal” in their allegiance to tradition and religion nonetheless directed pejorative Balkans stereotypes at Bosnian Serb while claiming European status for the Bosnian Muslims. In her support of Bosnian independence, Sontag therefore drew uncritically on the rhetoric of Europeanism being used to assert post-Yugoslav sovereignty claims. She also reified a Balkanist tendency to set up the “European” in opposition to Byzantine and Ottoman cultural and political legacies through her emphasis on the secular and cultured Bosnian rather than those who identified with Byzantine or Ottoman legacies.⁴⁰

Sontag publicly maintained this opposition between the sophisticated Sarajevans and the fascist tribal aggressors, perpetuating a general belief among the Sarajevo literati that this was a war between the uneducated peasants tied to tradition and the cultured and progressive Sarajevo urbanites.⁴¹ In her marginalia, journal entries, and private correspondence, Sontag did not

⁴⁰ Sontag also disavowed the racial undertones that shaped discourse about the Balkans. In correspondence with Emiko Iwai of NHK International, Sontag responds to a question about multi-racial Bosnians by stating that they are “white” and “European” so cannot be racially mixed (Sontag papers). This emphasis on a European and racial homogeneity interrogates neither the construction of whiteness, the history of Balkan’s being described as “impure” or “mixed” race, nor the history of the Balkans being described as non-European.

⁴¹ Claims like those by film director Mirza Iorizović that “this is a fight between uneducated people and educated people who want to live the way the rest of Europe lives” exemplify the rural/urban distinction circulating as an explanation for the war (Sontag papers: “Sarajevo”). The distinctions between urban and rural Bosnians is connected with the distinctions between Bosnijaks (Bosnian Muslims) and Serbs. As Andrew Wachtel writes, “South Slavic

maintain the distinction between barbaric Serb peasants and sophisticated Bosnian cosmopolitans as clearly, however. She distinguished between art fit for Sarajevo and art fit for Western Europe in more private exchanges. A series of faxes and letters between Sontag, the theatre and film festival's producer Haris Pašović, and various affiliated parties tracks a conflict between Pašović, who wanted to stage *Godot* in London, and Sontag, who resisted such "poor theatre" being associated with her in front of a sophisticated Western European audience.⁴² Furthermore, in addition to Sontag's claims about Bosnia's "poor theatre" not being up to Western European standards, she and son David Rieff bemoan in correspondence with leadership at the Open Society Institute in Budapest the corruption and lack of talent and sophistication of the "second rank" Sarajevo artists that Sontag publicly endorsed ("Fax to Katalin Koncz" and "Letter to Katalin Koncz").

"Tribalism"

Although Sontag privately undercut the quality of the art that she attributed to war-era Sarajevo, she publically valued it for more than its purported sophistication; Sarajevo arts were ethically serious and therefore not "tribal." In her discussion of Sarajevo Muslims, she identified them as secular and anti-tribal, unlike "the devout in Teheran or Baghdad or Damascus" ("Waiting" 93). Religious devotion did not belong in the ideal European Sarajevo that Sontag affirmed. Claiming to herself be tolerant toward Islam—she accused the West of failing to intervene because of anti-Muslim prejudice—Sontag nonetheless insisted that Bosnian Muslims were essentially "modern, secular, urban Europeans," in a dismissal of all who were practicing

Moslems and Christians both lived on Bosnian territory, with the former dominant in the cities and the latter forming the rural labor force" (12). See also Bogdan Bogdanović's "The City and Death." *Balkan Blues*. Ed. Joanna Labon. Evanston, Ill, 1995.

⁴² These documents are in boxes 45 folder 19, 47 folder 2, and 165 folder 1 of the Sontag Archive. A 4/4/94 fax from Sontag to Sue West, a 4/4/94 letter from Sontag to Beka Vuco, and a 4/1/94 letter from Sontag to Pašović most clearly evidence Sontag's frustration with Pašović's plan, which she attributed to his opportunism and to the naïve trust of Vanessa Redgrave, who supported the project.

(“Waiting” 95, “There” 819). She further claimed them to be less Muslim than she Jewish, because “they are, in fact, the descendants of Christian southern Slavs,” thus basing the claim to identity on genetic descent rather than cultural or religious heritage (“Waiting” 92).

Sontag’s representation of Bosnian Muslims was based on Socialist Yugoslavia’s definition of the Bosnian people as a *nacije* (constituent Muslim identity) rather than as a body of practicing believers, but this portrayal is partial. Sontag was correct that it was common for ethnically Muslim Bosnians to not adhere strongly to Islamic practice, but it was especially common among the people with whom she interacted. Not practicing religion was a requirement for the professional class for whom communist party membership was a prerequisite for success (Bringa 204). The professional intellectuals, actors, and directors that Sontag worked with in Sarajevo were thus much more likely to be secular based on the position they held. Sontag may not have interacted with the many rural practicing Muslims, but she did know about the devout in Sarajevo, as evidenced by a journal entry about a visit with an Islamic leader in Sarajevo. Although Sontag refers to him throughout as “His Excellency,” each time with scare quotes (Sontag papers: “Sarajevo”), this was likely a visit to the *Reisul-ulema*, the head elder of the state-approved and Sarajevo-based *Islamska Zajednica* (Islamic Association) that oversaw Bosnia’s Muslim Community. Furthermore, she likely knew that Bosnia’s president, Alija Izetbegović, was a devoutly religious Muslim, although she may not have known that he had been imprisoned for five years during Socialist Yugoslavia for his arguments that Islam and the secular should be integrated into governance (Stokes 8).

In her advocacy for the secularism of Sarajevo arts, Sontag dismissed the religious identity that Bosnia’s sovereignty claims depended on even as she promoted the legitimacy of the new nation for its Muslim constituents. In addition to ignoring the practice of Islam in

present-day Bosnia, this dismissal erased a complicated discourse about Balkan identities to claim Sarajevo's Europeanness unencumbered by the religious and social particularities of its Ottoman past. It did so even as its official repository (the Oriental Institute and National Library) and citizens (Bosnian Muslims) were under attack. In dismissing the relevance of Muslimness as both an identity (Bosnian Muslims with an Ottoman cultural heritage) and a religious practice (Islam), Sontag was also unable to address the primary point of contention during the war in Bosnia: what ethnicity would have majority status. Sontag described in her publications her mixed-ethnicity cast and the non-Muslim constituents of Sarajevo, which correctly acknowledged the minorities allowed within the city but not the shift to majority status for Muslims that the establishment of the Bosnian nation was also effecting (Stokes 5).⁴³

Although Sontag dismissed the relevance of Islam to the new Bosnian nation, she nonetheless campaigned for the legitimacy of the new nation established in contradistinction to the majority ethnic Serbs of rump Yugoslavia. Sontag supported Bosnian sovereignty through a performance of *Waiting for Godot* qua "waiting for Clinton," which she noted as being a "plea for help, aid, assistance, attention" (Sontag papers: "holograph"). Supporting the arts in Sarajevo meant taking sides with the newly declared Bosnian nation. The theatre and film festival promotions claimed that the aesthetic was only of value if it responded to and addressed the emergency of Sarajevo because Sarajevo provided the encounter with "the real" necessary for any true artist.⁴⁴ Sarajevo was therefore presented as playing a complex and sometimes

⁴³ Socialist Yugoslavia (SFRY) was composed of constituent nations (e.g., Serb, Muslim, Montenegrin) for each group of people represented by a republic, even though many people did not live in the territory associated with their constituency. Each constituent nation was equally represented politically regardless of what percent of the population they actually represented. When the Bosnian republic became a sovereign nation, the constituent Muslims became the majority and were challenged by the constituent Serbs living in Bosnia, who kept the weapons of the Yugoslav National Army assigned to Bosnian Serbs when that entity dissolved in Bosnia (Stokes 3-4).

⁴⁴ The program for the 1993 SFF, for example, calls "all relevant authors" to join the Sarajevo struggle and concludes with the appeal, "DON'T CLOSE YOUR EYES ! Film must not be silent about this disaster. Your duty is

contradictory role; it was simultaneously the exemplar of what would eventually become a global future and an exceptional place where otherwise multivalent world literature like *Waiting for Godot* found its specific application as an expression of the particular (and crucial) Sarajevo real.

Sarajevo as site of “real” and exemplar of global future

Sontag publically took the position that the fate of Sarajevo would be the fate of Europe and its ideals, which determined the war in Bosnia to be on the cusp of what would be a more widely experienced future. In addition to making such claims in her critical essays, Sontag ended her short story “Spring in Sarajevo” with “The twentieth century began in Sarajevo. The twenty-first century has begun in Sarajevo, too.”⁴⁵ Such narratives of the birth of an era reappear throughout the collection of documents in the archive. For example, the first Sarajevo Film Festival was titled “Beyond the End of the World” and billed as being a journey (“through Tarkovsky’s *Zone*” and “Sarajevo is taking its Odyssey”), at the end of which the “movies of the New Age” could be tested “in front of the New Spectator” (Sontag papers: Pašović 93 and SFF program 1993). The war in Bosnia was presented as being the crisis in a classic plot whose denouement would produce the new century, the new viewer, and the new Europe.

Sontag argued that the outcome of the crisis for Sarajevo would signal the outcome for Europe, but others enlarged this claim to more global proportions. In a letter of support for the Sarajevo Film Festival, Haris Pašović and Zlata Kurt follow the claim that “Sarajevo and Bosnia are not local problems” by differentiating the universality of their crisis from the particularity of non-European ones: “Sarajevo is not Beirut. Sarajevo is the world. This is an emergency.” They

to react! Be a man!” The promotional materials for the International Theatre Workshop associated with the festival also call it “the real” that is “the beginning of new art” (Sontag papers).

⁴⁵ In addition to publishing the story in the Soros’ Open Society newsletter, Sontag also offered the story for use in fundraising efforts for Sarajevo’s national library. (Sontag papers: “Letter to Michel Uytterhoeven”).

claim the conflict in Sarajevo to be too particular to be categorized as the same kind as that in Beirut even while arguing that Sarajevo's crisis reflects the state of the whole world. Although these claims to both exceptionality and universal significance exceed Sontag's narrative of Sarajevo's European significance, they also bring into relief the universalizing direction her claims point toward. In contrast, *Waiting for Godot* moves in the other direction. From a classic of world literature, the play is presented as an otherwise abstract text that finds its home, or purpose, in Sarajevo.

Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, first performed as *En Attendant Godot* in 1953, combines allegorical characters and vaudeville techniques into a slapstick tragedy about two men who wait in vain for Godot (variously interpreted to be God, life, meaning). Without context other than a country road and one tree, the play as directed by Beckett presented an "abstract, aural 'concept'" (Munk "Notes" 26) that has since been applied to a variety of contexts: its performance in San Quentin prison is one of the earliest and most well-known and in post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans a more recent one (Chan, Paul). Sontag's interpretation of the play focused it strategically on besieged Sarajevo. She set the play against an urban and war-torn backdrop, cut out the second act, and tripled the characters of Vladimir and Estragon into three "gender-blind" couples (Sontag qtd in Munk "Only" 35). Her set design of sandbags and humanitarian aid crates made Sarajevo the setting (Munk "Notes" 26), her omission of the second act left open the question of whether Clinton would actually come (Sontag "Waiting" 97), and her tripling of the couple made of them a "Greek chorus" (Sontag in Munk "Only" 32) and a "city cross-section" (Munk "Notes" 26).

Sontag described *Godot* as particularly apt for the Sarajevo context: "Beckett's play, written over forty years ago, seems written for, and about, Sarajevo" ("Waiting" 88). A post-

World War II play that denies its characters movement or change, *Waiting for Godot* reflects the loss of illusions of unilinear progress (Bennett 8). In such a world, meaning is supplied by neither a divine guide nor a utopian endpoint, but must instead be created by the characters themselves. This impetus to create value through action aligns with Sontag's concern throughout much of her work with the ethical. In contrast to beauty, which Sohnya Sayres identifies as Sontag's other chief interest, "ethics requires us to act, ultimately, as does the quest for truth, which demands establishing a faith with ourselves for proceeding with ever-evolving standards" (Sayres 216). The cyclical construction of *Waiting for Godot* and the refusal of resolution reflected the return to war in Europe, which Sontag believed she needed to act in response to.

As Sontag's "Greek chorus," the three Vladimir-Estragon couples ostensibly represented the range of ethnicities, ages, and genders in Sarajevo. Ines Fančović, the actress who played Pozzo, claimed that the three couples were meant to reflect Sarajevo's three constituent ethnicities (Bosnijak, Serb, and Croat) (Diklić 80, qtd in Jestrović 123). This may have been the case, but Sontag's description of the three as "gender-blind" also inserts into the play her advocacy for androgyny as the end goal of restructured gender and sexual relations. Rather than the standard all male cast for *Godot* that either makes of the male the universal human symbol or that displays elements of homoeroticism (Boxall 110), the female-female, male-male, and female-male couples reflect Sontag's preference for protesting the gender roles that she argued drove both exclusively heterosexual and exclusively homosexual relationships (Sontag "Third" 189 and Ortleb 33). Sontag's advocacy for gender-blindness aligns with her advocacy for blindness of cultural difference; in the world she worked to create, neither a person's gender nor their culture should delimit their options and experiences.

This advocacy for gender- or culture-blindness nonetheless diminishes the potential for advocacy based on the specific experiences and challenges associated with being a woman or being a Bosnian Muslim. In this respect, Sontag's advocacy for a European Sarajevo whose Muslims are no different from Western European city dwellers aligns in some senses with her own stance of avoiding speaking about her personal life and, more specifically, her sexuality. During the later part of her life, critics took her to task for displaying homophobia and for not making her lesbian relationships public. After *AIDS and its Metaphors* was published in 1989, DA Miller argued that Sontag exhibits homophobia in her use of language in the text and insensitivity by using a devastating disease to make a point about writing and hermeneutics. In 1993, Marcie Frank argued that Sontag should be more self-critically autobiographical when writing about gay performance. Since the posthumous publication of Sontag's diaries, in which she claims to have "lesbian tendencies" but then hastily marries and had a child with Philip Rieff, Sontag's silence about her lesbian relationships has been the object of additional reflection and critique. Although Sontag acknowledged in an interview in 2000 her bisexual history (she had been in love nine times, "five women, four men" (Mackenzie)), she never publically acknowledged her fifteen year relationship with Annie Leibovitz.⁴⁶ Reflecting on Sontag's posthumous legacy, Daniel Mendelsohn argues that Sontag's strong commitment to giving comfort to Bosnians contrasted with her refusal to offer comfort to lesbians by addressing her own sexuality (6). Sontag's activism in Bosnia did not differ completely from her silence on behalf of lesbians, however, but similarly sidestepped the beliefs, feelings, and desires that distinguished the Bosnians from a prototypical European, erased of difference.

⁴⁶ Upon Sontag's death, Leibovitz made the relationship public through an exhibit and book of photos that included intimate images of Sontag and an introduction disclosing their relationship (N. Miller 208).

Although her choice of *Waiting for Godot* and her gender-blind Vladimir-Estragon couples underline an emphasis on equality, her director's holographic notes in her copy of the play emphasize help from above. She notes the following four quotes from the text on the script's inside flap in what appears to be her reading of the situation in Sarajevo: "nothing to be done," "what are we doing here," "let's play," and "what if we parted?" She also listed "21 cries for help," including "14 ignored, 4 answered, 1 attempt made, 1 not known, 1 on condition." This emphasis on the characters' calls for help in *Godot* answers their equivocation on whether or not "playing" is of use. This interpretation of the play dramatizes the helplessness and hopelessness of a besieged city that has not been able to rely on intervention from Europe and the US, whom it indicts in the final scene when the Vladimir-Estragons beat the messenger who conveys that Godot will not come. In contrast to Beckett's staging of the play, which Sontag saw in Berlin and found "much too amusing" (qtd in Munk "Only" 32), Sontag's staging was what theatre critic Erika Munk called "the least amusing *Godot* I've ever seen" ("Only" 32). The project reflected Sontag performing the seriousness she so valued, in keeping with her mission in Sarajevo to act as ethical public intellectual.

By omitting the second act, Sontag left room for Godot/Clinton/NATO to come and put an end to the waiting. She hoped such an intervention would occur as it would rehabilitate the idea of Europe by proving that its paragon in Sarajevo was worth defending. However, handwritten notes in Sontag's Sarajevo notebooks suggest that she felt ambivalent or even disappointed about Sarajevo and the world's ability to fulfill this charge. As much as she had hoped that a new Europe would arise from what she quoted in her journal as "life 'tragically purified'" in Sarajevo, she observed instead stagnation, addiction to the crisis by visitors such as

herself,⁴⁷ and an interregnum from which nothing new could birth (Sontag papers: “Bosnia”, “Sarajevo”, “Holograph”). In a self critic, she noted that her role in Sarajevo was more performance than personal revolution, “‘It’s a privilege to be here,’ I heard myself more than once intoning on public occasions—with inane-sounding (or was it merely inane) sincerity/fervor” (Sontag papers: “Handwritten”). Nonetheless, traces in the archive of her and other works show that much was indeed emerging, even if these cultural productions complicated Sontag’s vision of the siege and its resolution.

Other works presented alongside *Godot* at the “International Film and Theatre Festival: Beyond the End of the World” also approached art in besieged Sarajevo as necessarily and explicitly political. Their positions on military intervention and on the role of amusement in art differed from Sontag’s, however. The Suada Kapić directed “Jelly Bomb” project, which was promoted for the festival but never realized because Kapić was denied re-entry to Sarajevo in time (Munk “Notes” 23), was based on the idea of reconstruction and survival. Meant to be a museum exhibit of life in Sarajevo during the siege, it would have displayed collaboratively produced installations on homes, meals, and machines made from UNHCR supplies and war debris (Kapić). The modifier “jelly” for the exhibit’s bombs suggests tactics and creative new visions rather than military force. The exhibit would have focused on everyday ways of resisting Sarajevo’s siege, including a different kind of bombardment than NATO intervention.

“Jelly Bomb” did not exhibit at the festival but one of the installments listed in the exhibit’s promotional materials and later published provides an ironic and humorous reflection on everyday life in Sarajevo. *Sarajevo Survival Guide* parodies travel guidebooks through a tongue-in-cheek presentation of the privations in Sarajevo. Its listing on “News” outlets in

⁴⁷ She notes that the fourth stage for visitors to Bosnia (after excitement, indignation, and boredom) is addiction—the inability to leave (Sontag papers: “Sarajevo, Jan. 1994”).

Sarajevo states “rumors are the most important source of information” (29), its recommended tourist souvenirs are shrapnel and bullets (38) and its suggested gift for Sarajevo hosts is a set of books: “Could you spare some Vladimir Illich Lenin? Last winter has proven that his books burned well” (39). This inventory of wartime life was not the only humorous approach to the siege, however. Haris Pašović’s staging of Euripides’ tragedy *Alcestis* played before *Godot* at the festival in an interpretation less ironic than carnivalesque “raucousness, rudeness, and mockery” (Munk “Notes” 25). Sarajevo critic Nermina Kurspahić read the staging as a refusal by Sarajevans to quietly play the role of victim (qtd in Munk “Notes” 25). Instead of waiting for military intervention from the powers abroad, these other works focused less on the waiting than on ways of responding to the siege irreverently and from the ground up.

The destruction of a cultural past, whether through the bombardment of the Oriental Institute or warming fires fueled by Lenin’s work, may have “tragically purified” life. But if the works and performances at the film and theatre festival are any indication, cultural production formed anew out of the ashes of this destruction. Ephemeral though many of these works were—only sparse records of their production survives, for those that were able to be produced at all—they responded to the cultural context of Bosnia at war with a complexity of styles and interests that sometimes exceeded with and sometimes collided with Sontag’s public position on military intervention and solemn interpretation of *Godot*. Few of the grassroots movements documented in the Bosnian files in Sontag’s archive received much publicity outside of their association with her, and even fewer persisted after the siege. Traces of the otherwise forgettable cultural productions that emerged at the periphery of Sontag’s celebrated *Godot* production are provided the prominence of “historical record” via their association with her, however. These papers make clear the role that interpretation played in Sontag’s portrayal of Sarajevo; rather than foreclosing

alternatives, as feared in Derrida and Said's representations of archival authority, the papers as an alternative memory museum to the visual open up the possibility of many different interpretations.

The papers are diffuse but not comprehensive; the simulacra Sarajevo preserved in the papers is still limited by its demarcation in time and the focused interests of the texts' collector. In contrast to the detailed and wide-ranging siege-era Sarajevo documented in the files, an event occurs annually in Sarajevo where traces of besieged Sarajevo mingle with contemporary conflicts and concerns in a more dynamic way. The International Theatre and Film Festival that formed around Sontag's *Godot* was replaced with the Sarajevo Film Festival, an annual event that continues to host small and collaborative film projects that would otherwise receive little publicity. If Sontag's archive brings into relief the unfinished question of what kind of future a multicultural Bosnia can have on the peripheries of Europe, the festival continually addresses this question in response to a perpetual flow of representations and analyses of the conflicts of Sarajevo's cultural present.

Exhibit Three: Sarajevo Film Festival, Sarajevo, 2010 and 2011

Buried among the hundreds of boxes of Sontag's writings and correspondence and wedged between drafts of her article about *Godot* in Sarajevo and documents from the "American Committee to Save Bosnia" and the "Balkan Action Council" sit two unobtrusive folders, "Sarajevo Theatre and Film Festival 1993-1995" and "Miro Purivatra 1993-1997." The first contains promotional documents for the festival Haris Pašović organized in conjunction with Sontag's *Godot* and the second Sontag's correspondence with Mirsad Purivatra about the Sarajevo Film Festival he began directing in 1995. Although filed alongside traces of Sontag's

humanitarian advocacy for Sarajevo, the traces of the concurrent artistic work do not always seamlessly fit the image of Sarajevo as secular and European exemplar on display in the former. Instead, the artistic works are juxtaposed in a way sometimes dialectical, perhaps even radically so, with that image of the city.



Figure 3: Logo of the 1993 Sarajevo Film Festival “Beyond the End of the World”

These unresolved and sometimes radical juxtapositions are also on display six thousand miles away from the UCLA archive at the Sarajevo Film Festival. At its 2011 installment, programmer Howard Feinstein interviews Argentinean director Lucrecia Martel, Austrian filmmaker Karl Markovics is awarded the Council of Europe funded Heart of Sarajevo for best feature film, and Angelina Jolie⁴⁸ (like Sontag, a celebrity, humanitarian, and now film director) meets Bosnian president Bakir Izetbegović, son of war-time president Alija Izetbegović, on the red carpet outside of the National Theatre on Sontag Square. The festival exemplifies the blend of Europeanizing, internationalizing and war memorializing processes at play in the dynamic reinterpretation that continues to render inoperative any final word on Sarajevo’s cultured Europeanness.

⁴⁸ As a location where suffering occurred and was well-covered in the media, Sarajevo can give gravitas to figures with humanitarian inclinations like Jolie, Sontag, Bono, as a counterbalance the superficial characteristics often associated with celebrity.

In this section, I argue that the program of films and events at the SFF reflects the multiple and competing narratives that complicate too narrow images of Sarajevo's cosmopolitan progress toward inclusion in the "European." Whereas the festival appears to be a transparent and cosmopolitan institution, it also plays the authoritative role of legitimating certain histories and versions of European belonging. The festival is nonetheless also a site for negotiating cultural memory and geopolitical belonging. Through analyses of the tensions between national interests and international affiliation in the festival's programming of films made in Bosnia, of the absence of films memorializing Yugoslavia, and of the dilemmas around the place of Islam in Bosnia's European identity, I demonstrate how the conflicts at the festival produce a dynamic and continually expanding alternative archive of Bosnian cultural politics.

In Sontag's published writing, she gave only an aside to the festival that formed alongside her Sarajevo production of *Godot*. However, the archival documents filed around the festival ones remain testament to activities long past whereas the SFF persists and, with it, Sontag's memory. The festival is held on "Theatre Square Susan Sontag" (Pozorišni Trg Susan Sontag),⁴⁹ run by her collaborator and friend Mirsad Purivatra, and includes films like *Nafaka* (2006) and *Grbavica* (2006) that make direct reference to her. Sontag is therefore memorialized and remembered through the festival.

Sontag's vision of an ideal Europe based on secular and cultured Sarajevo also persists at the SFF. The festival's promotional materials and programming reflect the cosmopolitanism and Europeanization at its origin. However, the festival's significance exceeds its Sontag publicized role of symbolizing the future of European ideals. These ideals are regularly challenged, altered and reimagined in the works that are displayed and by the public that gathers around the annual

⁴⁹ Haris Pasović, director of Bosnia's East/West theatre company and producer of Sontag's staging of *Waiting for Godot* during the siege claimed, "This square is in the centre of the city so Susan Sontag's name will be written in the heart of Sarajevo forever, where it belongs" (Carter).

festival. The film professionals, members of the press, and local audiences actively comment on how the world is imagined at the festival. Claims that challenge or complicate the festival's focus on secular and urban Europe demonstrate the unfinished quality of Sarajevo arts.

During the siege, the arts were actively used to contest the war's balkanizing principle; film became an especially important form of public culture in the struggle for peace and international alliance. Originally intended to be part of the International Theatre and Film Festival in Sarajevo that formed around headliner *Godot*, the "Sarajevo Film Festival: Beyond the End of the World" began exhibiting films two months later because of logistical setbacks. This event was presented as being a form of peace activism. The 1993 festival's fundraising and promotional publications included the following claims: "There is a powerful artistic movement of resistance here in Sarajevo ... this is the only way not to succumb to this disaster and horror, the only path leading to peace in Bosnia. ... [the festival] is an artistic action directed against violence, both physical and mental." This pacifist emphasis occludes the military intervention that Sontag presents the theatre and film events as advocating; peace achieved non-violently requires that the current world order give way to a new one where neither Serb nor NATO forces can violently enforce their will.

The future beyond the end of the world promoted by the festival was not modeled on a vision of Sarajevo as the prototype Europe. The programming of the early festivals instead suggests a future based on the intersection of the European West with the "East" and "South." The diversity that Sontag advocated appears in the festival's promotional materials, but the films programmed demonstrate this to be less focused on Europe than Sontag's version. The programs of the 1993 and 1996 festivals present Sarajevo as a multicultural city and a "meeting point of the great civilizations of East, West and South." The first festival screened works by European

auteurs like Jean Luc Godard and Wim Wenders alongside ones from directors from East Asia (Tony Chan, Clara Law, Tian Zhuangzhuang), North Africa (Rachid Bouchareb), Mexico (Guillermo del Toro) and Eastern Europe (Lucian Pintilie, Vitaly Kanevski, Joanna Helander, Dušan Makavejev), and from ethnic minorities in North America (Atom Egoyan, Camille Billops).

Sarajevo's film festivals originally emphasized international films for a Sarajevo audience; one of its stated objectives was to rebuild Sarajevo's world cinema archives. The 1993 theatre and film festival program posited the screening of new international releases as a remedy to the besieged city's isolation and the 1996 SFF program claimed one of the festival's primary goals to be reconstructing the Bosnian cinematheque holdings. Formed as a way of bringing international films to Bosnia in order to "recreate civil society" (SFF website), the SFF's role has now partially reversed. As the festival shifted its emphasis toward films from Southeast Europe, in response to Sontag's suggestion that Purivatra include a competition program (Sontag papers: Purivatra), it increasingly invested in the exhibition (putting on display) and publicity (putting on the market) of Southeast European works for an international community.⁵⁰

The festival's shift from emphasizing international works for local viewers to Southeast European works for international viewers also entailed a shift from theatre to film. Pašović continued to organize the theatre thread of the festival through the International Theatre Festival MESS, which had been established as an annual event in 1960, morphed into the International Festival of Theatre and Film in 1993, then reverted back to a theatre festival the following year. The Sarajevo Film Festival emerged independently of the association with MESS. Although Sontag had elsewhere claimed cinema to be a likelier candidate for "master art" than theatre, she

⁵⁰ In 2003, the festival began limiting its competition films to exclusively ones from Southeastern Europe (Tataragić "Young").

had opted to stage a play rather than make a movie in Sarajevo because she wanted something that would be “made and consumed there” (“Approaching” 32, “Waiting” 87). Securing distribution for local films entails getting films “made there” to be consumed elsewhere, however. Under Mirsad Purivatra’s leadership and with Sontag’s support and encouragement, the festival gained momentum as a vetting ground for local works prior to their entry onto the world arena. Purivatra directed the Obala Gallery in Sarajevo and had organized the traveling “Witnesses of Existence” art exhibit; his experience and skills equipped him for the film festival’s shift towards curating local works for international exhibition.

The SFF is now the most important platform for disseminating Southeast European cinema to the outside world.⁵¹ Many films from Bosnia and the other Yugoslav successor states begin their circuit at the festival or, more commonly, reach the height of their publicity there. The works of Southeast European filmmakers whose exhibition at the SFF leads to their being extracted for international markets are often marketed through stock categories that oversimplify the work they do (e.g., a war film, a human rights film, a Macedonian film), however. This publicity nonetheless enables marginal films to circulate through alternative distribution networks to those employed by more dominant cinemas.⁵²

Identity and commercial interests compete at the festival, which is now an important venue for works that debate the role of arts in Southeast Europe and the role of Southeast Europe in the world. In its staging of the workings of both identity and capital, the SFF is typical of film festivals. Scholarship on film festivals tends to address either the mega festivals with business models (e.g. Cannes, Berlin, Sundance, Toronto) or the more identity-based ones (e.g., lesbian

⁵¹ The festival is FIAPF accredited as a specialized competition because only Southeast European films are part of the competition program. Although the FIAPF accredited Thessaloniki International Film Festival is of a similar size, its competition is international.

⁵² For more on film festivals as alternative distribution circuits, see Marijke de Valck’s *Film Festivals: from European Geopolitics to Global Cinephilia*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007.

and gay festivals, festivals for diaspora). Festivals in the latter category aim to bring together communities of people around minor arts.⁵³ However, even at the smaller festivals, commercial considerations often threaten to crowd out these counterpublics.⁵⁴ In addition to communal and commercial considerations, the political agendas of various interests groups also shape festival programming.⁵⁵ As an institution that host the interests of funding organizations, programmers, distributors, and audience members, the SFF programs films for exhibition and competition that reflect a blend of financial, political and social interests.

Although it focuses on exhibition and distribution to international audiences, the SFF is more than a static receptacle for the ideologies of Europeanization or the dominion of capital. As a collaborative and dynamic public venture, it hosts many players' visions for the future of the festival, the city, and the world; participants challenge the festival norms and alter its program. The festival's recent move to increase exposure for Bosnian filmmakers exemplifies one way the curatorial priorities of the festival programmers have shifted in response to public opinion. The present-day festival's primary goal is to promote Southeast European cinema internationally (Tataragić "Young" 22) rather than to resist a siege or promote military intervention. The "Southeast European" category encompasses films from all of the Yugoslav successor states, including those that were deemed "fascist aggressors" in the early festival documents (i.e.,

⁵³ See, for example, editor Patricia White's introduction to a dossier of essays on lesbian and gay film festivals in *GLQ* and editor Dina Iordanova's essay in the second annual installation of *Film Festival Yearbook*. In the mid-90s, White proposes that lesbian and gay festivals composed a counter-public sphere, where both a collective experience and critical reception occur within an audience that is multiple and itself exhibited. Iordanova analyzes the identities imagined at diasporic festivals and argues that these festivals promote marginal cinemas by developing a diasporic audience market.

⁵⁴ *GLQ* contributor EO Clarke offers a less optimistic reading of the public sphere that lesbian and gay festivals form, arguing that the "public" becomes "publicity." Iordanova highlights a similar tension between the communal and the commercial and argues that in addition to promoting identity agendas, diaspora festivals also often promote diaspora-linked businesses.

⁵⁵ Mark Peranson lists the interest groups at business and audience festivals as: distributors/buyers, sales agents, sponsors, governments, audiences, critics and filmmakers. Richard Porton argues that festivals like Cannes produce a canon of film. Iordanova shows that some festivals are used as part of the cultural diplomacy that nations, especially those with more economic clout, engage in. Liz Czach argues that categories like "Perspective Canada" at Canadian film festivals make the films nationally representative, a nationally framed tastemaking project.

Serbia, but also Croatia and Montenegro). It also includes those from Turkey, Austria and Hungary, former seats of empire.

Some of the festival's critics argue that promoting non-Bosnian Southeast European film professionals places an unfair burden on the festival's comparably poorer Bosnian hosts. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the city of Sarajevo's canton and municipalities shoulder much of the financial responsibility for the festival.⁵⁶ The government has no oversight over the festival budget, however. In light of this system of funding, the festival has recently been criticized for under-representing Bosnian films.⁵⁷ In a searing critique of the 2009 festival, Senad Pećanin, the editor of the periodical *Dani*,⁵⁸ argues, "The Sarajevo Film Festival is the perfect example of the corrupt private-public collaborations that characterize societies in transition [Sarajevo Film Festival je najbolji primjer privatno-javnog partnerstva u kriminalnim tranzicijskim društvima]" (3, my translation). Pećanin points to the absence of Bosnian films in the 2009 festival competition as evidence of its abuse of city and federation funds. For emphasis, he suggests that the festival instead promotes the Croatian tycoon Goran Štok who owns the

⁵⁶ The festival catalogue lists as its highest level "patrons" the following Bosnia-Herzegovinian political bodies: BiH Federation's Federal Ministry of Culture and Sport, the Sarajevo Foundation for Cinematography, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Canton of Sarajevo, the City of Sarajevo, the Sarajevo Canto Tourism Association, the BiH Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces, the Municipality of Sarajevo's New City, the Municipality of New Sarajevo, the Municipality of Sarajevo's Old Town, and the Municipality of the Sarajevo City Center.

⁵⁷ "Bosnian" films have primarily been made by filmmakers from the Federation, in recent history. That the Federation of B-H contributes funds whereas Bosnia's Republika Srpska does not situates the festival within the war-era politics of Bosnian Muslim regions versus Bosnian Serb regions, however. Bosnia and Herzegovina is now made up of two semi-autonomous political entities formed during the war: the Republika Srpska from the primarily Serb constituent parts of Bosnia and the Federation from the primarily Bosnjak (Muslim) constituent parts (including Sarajevo). SFF's funding suggests the festival to still be a project born of the anti-Serb resistance; the dearth of filmmaker in the Republika Srpska further attest to this. Republika Srpska director Saša Hajduković's film *32. Decembar* was exceptional at the 2010 festival considering the otherwise systemic lack of support for non-Federation Bosnian films.

⁵⁸ *Dani* is a weekly magazine that emphasizes political critique and includes as its columnists poets and writers like Semezdin Mehmedinović, Aleksandar Hemon and Miljenko Jergović.

Dubrovnik resort where the festival extension, the Dubrovnik Film Meeting, takes place.⁵⁹ His critique of Bosnian under-representation seeks to reclaim for the in-transition Bosnian *national* cinema the economic and political benefits of the SFF as an *international* trade fair and exhibition space. The SFF's location in Bosnia and local tax funding insert city and national interests into the festival's international project.

The festival shifted its programming the following year in response to such critiques of the dearth of Bosnian film. The 2010 festival's opening day bulletin addressed Bosnia's prior underrepresentation in a full-page interview with the Competition Feature and Shorts programmer Elma Tataragić. In the interview, she lists the number of Bosnian films represented in each program category and emphasizes that thirty new Bosnian films would be screened in the "BiH Film Program," a program developed in cooperation with the Association of Filmmakers of Bosnia and Herzegovina to exclusively exhibit Bosnian films. Tataragić argues that the festival promotes local films, claiming that "BiH cinematography is developing at a very fast pace and, since one of our goals in the promotion of *our* cinematography, we are fully dedicated to this task" (21 "Selection"; emphasis mine). Tataragić's interview was translated into English at the end of the bulletin. The daily festival bulletins include English translations of the day's highlighted articles, usually ones that involve the most well-known film professionals (Morgan Freeman, Angelina Jolie) and that report on international programs (Human Rights Day, British Council Award). That Tataragić's interview was translated suggests the importance for the festival's Bosnian and international participants of recognizing national concerns at the event.

Tataragić's discussion of Bosnian films' importance at the festival responded to the following question by festival bulletin editor Aida Džaferović:

⁵⁹ Pećanin quotes 2006 festival guest of honor Nick Nolte's confused statement, "I had not realized that Dubrovnik was in Bosnia and Herzegovina" after having been flown there by helicopter for the Dubrovnik segment of the festival.

Unlike last year, when our country did not have a single representative in the main selection, the situation this year is significantly different. Not only that we have two films in the main selection, but we are also able to see BiH films in other programs. Are we correct to say that the 16th Sarajevo Film Festival will be marked by BiH film?

In contrast to portrayals of the SFF as a regional festival for an international public, this exchange shows that a Bosnian national narrative also informs the festival project. Pećanin's critique of what he understood to be a lack of responsibility to the Bosnian people and Tataragić and Džaferović's response about Bosnian films' privileged space in the programming demonstrate the persisting tension between national interests and international affiliation at the festival.

The increased emphasis on Bosnian films at the 2010 the SFF does more than advocate globally for the nation, however. This nationally framed programming also puts on display conflicts in a public sphere still negotiating memory of the Wars of Yugoslav Succession. Whereas the festival exhibits many films that treat the wars attending Yugoslavia's dissolution, it rarely shows ones that take up Yugoslavia as setting or theme. Serbian director Igor Stoimenov's *Bijelo Dugme*, a retrospective that presents the trajectory of Goran Bregović's rock band from Sarajevo as allegory for Yugoslavia's breakup, was rejected from the festival program. Combining archival footage and interviews that track "Dugme-mania," the film was deemed to be of high enough quality to screen at other festivals (e.g., Rome International Film Festival, Los Angeles' South East European Film Festival, Munich's International Documentary Film Festival). Although the SFF documentary programmer made no public claim about why the film was denied, Stoimenov read the film's rejection to be a sign that the festival refused this

memorialization of Yugoslavia. In a more straightforward strategy for altering the festival program than Pećanin's, he responded to what he saw as a subtle act of censorship by making arrangements to screen the film, independently of but during the festival and at a venue also screening festival films (Stoimenov).

Representations of Bosnia's multi-ethnic Yugoslav past receive little space in the festival programming, but the festival's increased emphasis on Bosnian films in 2010 enabled some contemporary intra-ethnic dilemmas to become visible. Several of the Bosnian films exhibited portray debates relevant to post-war Bosnian Muslims as they negotiate their belonging to a local community of Muslims in relation to their belonging to a global community of Muslims. In Jasmin Duraković's *Sevdah for Karim (Sevdah za Karima)*, for example, Karim clears mines for a living outside of post-war Sarajevo and suffers from war trauma. When the funds that covered his mine clearing work in Bosnia dry up, Karim considers clearing mines in Iraq for the U.S. To do so, he must reconcile his position as a Bosnian Muslim with a greater Islamic community that includes what would be his Iraqi opponents. Jasmila Žbanić's *On the Path (Na Putu)* takes a position on the conflict between the communities formed through Saudi Arabian Wahhabi missions to Bosnia and Bosnia's less traditional Islamic communities. The film portrays Wahhabi as an imported Islam attractive to Bosnian men needing help with sobriety and employment but harmful to women whose freedom to dance, drink, and hold jobs is threatened by this religious practice.

As Duraković and Žbanić's films demonstrate, public debates among Bosnian Muslims about religious practice address the dilemmas facing the majority ethnic constituency in a country dependent on more powerful nations for its safety and wellbeing. Saudi Arabia and the US both hold political and economic sway in Bosnia, as do Turkey and Iran. The international

community at the SFF exceeds the European in a network more plural and more hierarchical than Sontag's vision of Sarajevo's ideal Europeanness. In addition to how the films programmed at the festival make clear some international affinities and dependencies, the participant interactions at the festival also suggests others. In response to a discussion about the scarcity of funding for art films at the festival's "The Future is Unwritten" roundtable, for example, a representative from the Cine Institute in Haiti⁶⁰ in the audience suggested that Southeast European filmmakers follow the Haitian lead. She explained that they had implemented the Nigerian video-film industry inspired "Nollywood model" of producing profitable comedies, soap operas, and horror films in order to raise capital for arthouse productions. Her proposal would enable a more sustainable model that what currently exists. Although funding films and the film festival has been a priority in state cultural funding, the decay of underfunded cultural institutions like the national museum and library give warning to the problems of relying on government support. Furthermore, the popularity of soap operas from Turkey, India and Latin America demonstrate the potential profitability of such genres.

Although Žbanić and Duraković's films put on display the particularities of an international public that exceeds the European, they also demonstrate the persisting discomfort of urban Sarajevans with the rural periphery. The countryside is the location for the Wahhabi communities that Luna, the protagonist of *On the Path*, perceives to be backward and counter to her progressive city environment. The forests and fields outside of Sarajevo are also where Karim is haunted by the past as he works to clear them of all traces of the conflict. For both films, rural Bosnia impedes urban Sarajevo's progress in a representation of rural backwardness with Balkanist undertones. Another film at the festival locates the problem for the post-Yugoslav states to be the *conflict* between the urban and the rural, however, rather than the rural itself. In

⁶⁰ The Cine Institute won that year's scholarship from the Katrin Cartlidge Foundation.

the short “Serbian Story” (directed by Ana Maria Rossi as part of the anthology film *Some Other Stories* analyzed in Chapter Three), the urban Milena refuses to sing a folk song with the rural Đorđe. Her restraint and sophistication underlie an ugly urban civility, however. While Đorđe kills a man in the middle of a busy intersection and is quickly apprehended by the authorities, Milena more subtly performs violence by using medical paraphernalia to intravenously kill him without trace or repercussion.

Interventions like Pećanin, Duraković, Žbanić, Rossi and Stoimenov’s draw out the stakes of the SFF as a dynamic site where a “society in transition” negotiates cultural memory of the Wars of Succession, the siege of Sarajevo, and the ethnic identities that underlie the successor states’ sovereignty claims. The controversy about the festival’s duty to promote Bosnian film (read: Bosnian Federation films), for example, indicates a partial refusal to foreclose the institution’s early role of advocating globally for the residents of Sarajevo. As Pećanin’s critique suggests, an emphasis on Bosnian film can attend to economic and discursive inequalities by partially counterbalancing the representations of the world circulating through more commercial films and by using the annual assembly in Sarajevo of international artists and intellectuals to draw energy to Bosnian concerns. Duraković and Žbanić do indeed make public the persisting tensions between cultured and secular Sarajevans and real or imagined threats from religious and rural Bosnians.

The festival’s role of drawing international artists and intellectuals to Sarajevo is especially important in Bosnia’s post-war present. Less dramatic than the siege itself, Bosnia’s post-war recovery received remarkably less attention from the international intelligentsia. Journalists and scholars remarked on the rapid decline of the arts in a country whose National Library was in ruins and whose once numerous galleries and bookstores no longer had the buyers

necessary to stay in business (Jordanova *Cinema* 241). Instead of being defined as a cultured center of progressive artistic production, Sarajevo became instead a hub for governmental and non-governmental organizations, whose highest authority was the Office of the High Representative and EU Special Representative (OHR) and whose daily operations continued to reify the distinction between the “internationals” and the “locals” in their civilizing mission (Coles 260).⁶¹ Relief and reconstruction efforts targeted emergency needs, which, paradoxically, ignored the symbolic and everyday impact of the cultural losses of archives, museums and religious buildings that was one of the primary focuses of “ethnic cleansing” agendas (Riedlmayer 124).

The decline in Sarajevo’s urban culture was not total, however; the city’s annual transformation in late summer for the SFF is remarkable for the energy it temporarily returns to the city, enabling films like Stoimenov’s to gain publicity (even on the sidelines) and concerns about Bosnian Islam to become internationally public. However, the publicity associated with the event also makes public challenges to its program and funding model, as exemplified by Pećanin’s critique of the disparities between Sarajevo and the Federation’s economic contributions to and representation at the festival. The energy generated around the festival and the combination of cultural producers and products “radically juxtaposed” at the event highlight the ongoing dilemmas of post-Yugoslav culture and politics in Sarajevo. Like the Sontag archive, the festival is an ordered and categorized collection of works that functions to legitimate culture. It is unfinished not only in that its multiple pieces are continually open to re-interpretation, but also in that it is continually added to and altered in response to such interpretations. However, it differs from the archive as an ongoing event subject to the

⁶¹ Whether termed ‘Europeanization’, ‘modernization,’ or ‘democratization,’ the neo-liberal and normative sociopolitical tilt of this humanitarian work supports Barbara Harlow’s suggestion that the “humanitarian intervention” and “civilizing missions” differ little in their purpose and effects (45).

contingencies of changing political and economic circumstances, pressures that are especially relevant in a time of cultural reconstruction at the outskirts of the European Union.

Whereas the strategically framed vision of Sarajevo's future associated with Sontag the icon weighed the future of Europe against the survival of Sarajevo's secular urbanity, the documents in Sontag's archive and the program of the SFF established in association with her enable more complicated visions of Sarajevo to be apprehended. The collection format of the archive and the festival as alternatives to the visual "memory museum"—the former as a collection of documents united by having been kept by Sontag and grouped according to her investments and idiosyncrasies, the latter as a curated collection of films and events—host the multiple and sometimes competing narratives of Sarajevo's cultural sphere. As I address in Chapter Three, other works exhibited at the festival more directly challenge the rhetoric of Europeanization and the utopian development narrative it implies for the Balkans. Before diving more deeply into how the post-war films continue to challenge a Europeanizing civilizing narrative, I first address in Chapter Two another body of works that emerged in Sarajevo during the siege. I analyze the poems of Ferida Duraković, which gained significance as "resistance literature" during the war. They have since been excerpted and anthologized in international literary collections in a mode of circulation not unlike the circulation of festival films. I analyze the effects of translation and re-framing on the poems to talk about the tensions between Sarajevo siege arts and world literature. If this chapter explored the potential for multiplicity in different media and the dominance of an ideology of "Europe," the following chapter attends to the ideology of "world" as a scale for relation. When literary collection that display multiplicity are reframed to become "world literature," the effect of that multiplicity changes.

Chapter Two - Textual Montages as World Literature: The Anthologization of Ferida Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* Poems

Produced during the Wars of Yugoslav Dissolution, Ferida Duraković's collection of poems *Heart of Darkness* provides an exemplary case for analyzing the formative processes of culture in transition. Written in Sarajevo while the city was under siege, the poems functioned as cultural resistance to the specific challenges of its historical moment. As short works, poems are especially mobile, however, and the *Heart of Darkness* poems were translated into English and published alongside works by writers from around the world. This international circulation marked their entry into Anglophone world literature. After Amela Simić translated the Bosnian language *Srce Tame Sarajevo 1973-1993* (1994) into the English *Heart of Darkness* in 1998, the poems were excerpted for inclusion in a variety of anthologies and collections unified by frames like "Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian Literature" and "poetry by international women" instead of the heart of darkness allusion in the title of the original collection.

From a Sarajevo at war and at the borderlines of Europe, the *Heart of Darkness* poems challenged a universalized version of European modernity. This de- and re-contextualization of the poems through translation and anthologization can reinforce universalist epistemologies, however, by draining the works of some of their specificity. For example, when the anthologized poems are identified as instances of International Human Rights Literature, they support a vision for an orderly but also flattened global modernity with a universally shared moral code. On the other hand, the discontinuous and even radical juxtapositions that result from the textual montages in anthologies can also put pressure on those epistemologies.

In this chapter, I address how the critical elements of the *Heart of Darkness* poems fare when the poems are included in world-literature anthologies framed as optimistic for a progressive global modernity. The process of being excerpted, translated, and arranged into

anthologies for Anglophone readers reorganizes the poems to better meet the interests of the world literary market. I argue that this translation and anthologization decreases the critical force of the original poetry collection, but the montage of texts in these anthologies productively emphasizes in other ways the political stakes of the poems. I draw on film theory to argue that a different kind of thickness is produced when the *Heart of Darkness* poems' thematic content and figurative language is part of a "montage" of distinct texts. I attend to the discontinuities produced when texts are arranged in world-literature anthologies. In other words, reading for the insights produced by juxtapositions of decontextualized texts is an important supplement to reading for the loss produced when these texts become "global." I illustrate the value of world-literature montage through a study of the changing implications of three of Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* poems as they circulate.

The poems' anthologization after *Heart of Darkness* evacuates some of the critical interventions that the collection had made in Sarajevo during the siege. This flattening of specificity in order to make works accessible to a more global audience may be ethical, however. Gayatri Spivak and Anthony Appiah, whose theories otherwise seldom overlap, both argue that a degree of flattening is necessary for ethical relation between people. Appiah argues in *Cosmopolitanism* for the value of inter-cultural relations based on "thinner" values and ideas. In contrast to relations based on "thick" concepts and values, which are deeply particular to cultural and linguistic context, "thin" concepts and values are the simplified abstractions that enable agreement with others, if not a deep understanding of difference. Spivak similarly argues that "we have to turn the other into something like the self in order to be ethical." She follows this by claiming a higher standard for translation, however. She states, "To surrender in translation is more erotic than ethical" ("Politics" 183).

By shifting the emphasis from the ethical to the erotic, Spivak insists on the difficult work of engaging difference and specificity without erasing it. There is value in paying attention to the ethical overlaps between texts from distant locales. There is a different kind of value in the effort to understand a text's specificity without requiring of it assimilation into thin universals.⁶² Spivak maintains an emphasis on the particularities and rhetoric of "original" texts in order to address the figurative constructions in language. These constructions, which are contingent and approximate, signal to the limits of language as a logical and total system of representation. Intimacy with a text therefore involves surrender to the "falling apart of language," to how figuration disrupts language's systematic logic and hints at its silences, or blind spots ("Politics" 180, 183, 187). From the pressure that different literature exerts on a new language or a new cultural context comes the potential to uncover where deep solidarities are possible; it can also reveal the limits beyond which solidarity is not possible without erasure, however.

The figurative turns in a text can provide a point of entry for experiencing the dynamic workings of language, even when the figuration cannot be transmitted exactly from language to language, or context to context. In Duraković's collection, figurative language like the heart-of-darkness metaphor becomes an especially important marker of contingency and randomness and an entry point for a more intimate engagement with this text assimilated into world literature. It provides an intertextual reference point for articulating ambivalence to European modernity which simultaneously puts pressure on oversimplified visions of global modernity advanced in the world literature anthologies in which the poems circulate.

⁶² With his conception of "Thick Translation," Kwame Anthony Appiah similarly prioritizes translations from the Third World to the West that will then be expounded on in the classroom. He prioritizes a "translation that seeks with its annotations and its accompanying glosses to locate the text in a rich cultural and linguistic context" (427). Through this contextualized approach, Appiah argues that a certain awareness can enter students' Western imagination if they begin to develop respect for others through the translated literary experience and proposes using thick translation as a teaching tool for building inter-cultural respect. Thick translation, like thin concepts, is thus still meant to produce something like the ethical rather than Spivak's erotic.

I have included the relevant poems in Bosnian and in two English translations in an appendix. When I analyze each poem in the body of the chapter, I also include a mini-montage of its two English translations for the reader's reference. I place these translations side-by-side in order to highlight the shifts in connotation and tone produced by the different word and metaphor choices. The juxtaposition of translations moves toward enabling what David Damrosch calls "triangulation," using multiple translations to "get a better sense of the original than any one version can give us on its own" (*How* 123). Two different English translations of "A Writer" already exist, so I included both to highlight the translators' interpretive differences. With the other two poems, I produced a second English translation to serve the same purpose in relation to Simić's. Rather than aiming to produce a more "correct" translation, I attempted to replicate the figuration and poetic word order of the Bosnian, even if at the expense of the more accessible and conventionally English adaptation of Simić's translation. When the difference between our translations is just word choice, I chose a different applicable synonym than Simić had in order to re-introduce some of the elements of the poem that did not carry over into the first translation.

Adaptation to a new linguistic context is fundamental to the process of translation and the poems are thus framed by the English they appear in as well as by the paratextual matter of the anthologies. The differences in figuration and word choice multiply the linguistic frames through which Duraković's poems are available to the English speaker. Providing side-by-side translations that differ in effect without being more or less correct allows me to highlight that translation is based on difference rather than equivalency. The impossibility of exact equivalency in linguistic translation sets the stage for critiques like Dipesh Chakrabarty's, that societies differ as languages do, rather than being at various stages in a uniform "progress" toward modernity

continuum. Cultures that put pressure on behavior and beliefs normative to Western modernity should be viewed as cultures in “translation” rather than in “transition.”

Duraković’s “Heart of Darkness” and European Modernity

Literary references abound in news media representations of the 1992-5 War in Bosnia. Journalist Roger Cohen opens *Hearts Grown Brutal: Sagas of Sarajevo* (1998) with an epigraph from W.B. Yeats, “We had fed the heart on fantasies / The heart’s grown brutal from the fare.” In *Trusted Mole: A Soldier’s Journey into Bosnia’s Heart of Darkness* (2000), British UN officer Miloš Stanković (born in Southern Rhodesia to Scottish and Yugoslav parents) describes going into Bosnian Serb territory as going “to the dark side.” Former President of Republika Srpska Radovan Karadžić becomes “the Mad Hatter.” And, as the title of the memoir suggests, Bosnia becomes the “heart of darkness.” Both Cohen and Stanković’s accounts present a more nuanced portrait of Bosnia than the representations of it as a place of “ancient ethnic hatreds” and even “cannibals.”⁶³ Their allusions to “hearts” are nonetheless part of a broader trend of using literary references, especially references to Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, to define the war in heart-shaped Bosnia.

The “heart of darkness” trope was widely used to make sense of the violence in Bosnia. A LexisNexis database search of news articles using the terms “heart of darkness” and “Bosnia” yields approximately 400 hits. Some articles use “heart of darkness” specifically to mean Banja

⁶³ The belief that age-old ethnic hatreds made the war inevitable was widely adopted in news and policy interpretations of the Wars of Succession. Maria Todorova makes an extended case for how this interpretation is applied to several “Balkan” phenomena in *Imagining the Balkans*. Robert Kaplan’s *Balkan Ghosts* (1993) is an example of such application; it was also US President Bill Clinton’s reference text for making policy decisions (Duffield 176). Although cannibalism appears much less frequently, Michael C. Williams quotes a British Foreign Service officer as claiming, “you have to remember they are all cannibals” (378).

Luka, the capital of Bosnia's Republika Srpska.⁶⁴ Many use the term more generally as a metaphor for Bosnia.⁶⁵ And still others expand the "heart of darkness" into any site of atrocity outside of Western European or US "centers." An article for the *Portland Press Herald*, for example, suggests that the "heart of darkness of human nature" can be found in Bosnia, as well as in places like Uganda, South Africa and Lebanon.⁶⁶ These often uncritical uses of the "heart of darkness" trope employ it to refer to spaces set up in opposition to a "West"⁶⁷ understood to be rational and civil. These representations of non-Western places as location for human nature's darkness confirm what Tim Allen and Jean Seaton show was a trend in the 1990s of positing "ethnic strife" as the oversimplified explanation for conflict in places like Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Uganda and Liberia. This is in contrast to the notion of "just war" or humanitarian mission, contemporary versions of the earlier "white man's burden," that Riika Kuusisto argues framed conflicts involving the West more directly, such as the Gulf War.

The tropic deployments of "heart of darkness" transform a multifaceted metaphor coined in response to Belgian and British colonial exploitation of Central Africa into a fixed label for sites of conflict outside of the US or Western Europe. Unlike the metaphoric sense of "heart of darkness" in Conrad's text, which also refers to the darkness in the hearts of those wielding economic and discursive power, these recent references mark the heart of darkness as being

⁶⁴ See, for example, Peterson's "Bosnia Serbs feel West's cold shoulder" in the *Christian Science Monitor* and *The Washington Post's* "Bosnian Serbs Expel Croats, Muslims." *The Washington Post* 15 Aug. 1995, Final Edition: A14. *LexisNexis*. Web. 21 Feb. 2011.

⁶⁵ See, for example, Julian Borger's "Sarajevo Diary: Searching for light in the heart of darkness" in *The Ottawa Citizen* and "Stand steady in Bosnia" in the *Austin American-Statesman*.

⁶⁶ "Witness': Postcards from a Journey into heart of darkness." *Portland Press Herald*. Also see Bernard Levin's "Heart of Darkness Still" in *The Times*.

⁶⁷ While "the West" can mean a number of things, in this chapter it refers broadly to democratic nation-states strongly influenced by European economic and cultural history and with significantly larger economic, political and cultural capital than Bosnia. On a more literal level, it most specifically denotes the Europe and US west of Bosnia.

located in that elsewhere where irrational and uncivil behavior reigns.⁶⁸ Furthermore, some of the more nuanced connotations of “heart of darkness” as a literary reference—economic and political interests driving imperialism (profit-driven companies and the political scramble for unclaimed spaces on the map of the Dark Continent), racial categorization (darkness, skulls being measured, Kurtz “going native”), and the ethical imperative to expose what lies beneath civilizing ideology (dark hearts)—are generally either emptied from the trope or made peripheral in its use.

As suggested by its title, Ferida Duraković’s *Heart of Darkness* poetry collection responds to the clamor of derogatory journalistic designations of Bosnia as a “heart of darkness.” Rather than rebut the label by demonstrating just how cultured and European Bosnia is, as was the strategy in Susan Sontag’s essays, Duraković’s poems instead affirm the heart of darkness metaphor’s relevance to Bosnia. The poems do not take the label as is, however; instead, they alter the idea expressed by the juxtaposition of “heart” and “darkness.” Bosnia is represented as neither the primitive nor a source of evil. Rather, it is a heart able to generate something other than the darkness of cultural oblivion and the darkness of uncritical progress toward inclusion in the modern European.

Duraković’s poems articulate the ephemeral circuits of desire and sensation that shape emergent culture in a Sarajevo caught between the residual ideologies and social structures of Yugoslav federalism and the conflicting ideologies of homogeneous ethnic nationhood and multinational European unity then competing for dominance. Her lyric poems put pressure on all of these ideologies and structures while simultaneously articulating desire for more personal

⁶⁸ Conrad’s novella has been criticized for replicating imperial racism, for aligning primitivity too closely with an Africa presented as developmentally prior and geographically exterior. Chinua Achebe famously accused Conrad of racism for representing indigenous Africans as a dehumanized backdrop for the European journey, plant-like creatures capable of no more than silence and frenzy. Other scholars have since nuanced Achebe’s reading with more specific ways that authority and the power of the West are either questioned or reified in the novella.

modes of attachment. The lyric poem, marked as it is by imagination and emotion and formed through figurative and unconventional uses of language, may appear to be an inefficient vehicle for communicating dissent in the midst of war. Poems do not produce the spectacle that draws audience to films nor do they offer the visual elements that help films counterbalance the linguistic loss of being translated and circulating internationally. Furthermore, as an impressionistic and fragmentary genre that suggests more than it says, lyric poems are not the most straightforward approach for making activist claims. In the context of the Wars of Succession, however, the use of poetry is especially apt for at least two reasons. First, poetry has traditionally been accorded prominence in South Slavic public spheres as a form tied to the sung poems (the word for song, *pjesma*, is also the word for poem) and celebrated through events like annual poetry festivals in each of the Yugoslav Republics (Burns 7-8). Secondly, writers played prominent political roles in shaping the ethnic nationalism driving the wars. Not only was novelist Dobrica Ćosić, “the ideological godfather of modern Serbian nationalism,” named president of rump Yugoslavia in 1992 (Wachtel *Remaining* 100), but Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić, who oversaw the siege of Sarajevo, was a multiply published poet who had lived most of his life in the city.⁶⁹ Footage of Karadžić talking about his poems with Russian poet and activist Eduard Limonov, having soldiers sing epic poems for him, and watching Limonov shoot rounds at the Sarajevans below gives credence to the joke in Sarajevo: “For

⁶⁹ Karadžić’s legacy is most associated with epic poetry. Slavoj Žižek argues that the Wars of Succession were based on a “poetic-military” complex; he describes the strongly anti-Muslim themes of the classic South Slav epic *The Mountain Wreath* (We put to fire the Turkish houses, / That there might be no stick nor trace/ Of these true servants of the devil!), how Karadžić would attend *gusle* accompanied epic poetry performances at a bar while he was in hiding after the war, and how he even recited an epic poem about himself (503-5). Before the war, however, Karadžić’s best received works were children’s poems. These poems nonetheless hint at epic themes and chauvinist sentiment. For example, the lines “Take no pity let’s go / kill that scum down in the city” and “When you put on your hard shoes, / Your brave boots, / Your manly shoes, / Your war boots, / You just automatically / Reach for your gun/ And set out / Down muddy roads” (qtd in Nelan and Hadziselimović, respectively).

Bosnians there were only two kinds of poets, those who were shooting at them and those who were trying to help them” (Pawlikowski, Merrill 316).

Poetry-as-propaganda was used to incite ethnic nationalist chauvinism during the Wars of Succession. Duraković and others responded with poetry whose lyricism and complexity produced an ethos resistant to the oversimplification that Karadžić’s poems exemplified. Poems by Semezdin Mehmedinović, Bisera Alikadić, Abdulah Sidran, Goran Simić and Marko Vešović are among the many notable instances of works from Bosnia resistant to exclusive national pride and idealized violence. As with Duraković’s works, these poems received international attention as much because they came from Bosnia as for their literary merit, however. Many of them circulated internationally because of the efforts of cultural activists like Susan Sontag and others advocating for the people of Sarajevo. For example, one of Sidran’s poems was read as part of the Kunsthalle art museum in New York’s program of support for Sarajevo during the siege that Sontag helped to organize. All of the poets listed above received Hellman-Hammett grants from Human Rights Watch in New York based on Sontag’s recommendation (Sontag papers: LaMarche). Duraković also worked and corresponded regularly with Sontag, who was a long-time PEN advocate and leader. Duraković had published several volumes of poetry before the siege, but only achieved international notice during the war for her poetry and for her work as an arts administrator. She had been publishing for over two decades before her work attracted the attention of an international reading public, which suggests that the added spectacle of being a war poet enabled a short-term literary recognition otherwise unavailable to many local poets.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Although Duraković’s work has achieved modest circulation and recognition because of the war, poets in post-socialist Bosnia generally receive little support. The effects of low GDP and high unemployment on book publishing and sales in Bosnia are compounded by sporadic funding for literary institutions and a 17% VAT added to all book sales (Živković). Access to English markets for Bosnian poets based in Bosnia is additionally affected by distance from translation and publishing networks; works by Bosnians living abroad account for the majority of Bosnian-English translation (Jones 310).

Duraković and other Bosnian poets came into international circulation as political poets who challenged the nationalistic, myth-making poetry that was simultaneously being used as propaganda.

Darkness of “big words”

In this section, I analyze how two of Duraković’s *Heart of Darkness* poems critique the persistence of concepts of civilized time and enlightened rationality—master narratives then being applied to the Balkans to demonstrate their lack of civilization and rationality. Duraković wrote her first war poem, “Beauty and the Beast,” right after the November 1991 atrocities perpetuated by the Serb dominated Yugoslav army against the inhabitants of the Croatian town of Vukovar. She claimed that this event and the siege of Sarajevo that followed effected her transformation from a poet interested in aesthetics to one interested in the “po-etički cilj riječe” / “po-ethical goal of writing” (“Genocid”). Being an ethical poet meant reacting with immediacy to the affectively perceived present. Duraković claims that, for the first time, she wrote “on the spot” (“*na licu mjesta*”) about “immediate stimuli” (“*neposredni podražaj*”). This presentism is noticeable in a shifting affective apprehension of the violent events of Yugoslavia’s dissolution; the events are perceived differently in each poem when filtered through Duraković’s on-the-spot poetic voice. In addition to the despair that hangs over some poems and the distant objectivism in others, nostalgia and longing for a future that differs from the present also display a present in constellation with past and future.

Composed of poetic pieces united through the title’s allusion to Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, the collection frames the poems as representing the horror that accompanies the violent dissolution of the multi-ethnic state of Yugoslavia. Duraković stated that she wrote in order to “zahvati taj užas svojim iskustvom i prenesi ga u književnost onako kako znaš” / “seize

the horror of my experience and transmit it into literature however I know how” (“Genocid”). She invokes horror in the statement above, written over a decade after the poems, and in the author’s commentary that concludes *Heart of Darkness*. Here, she acknowledges Conrad, “who realized long before others that darkness had a heart, and that the heart had darkness, although in the end everything comes to THE HORROR! THE HORROR! THE HORROR!” (109).⁷¹ With this allusion to Conrad, Duraković registers the violence of Yugoslavia’s dissolution as horror, just as the dissolution of Kurtz’s eloquently rationalized civilizing mission in Conrad’s novella is registered in the simple repetition of the phrase, “the horror.” In other words, the dissolution of Yugoslavia was driven by big ideas that fell apart, like Kurtz’s civilizing mission was.

The lofty goal of producing a developed civil society composed of educated citizens can obscure the ugliness engendered by the actual material practices associated with such “civilizing missions.” As Marlowe, the main narrator of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, claims, “The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only” (7). The character Kurtz from Conrad’s novella, who vacillates between his eloquently rendered mission to civilize in his report on the “Suppression of Savage Customs” and the unsteady scrawl of his concluding note to “Exterminate all the brutes!” (50), illustrates the ambivalence that a serious investment in the clashing ideals and practices of a “civilizing” world conquest can cause. The capricious big ideas of nation and civility are at the center of “Beauty and the Beast,” Duraković’s first po-ethical poem. The spare two-stanza poem apprehends a feeling of betrayal and represents it through the metaphor of untruthful or false beauty. As with the English translation of the title, “Beauty and the Beast,” the poem’s Bosnian

⁷¹ Like the Belgian Congo, which is the setting for Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Bosnia had been parsed out to a European power (Austro-Hungarians) at the 1878 Berlin Congress.

title alludes to the fairy tale of a kind beauty who turns a beast into a gentleman. Or, to put it otherwise, the tale of a beauty who civilized the beast who kept her captive by cultivating him into a polite gentleman.

Beauty and the Beast

Untruthful Beauty
Slammed the door
Finally
As the Homeland did,
Then vanished
Into history.

Nonetheless, Beauty,
Untruthful one,
And the Homeland
Have something in common—
Both leave behind
The boys
Who will die
For them

War, 1991

(Amela Simić translation)

Beauty and beast

The false beauty
Slammed the doors
Finally
Like the Homeland
And vanished
Into History.

The false, thus, beauty
And the Homeland
Have this in common:
Both behind themselves leave
Boys
Who will die
Because of them.

war 1991

(Kotecki translation)

Figure 4: Side-by-side translations of Duraković’s “Ljepotica i Zvijer” ⁷²

The false idea that obscures ugliness in “Beauty and the Beast” is fundamentally the Homeland, which is capitalized as a proper noun and functions as the fixed term in the false beauty-Homeland simile. In the Bosnian version of the text, “beauty” is not capitalized whereas “Homeland” is. Homeland therefore stands as the abstract truth. Furthermore, the simile presents the false beauty as being like a Homeland, rather than the Homeland being like a false beauty.

⁷² Translator’s Note: I chose “False beauty” instead of “Untruthful Beauty” in my translation in order to convey the infidelity thematic to the poem; I used the simile “like the homeland” instead of “as the homeland did” in order to convey the possibility that the noun ‘beauty’ is being compared to the ‘Homeland’ in addition to their acts of infidelity being paralleled; I chose “false, thus, beauty” because the word order entails an argument about the causal relationship between falseness and beauty; “behind themselves” implied a more self-obsessed role of Beauty and Homeland than does “leave behind”; “who will die because of them” conveys a less directly causal relationship between the boys’ deaths and Beauty/Homeland as subjects, and more of a relationship between the general idea/narrative of Beauty/Homeland and the boys’ sacrifice than does “who will die for them.”

The Homeland therefore functions as the fixed term in the comparison, through which the as yet undetermined character of the beauty can be elucidated. In other words, the Homeland's propensity for seducing boys into martyrdom needs no concrete image to explain it; it is presented as being a given. Notably, the poem uses the word "Homeland" (*Domovina*), rather than "state" (*država*).⁷³ If "state" refers to the geopolitical entity and "nation" to the ethnic or cultural entity that marks a nation-state, "Homeland" leans more toward the latter; home implies belonging, to a space and to a set of familiar practices and hierarchies (*dom* also means home or house in Bosnian). The boys do not die for the geopolitical entity; instead they die for the myth of "nation."

The false beauty is compared to a Homeland that leaves boys behind to die, but the beast receives no such analogy. Instead, the beast is only defined by its juxtaposition with the beauty, conjoined by the vague banality of the conjunction "and." The beast's possible analogs lie instead in the allusion to *Heart of Darkness* of the collection's title: the beast may be the object of a civilizing project, analogous with Kurtz's "brutes," or the beast may be found in the "forgotten and brutal instincts" (Conrad 65) of beauty herself, which is analogous with British imperialism. In the first sense, the beast refers to the character that was subject to Beauty's lesson in manners in the fairy tale "Beauty and the beast." The poem's beauty, however, has already been proven false, traitorous even. The poem thus has no fairy-tale referent for how the beast would react if he were to recognize that the beauty, so skilled at mesmerizing boys into suicide, was also constructed, was a lie even. In the second sense, beast and beauty both describe the same subject; Bosnian uses no articles, so the title could be interpreted as "beauty and beast."

⁷³ The distinction between 'Homeland' and 'state' is drawn more clearly in a later, as of yet untranslated poem. "Disappearance of the Homeland" ("*Nestajanje Domovine*"), published in 2007 in *Locus Minoris*, concludes its inventory of lost lives and dreams with the couplet "From all of this only the state remains / the Homeland was out of style anyway" ("*Od svega je ostala država / Domovina je ionako bila démodé*") (57).

Rather than the “and” connecting a proper noun (Beauty) to the beast, the beauty and the beast could be the same subject. Beast and beauty could therefore refer to the clashing faces of “the idea only” (Nation, Civilization), while upper case “Beauty and the beast” would be separate players in an ill wrought Pygmalion project as civilizing mission. Both interpretations are framed by the *Heart of Darkness* title. The false appeal of a beauty as Homeland, redeemed by the idea only, leads to the theme of betrayal in the poem.

If the ideas of “nation” and “civility” betray in “Beauty and the Beast,” those of “Europe” and “progress,” provoke shame in “The Writer Contemplates his Homeland While a Famous Postmodernist Enters the City.”⁷⁴ In the poem, a Parisian scholar hopes to bring order into a Bosnia that he has already categorized and defined as darkness and a threat to Western European orderliness. The poem prefaces two third-person descriptions of loss, a young man bleeding to death and the reflection of the sky in the open eyes of a dead soldier, with the claim, “For a long time everything has repeated itself most cruelly / and yet everything is happening for the first time.” A first-person voice claims that these scenes are not “the calm and distant face of History” but that a second-person “you” is instead making them up. The first person accuses the second of being an unreliable witness who comes from “the heart / of darkness that erupted and gushed forth into daylight.” In response to the unreliability of those from the darkness, a French scholar arrives to make sense of the war for them:

⁷⁴ In the English translation, the poet’s gender is translated as “he.” In the Bosnian version of “A Writer Perceives his Homeland,” the poet’s gender remains ambiguous. Although the masculine noun *pisac* is used instead of the feminine (and diminutive) *spisateljica*, the male noun can refer to any gender. Duraković later changed the male noun *pisac* to the feminine noun *spisateljica* in her collected works, *Locus Minoris*.

... *Mes enfants*, he started,
and his fingers kept repeating: *Mes
enfants, mes enfants, mes enfants...*

In the Academy of Sciences
wise grey heads could think only about
his screamingly white shirt. *Mes enfants*,
Europe is dying here. Then he arranged
everything into a movie, images,
Great words like *histoire, Europe,*
responsabilité, and naturally,
les Bosniaacs. So this is the way
to look into the face of history,

not like you: in crude irresponsible
fragments, in a sniper shot which stabs the skull,
in graves already covered with tireless grass...

(Amela Simić translation)

... *Mes enfants*
he started, and his fingers repeat it for him: *Mes
enfants, mes enfants, mes enfants*, in the middle
of the Academy of Science the old greybeards could think
only of his shirt, glaringly and conspicuously white.
Mes enfants, this is the death of Europe. Then he changes
it all into a film, into frames, into mouthfuls like
histoire, Europe, like *responsabilité* and, of course
les Bosniaacs. Look here, that's the right way to look History
in the face, not like you: in the crude irresponsible fragments,
the sniper shot that penetrates deep into the skull,
the graves already covered over by irredeemable grass...

(Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill translation)

Figure 5: Excerpt from side-by-side translations of Duraković's "Pisac Sagledava Domovinu..."

The "you" who comes from the heart of darkness cannot be trusted, according to the first-person voice. In contrast to darkness from which "you" comes, the Parisian scholar comes from the seat of the Enlightenment.⁷⁵ By calling the "wise grey heads"/"old greybeards" of Sarajevo children (*Mes enfants*), he inflects Rousseau's theory of the stages of human development with Hegel's categorizations of the globe into a hierarchy of development. Like Africa, which Hegel determined in 1822 to be "...the land of childhood, which lying beyond the day of self-conscious history, is enveloped in the dark mantle of Night" (21), Bosnia for the Parisian is in the land of childhood. As such, the wise grey heads from the heart of darkness would be ruled by emotions and impulses instead of reason and would lack the self-consciousness to enter into World History, as well as the maturity to engage in self rule, in John Stuart Mill's variation on the social

⁷⁵ The poem originally left the referent for the Parisian professor open, suggesting a number of possible figures: André Glucksman quoted Baudrillard that wars are made, won, or lost on TV, and François Mitterand, Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Luc Nancy and Jean Baudrillard also acted or theorized similarly to the character in the poem. For the English translation, however, Duraković added the dedication "To BH Levy" (Bernard-Henri Levy), who screenwrote *A Day in the Death of Sarajevo* and directed *Bosna!*. In the later published *Locus Minoris*, "with a grain of salt" ("*sa šakom soli*") is added to the dedication.

development thesis.⁷⁶ The Parisian scholar discounts the authority of the wise grey heads in favor of his own, which is based upon the intellectual weight of his Parisian academic pedigree, the cleanliness of a “screamingly white shirt”⁷⁷ that contrasts with the darkness, and the abstract universality of the “great words” that he uses.

Like Kurtz, who expresses the civilizing mission as “an exotic Immensity ruled by an august Benevolence,” the Parisian professor stands out for “his ability to talk, his words” (Conrad 50, 47). He disregards the broken bodies, blood, and clay with which the poem opened in favor of great words, or “mouthfuls” in Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill’s translation,⁷⁸ like Europe, history, responsibility, and the Bosnians. National identity (“*les Bosniacs*”), however, has already been rendered suspect in “Beauty and the Beast,” which appears earlier in the *Heart of Darkness* collection. Furthermore, responsibility, with its connotations in French, as in English, of both autonomy (to be capable of independently making decisions about something) and guilt (to answer for a wrong) simultaneously implies belonging to a universal regime of rights (and wrongs) and having transgressed against that regime. These questionable ideas of national identity and universal rights speak more to the investments of a dominant European epistemology and less to the specificities and traumas of Bosnia at war. The claim, “Europe is dying here,” implies Bosnia to be vital for proving the salience of the idea of Europe (in a move akin to Sontag’s advocacy), which heightens the stakes of the civilizing narrative that the professor tries to revive there.

⁷⁶ John Stuart Mill argues that Africans and Indians needed to be ruled by the colonizers until they were educated enough for self-rule (*Considerations on Representative Government, On Liberty*).

⁷⁷ Dušan Bjelic draws a contrast between representations of French civilizing order that sublimate filth and representations of the abject Balkans as disordered filth of Europe (“Europe’s Cesspool” 35, 48, 54)

⁷⁸ Irish poet Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill translated seven of Duraković’s poems for the *Scar on the Stone* anthology based on Antonela Glavinić’s literal-translation cribs. In addition to her adaptations of the literal translations into a poetic English, she also adapted Duraković’s poem “Georg Trakl on the Battlefield Revisited, 1993” into Irish Gaelic.

The Professor defines the war in Bosnia in relation to a distant sense of European history, an abstraction that places Bosnians both at the beginning of history (childhood) but also at its end (death). This developmental narrative simultaneously begins and ends in the Bosnian heart of darkness, in a chaotic simultaneity that the Professor tames through order and abstract universals uncontaminated by the corrective that a material and sensory encounter with the darkness provides. He compiles everything into a continuously ordered montage, one that is visual (“images”, “frames”) and that is defined through the accompanying narration. The Bosnian word that Amela Simić translated into “arranged” is “*poređati*,” from the root word “*red*” for line and order, meaning to order into lines or rows. The Professor thus explains the Bosnian situation through the abstraction of Enlightenment concepts systemized into “the calm and distant face of History,” in a linearity that contrasts with the “crude irresponsible fragments” that the second-person “you” offers as an alternative.

The self-conscious “I” in the poem exists in dialogue with a “you” toward whom the first person is ambivalent; she desires both the Professor’s linear and abstract point of view and the fragmented and affective point of view of the second person. Whereas the Professor only appears in the poem as third person, the first- and second-person speakers exist in dialogue with each other and in proximity to the blood, clay, and sensation.⁷⁹ The “you” processes the scene of loss in Sarajevo differently from the Professor’s universalist and continuously ordered montage, relying instead on the fragments of a sniper shot to the skull, graves covered with grass, and a memory of hands lain across Edvard Munch, an artist known for infusing observation with

⁷⁹ When apostrophe is used in poetry, the second person “you” of the address may not exist as a physical body; as Berlant argues, following Barbara Johnson, apostrophe can demonstrate the desire for relation with a desired but absent object. She describes apostrophe as “an indirect, unstable, physically impossible but vitalizing movement of rhetorical animation that permits subjects to suspend themselves in the optimism of a potential occupation of the same psychic space of others, the objects of desire who make you possible (by having some promising qualities, but also by not being there)” (*Cruel* 22).

emotion (most famously in “The Scream” to which the Professor’s “screamingly white” shirt alludes). All three fragments disrupt the distance of abstract and systemic explanation in favor of the material and sensory detail of lived affective histories. This attention to the affective, to the life conditions registered as sensation before they can be processed from a more objective distance and categorized (Berlant *Cruel* 4), also makes the first-person voice uncomfortable, however. It appears to confirm, after all, the Orientalizing stereotype of Balkan people as ruled by impulse and emotion. The second-person voice nonetheless reclaims affect in a corrective to the disparaging correlation; rather than needing to prove just how reasonable and objective the people of Sarajevo caricatured otherwise can be, the second-person voice instead refuses to denounce this mode of encountering life in besieged Sarajevo.

The first-person voice’s address to the “you” who experiences history affectively, “in crude irresponsible fragments,” offers a corrective to the abstraction and distance of the Professor’s “calm and distant face of History.” The poem also alludes to the critique in *Heart of Darkness* of a European rationality established in contrast with the “irrationality” of savages represented as being outside of civilized time; the poem suggests that the denial of co-evalness that the “you” experiences fits within more widespread patterns of loss and exclusion (Fabian). The allusions to “heart of darkness,” in the poem and in the collection’s title and author’s note, mobilize a literary critique of colonial violence to represent contemporary ambivalence in Bosnia about belonging to European Modernity. In other words, the incorporation into Bosnian cultural memory of Conrad’s story about the civilizing discourses and economic exploitation of colonialism puts into question the simultaneously universalizing and exclusionary discourse presented as being the solution for this “balkanizing” society. Rather than accept the generalizations offered by the Professor, the poem structurally demonstrates the inconsistencies

between the eloquence of his civilizing rhetoric and the horror of practices of European domination. The Parisian's moralist prescription of ideals like "*Europe*" and "*responsabilité*," his demeaning address to the people of Sarajevo as "*mes enfants*," and the horrific whiteness of his "screamingly white shirt" are resisted by the "you" who insists on an affecting and intimate face of history.

Darkness of cultural oblivion

"A Writer" and "Beauty and the Beast" wield the complicated layers of the "heart of darkness" metaphor to disrupt an unremarked upon Eurocentric and civilizing labeling of Bosnian darkness. The "darkness" takes on a different metaphorical content in "A War Letter" ("*Ratno Pismo*"), the final poem that I analyze before moving into a discussion of how these poems have been re-framed for anthologization. Instead of the practices authorized by civilizing narratives, the darkness in "A War Letter" is the total absence of such ideals and practices; it is that of an empty space without institutionalized record of past identity.⁸⁰ Epigraphed "About the letter from before the war," the poem argues that the darkness that follows the loss of institutions like the national library and modern documentary records may allow for cultural renewal and alterity; instead of relying on the authority of the archival record, imagination and memory can create stories of a past that enable a future community based in the land:

⁸⁰ In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Marlowe refers at one point to his childhood love of the blank spaces on the map, over which he could "dream gloriously," but states that by the time he went, Africa was no longer a blank space but "a place of darkness" filled with "rivers and lakes and names" (8).

The Universe sent darkness to our humble home,
Which is gone now. The letter, and every single
book,
and dear things: they all burned like Rome.
But it is just an image! Have a look:

We aren't gone! And manuscripts never burn,
they say. It means that I'll read anew
that precious letter, whenever you turn,
whenever only those few syllables

change our agony into an endlessly dull
winter afternoon. In those hours everything's
so simple that I suffer (same old song),
I don't love anyone, and the fear devours

me that passion, which brings back the first day
of love, the re-creation, is finally gone
like the heart grown in a poplar tree! And may
only this flourishing pain stop! May everyone
alone

leave for good, to wherever they want: to
water, air, or fire. And us? What fireside
awaits us in the time to come? Here is our home,
where mother can never tire of planting
roses and fruit, and us, her poor ones, on her palm.
(Amela Simić translation)

The darkness returned from the universe to our home:
our home is no more. Books and the letter
that one, and sentimental objects, all in the blaze
transformed into an image. But we did not

disappear, us! Neither do manuscripts burn, they say,
which means that I will read again
that dear letter, wherever you want, wherever
the letters want to transform this drawn out suffering

into the drawn out tedium of a winter afternoon,
when I don't love anybody, and I suffer
because everything is so normal and in order,
because there is no fervor to bring back

that first day of love, that re-creation of the world,
that growth of the heart into the poplar above the water!
But let just this suffering cease to blossom
And let already each go one-by-one

everyone, anywhere anyone wants to:
to the fire, to the water, to the air! And us? To whose home?
We will be here, where Mother grows roses and fruit,
and us, poor ones, on her palm.
(Kotecki translation)

Figure 6: Side-by-side translations of Duraković's "Ratno Pismo" ⁸¹

The darkness in "A War Letter" is the darkness of cultural oblivion. Like the vast emptiness of the universe, the poet's home is once again dark and empty after being destroyed by fire: "the letter, and every single / book / and dear things: they all burned like Rome." This

⁸¹ Translator's Note: I chose "the darkness returned from the universe" rather than "The universe sent darkness" to emphasize a return to a pre-existing darkness; I omitted the "burned like Rome" that Simić adds in her translation, which is an interesting simile but does not appear in the original; I use "sentimental objects" rather than "dear things" because it conveys the emotion infused in memorabilia; I make a grammatical parallel between "us" and "manuscripts" to better mark the thematic comparison between the two; Simić divides the long drawn out sentence in the center of the poem into three sentences, which makes them easier to follow but loses the replication of boredom produced by the longer sentence; "normal and in order" conveys the boredom produced by modernity more than "simple" does; "growth in the heart" emphasizes the effect on the heart of a speaker whereas Simić's translation also implies the poplar tree's heart; I emphasize the contrast between isolation and the plural "us" through the use of "each," "everyone," and "anyone" in the final stanza; "grows" conveys the act of growth more than the unfulfilled potential in "planting." On another note, the *A Map of Hope* anthology uses Amela Simić's translation of the poem from *Heart of Darkness*, but omits the last line in what appears to be a typographical error. As such, the final line does not appear: "roses and fruit, and us, her poor ones, on her palm."

oblivion entails the loss of private possessions, but, in the context of the poetry collection, that loss also becomes more general. The poems in *Heart of Darkness* inventory objects made meaningful by loss, whether “a fallen ash tree” (89, “War Haiku”) or the “old letters and books” out of which emotions fall onto the road as a moving truck leaves Sarajevo (86, “Look, Someone has Moved from the Beautiful Neighborhood where Roses Die”). These lost objects accumulate across the poetry collection as a whole into a compilation of remembered objects. In the historical context of besieged Sarajevo, this accumulation of loss also references institutional loss at the national level. As addressed in Chapter One, Bosnia’s cultural patrimony, the artifacts that stood as evidence of the cultural distinctiveness validating the nation’s sovereignty claims, was specifically under attack as part of the logic of ethnic cleansing. The National Library and Ottoman Institute both suffered extensive losses to fire when they were targeted with incendiary shells, for example. The individual’s loss of a personal library is thus repeated in the collective’s loss of a national library, a collective “dear thing” infused with the mandate of safeguarding selected historical documents categorized as the nation’s cultural patrimony.

The loss of cultural patrimony produces agony for the speaker, a state in contrast to which boredom appears as fantasy. Boredom seems a surprising choice for object of fantasy. It implies aristocratic privilege in the form of the early modern *ennui* of the literate classes (Gardiner 41). According to Walter Benjamin, modern boredom results from the homogenization of progressive time and continual stimulation, (“The Storyteller,” “Convolute D” *Arcades Project*), or, according to Henri Lefebvre, from the nihilism of “privatized, ‘petty-bourgeois’ individualism” (Gardiner 50). Nonetheless, this affect of the privileged, urban, modern and bourgeois individual becomes the object of a temporary fantasy in “A War Letter.” Rather than the suffering that results from the darkness of cultural oblivion, the suffering that results from

boredom is “because everything is so normal and in order.” Boredom represents the everyday of modernity, the normative and ordered present within homogeneous and progressive time. This boredom, which the speaker experiences as a lack of fervor, nonetheless fails to produce the “tranquility” to “recollect emotions” that William Wordsworth required to compose poetry. It cannot bring back the fervor remembered in the poem, when the speaker loved and felt capable of recreating the world. Furthermore, that boredom is restless, as seen in the following sentence:

“Neither do manuscripts burn, they say, / which means that I will read again / that dear letter, wherever you want, wherever / the letters want to transform this drawn out suffering / into the drawn out tedium of a winter afternoon, / when I don’t love anybody, and I suffer / because everything is so normal and in order, / because there is no fervor to bring back / that first day of love, that re-creation of the world, / that growth of the heart into the poplar above the water!”

The drawn-out vacillations and inconsistencies of the sentence produce the effect of a drawn-out but restless tedium, and this drawn-out tedium makes it difficult to alight with any commitment on a meaningful image. It produces an immobilized state antithetical to a renewed growth of the heart.

The word “heart” in the poem carries the usual connotations of love and vitality. It also suggests Bosnia itself, which was often referred to as the heart of Yugoslavia, as both its geographical center and as the republic that best exemplified its ideal of multiethnic “brotherhood and unity” (Longinović *Vampire* 142). The images used to describe this Bosnian “heart” vary across the poems in Duraković’s *Heart of Darkness*, and include the fragile heart of a spider trembling in the corner of the room and the more ominous similes of heart as a “lonely

hunter”⁸² and as “a poisonous plant.” The heart grown into a poplar tree that appears in “A War Letter,” along with the other poems that associate the heart with fruit, trees, and plants suggests a more positive valence to this “heart” as something generative and healing, however. The Bosnian word for “heart” (*srce*) also means the kernel or the core of fruit.⁸³ In “A War Letter,” the heart grows into a poplar tree and is associated with the fervor of creating the world anew. That the heart grows into a poplar tree is significant—Poplar (“*Jablan*”) is a figure in South Slavic mythology similar to the Greek Apollo who is able to heal, raise the dead, and inspire (Loma). Inspiration and healing for the heart shaped Bosnia could come from the heart as a poplar kernel; in a state of boredom, however, the speaker cannot recreate the growth of this heart.

The speaker turns away from a boredom that would also abandon the growth of this heart and instead seeks only to end the agony produced by the darkness of cultural oblivion. The speaker in the poem nonetheless finds that cultural oblivion can have a heart, if it leads to the dissipation of the individual: “And let already *each go one-by-one / everyone*, anywhere *anyone* wants to” (emphasis mine), in favor of the “us” who claims a home in the earth.⁸⁴ This movement toward attachments is an optimistic drive to generate a better future that will differ from the conditions of the present. In the wake of the loss of the fantasy of a long boring winter afternoon at home among one’s books emerges a new desire for a future not dependent on print textuality. Loss of a print culture needs not be entirely negative, if one follows David Eng and David Kanzenian’s argument. From the remains of what is lost can arise something social and

⁸² The poem thus also references Carson McCullers, drawing southern gothic style and the misfits of southern US into a Bosnian context.

⁸³ This meaning of “heart” echoes the first narrator in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, who claims that for Marlow, “the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze...” (5).

⁸⁴ The social is also a rejection of available forms of political membership. Chakrabarty rethinks two concepts of Enlightenment modernity: historicism and the political. With political modernity, the question of whether the “peasant” must be trained into citizenship or whether the peasant is citizen as is (with attention to kinship, spirituality, and other such elements) is key. The former assumes “prepolitical” people must be developed in order to have citizenship.

activist (ix). The “us” that the poem’s speaker ends with suggests that the loss of the cultural patrimony that was used to substantiate national belonging can enable a future sociality built around stories instead of documents. And the “here” where the “us” finds a home suggests an active claim to the Bosnian heartland.

Rather than the fire, water, and air to which *everyone* can go, the speaker chooses earth for “us,” the “here” (“*ovdje*”) in Mother’s palm. The “here” cannot be a house, as the speaker no longer has one, and although “Mother” could be the speaker’s own mother, the image of her growing the “us” in the palm of her hand suggests her to instead be something closer to an earth mother. The land upon which the “us” determines to stay is the home where the heart is planted, and from which will grow words and worlds to fill in the darkness. Neither the ordered normal of boredom nor the inspiration provided by the masculine thunder and fire gods of South Slavic mythology are the source of these new words and worlds. Instead, they arise from the earth upon which the “we” stands. This focus on the earth implies a claim to territory, but, more importantly, it also stands in contrast to the “heavenly gaze” of Serb as martyr upon which the mythos of the militant Orthodox Serb claims to territory in the Wars of Yugoslav Dissolution continued to rely, in ways similar to the heavenward gaze of the Croat defined as Catholic and the Bosniak defined as Muslim.⁸⁵

Rather than the heavenly gaze of any of the three religious affiliations, Orthodox, Catholic, or Muslim, upon which the ethnic identities were based, the “us” ends firmly planted in the earth. In some ways, this social earthliness replaces the fantasies of progress toward European or ethnic-national belonging with the fantasy of a primordial feminine paganism. This invocation of Slavic mythology’s Damp Mother Earth follows the neo-romantic current of mid-

⁸⁵ Associated with the martyrdom of Miloš Obilić during the resistance to the Ottomans at the battle of Kosovo (Longinović “Post-Oriental *Avliya*” 167).

20th-century Serbian (and Western) poetry and it suggests a return to the Romantic notion of nations based on shared mythology and folklore (Lalić 17; Longinović “Serbo-Croatian” 286). However, by invoking an oral tradition based on pre-literate times, the speaker also draws on social memory independent of the cultural history catalogued in the destroyed libraries. After the archive, cultural patrimony becomes less about preserved documents as evidence of patrilineal descent, whether from the religions of the past imperial masters or from the literatures of modern Europe. The destruction of this cultural patrimony instead enables the speaker to imagine a break from the past documented in the libraries, and with it a break from a future predicated on the assumptions and hierarchies of the documents therein categorized as “cultural” and “historical.” As Diana Taylor argues in her analyses of performed responses to histories of violence in Peru, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, embodied systems of transfer like spoken language are important alternative sources of cultural memory to more enduring material records like documents and buildings. She calls “memory paths” the route to recuperating memory of past struggle through the body and the senses rather than through material records.⁸⁶

If something social and activist can arise from the remains of the destroyed libraries for the speaker who calls on the earth Mother, it is the possibility of revisionist storytelling that draws on “memory paths” not to endlessly repeat the past but to incorporate elements of what has been lost into a more satisfying future. As Avery Gordon claims in *Ghostly Matters*, “the stories people tell about themselves, about their troubles, about their social worlds, and about their society’s problems are entangled and weave between what is immediately available as a story and what their imaginations are reaching toward” (4). Nothing is available in the form of

⁸⁶ Her argument about the power to recall histories of injustice intersects with the recognition of past injustices that Walter Benjamin’s hoped would occur through the “flash” from shocking juxtapositions and the CRL James hoped would occur through the recollection of the emotion generated by violence in the past that can occur when societies are embroiled in the emotions produced by current crises (“Theses”, *The Black Jacobins*).

literary source in the poem, but a story can be built by drawing on Slavic oral tales to articulate a structure of feeling that responds to cultural oblivion. The poem presents a vision of the heart of Bosnia as able to grow from the damp darkness of the earth and of cultural oblivion, in an activist insistence on land. The heart in the darkness refuses oblivion once planted and is able to generate something new after the lost fantasy of the normal and orderly European life.

***Heart of Darkness* Poems Reframed**

Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* poems were originally published at a time when Sarajevo arts spoke for the besieged city. The poems have since been excerpted and re-ordered alongside poems from other collections and other contexts. Rather than being united by the "heart of darkness" allusion specific to Bosnia at war, the poems appear side-by-side as of the same kind based on more global interests and investments. The nonprofit publishing house White Pine Press, whose mission is to publish literature that increases cultural awareness and addresses human rights issues, put out the English translation of *Heart of Darkness* as the third volume in its *Terra Incognita* series edited by Slovenian poet Aleš Debeljak. As an alternative press funded through arts endowments, White Pine Press can publish poetry and international literary volumes without relying on their projected profitability. Less profitable genres like the poetry collection and less bankable international authors thus account for many of its titles. While Duraković's English language *Heart of Darkness* has not circulated widely in its form as a dedicated poetry collection, some of its poems have been extracted for inclusion in anthologies with wider scope and appeal. Poems from the collection have appeared in Rutgers University Press's *A Map of Hope: Women's Writings on Human Rights*, University of Wisconsin Press's *Bosnian Croatian Serbian: A Textbook with Exercises and Basic Grammar*, Bloodaxe Books' *Scar on the stone:*

Contemporary Poetry from Bosnia, and Graywolf Press's *New European Poets*, the last of which I do not address in this chapter. In the following sections, I discuss the poems' entry into World Literature via these anthologies and examine how they are re-framed in the process.

Bosnian Literature as World Literature

The specificity of the *Heart of Darkness* poems in their Sarajevo context does not translate seamlessly to the more global role they play as world literature. If world literature is understood according to David Damrosch's definition, as "literary works that circulate beyond their culture of origin" (*What* 4), then the dissemination of Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* poems in anthologies and collections outside of Bosnia marks their entry into world literature. The translation of her poems into English is furthermore a mark of distinction, according to Pascale Casanova's characterization; the poems are recognized as world literature by virtue of their translation into a major world language and circulation to centers of literary reception (133, 136). Damrosch and Casanova's celebratory schema for evaluating works that are disengaged from the linguistic and socio-political context of their origin emphasizes the gain in cultural capital effected by texts' trans-linguistic and trans-cultural mobility.

In contrast to these more optimistic interpretations of textual mobility, other evaluations of translation address the linguistic richness that is lost when poetic works are transmitted from a source language to another language. Robert Frost's dictum, "Poetry is what is lost in translation" summarizes such claims. Sound, meter and rhyme are crucial elements of poetic effect, and the argument that such elements do not translate well is neither unique to Frost nor dated. In a recent monograph on transnational poetics, Jahan Ramazani defends his explicit focus on Anglophone poetry with the claim, "poetry, especially in its lyric mode, cannot be adequately studied in translation in the same way that drama, epic, and the novel can be studied within their

generic frameworks even when translated into another language” (19). Both Frost and Ramazani acknowledge that elements of poetics cannot be transferred intact between languages. The object of their concern can be exemplified by the translation of Duraković’s “Beauty and the Beast.” The opening lines, “Lažljiva ljepotica / Zalupila je vratima” is translated for *Heart of Darkness* as “Untruthful Beauty / Slammed the door.” The alliteration and end rhyme in the Bosnian language version do not appear in the English translation, nor does the switch from the smooth and round “l” and “a” sounds in the poem’s opening to the more cacophonous “ch” (“č,” “ć”) and “k” sounds at the end of the poem (“Dječake / Koji će umrijeti / Zbog njih”; “The boys / Who will die / For them”). Furthermore, the sound of a sigh produced by the final “njih” (pronounced “nyih” with emphasis on the “h”) is not replicated by the final “them” in English.

The linguistic loss of poetic sound and rhyme is paralleled by a cultural loss of social and historical context in the poems’ anthologization. As framed by the *Heart of Darkness* title, Duraković’s poems responded explicitly to the characterization of the Balkans as another heart of darkness, a characterization that extends earlier stereotypes of Balkan barbarity to the wars in the 1990s. This challenge to stereotypes sometimes becomes less evident when the poems are reframed. The specificity of the poem’s political context was erased when “A War Letter” was anthologized in *A Map of Hope*, for example. No bibliographic or other contextual information introduces the author or the poem. Furthermore, the implications of “darkness” and “heart” in the poem become less evident outside the context of the “heart of darkness” label applied to Bosnia and the poetry collection. The specificity of the poem’s resistance to an ideal Europeanness is hinted at but not transmitted fully in “A War Letter’s” translation and anthologization in *A Map of Hope*.

Although the translation and circulation of Duraković's poetry provides it distinction and entrance into "world literature," it also entails a loss of some of the linguistic and cultural specificity of the original. Whereas a strain of poststructuralist thought might do away with the concept of "origin" completely and thus negate the problem of translation loss, the uneven distribution of resources for literary production and dissemination justifies some attention to what literary and contextual elements are compromised in the transfer from the smaller Bosnian to the more dominant Anglophone literature. Small literatures that gain recognition in literary centers often display some signs of assimilation into the stylistic and thematic conventions of the receiving culture.⁸⁷ The problem with minor and translated literature that fits too neatly within contexts outside of its "culture of origin" is precisely that this domestication appears to reinforce the universality of the receiving culture's epistemology and aesthetic sense. Gayatri Spivak refers to such homogenization as "with-it translatese" in reference to translation ("Politics" 182), and Tomislav Longinović refers to it as "globalese" in reference to the platitudes of a general set of cultural codes ("Post-Oriental" 159). More assimilation to the content and style of the center makes circulation more likely for minor literatures, however. Emily Apter, for example, references an identifiable canon of world literature "dominated by PEN and UNESCO writers," in a critique of assimilation relevant to an active PEN writer like Duraković (100).⁸⁸ The global traffic in literary productions sometimes reduces the literature of smaller languages to the stylistic and thematic interests of the more dominant language; attention should therefore be paid to the original works in order to address those elements "lost."

⁸⁷ In response to this uneven context for cultural production, scholars had developed scales for evaluating minor or translated literature that range from "homogenization" to "heterogenization" (Appadurai 32), "assimilation to differentiation" (Casanova 179), or "domesticating" to "preserving foreignness" (Venuti 469).

⁸⁸ Meredith Tax, the chair of the International PEN committee on women writers took an active role in decry-ing the treatment that Duraković's fellow writers in Croatia, including Dubravka Ugrešić, faced when they were accused of being witches for speaking out against the chauvinism of Croatia's governance during and following its secession from Yugoslavia.

This attention to the elements that are lost need not negate the gain that anthologization and translation can also entail. Beyond the gain in cultural capital that entry into world literature effects, texts that are re-framed by new paratextual matter and a new language may produce new meaning. In Walter Benjamin's meditations on translation, he argues that translation is a creative process that exceeds the original act of composition. He claims that "...no translation would be possible if in its ultimate essence it strove for likeness to the original. For in its afterlife—which could not be called that if it were not a transformation and a renewal of something living—the original undergoes a change" (Benjamin "Task" 73). The work of the original becomes defamiliarized when it is altered to fit the target language, but the target language is also estranged by stretching to accommodate a work composed in another linguistic context. Benjamin thus sees translation as a productive process if it diminishes tendencies toward singular meaning in both the source and receiving culture. New affinities can become apparent and old distinctions gain nuance.

"Beauty" and the problem of national literature and language

Benjamin's model for thinking about the productive potential of translated works can help when thinking about the productive potential of textual movement across contexts, even if no linguistic translation occurs. When reprinted in the University of Wisconsin Press textbook, *Bosnian Croatian Serbian: A Textbook with Exercises and Basic Grammar*, Duraković's "Beauty and the Beast" was not translated but was re-framed to fit the genre of the textbook for English readers. It was also framed by the goal of teaching the language formerly known as Serbo-Croatian in a world where such a designation is no longer politically correct. In this new context, the poem is framed by a version of world literature based on international and interlinguistic rapprochement.

B5			
<u>Bosnian</u>	<u>Croatian</u>	<u>Serbian Latin</u>	<u>Serbian Cyrillic</u>
1. Šta vidiš kroz prozor?	1. Što vidiš kroz prozor?	1. Šta vidiš kroz prozor?	1. Шта видиш кроз прозор?
2. Vidim i velike i male pse.	2. Vidim i velike i male pse.	2. Vidim i velike i male pse.	2. Видим и велике и мале псе.
1. Dobro, vidim jednog velikog psa, ali gdje su mali?	1. Dobro, vidim jednoga velikog psa, ali gdje su mali?	1. Dobro, vidim jednog velikog psa, ali gde su mali?	1. Добро, видим једног великог пса, али где су мали?
2. Tamo su i mali i veliki psi.	2. Tamo su i mali i veliki psi.	2. Tamo su i mali i veliki psi.	2. Тамо су и мали и велики пси.
1. A, sad ih vidim!	1. A, sad ih vidim!	1. A, sad ih vidim!	1. А, сад их видим!
✂ Replace italicized words in the second line with: a) plave i žute cipele; b) visoki i niski profesori, and make appropriate adjustments in following lines.			

Figure 7: Sample exercise in BCS textbook (43)

Rather than focus on one of the national languages that Serbo-Croatian divided into with the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the textbook's authors advocate teaching them as a unit. Passages in Bosnian are placed next to passages in Croatian and Serbian; the differences are minor and the passages almost interchangeable. The authors claim, "Our intent in producing this book has been to bring some measure of unification to the fragmentation of language teaching which came about as a result of the wars accompanying the breakup of Yugoslavia" (Alexander and Elias-Bursac xii).⁸⁹ They might have added that the textbook also brings a measure of unification to the fragmentation of Yugoslavia's literature into national literatures. The textbook devotes three chapters to the national literatures of the three languages it teaches. Although the chapters are not labeled according to the national identity of the poets presented within, the bibliographic information accompanying the poems makes this organization evident. The chapter devoted to Bosnia includes poems by Ferida Duraković, A.B. Simić, and Aleksa Šantić. The Croatian chapter includes poems by Antun Gustav Matoš and Tin Ujević, and the Serbian and

⁸⁹ BCS (Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian) also became the official acronym given the language by translators at the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague (Longinović "Serbo-Croatian" 283).

Montenegrin chapter includes poems by Vasko Popa and Desanka Maksimović and an excerpt of oral epic poetry from Stanko Pižurica.

Textbooks, readers, and anthologies reflect the political projects informing pedagogy and play an important role in establishing canons of literature. A textbook like the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian (*BCS*) textbook exists because of academic departments built around national languages and literatures for citizens of other nations and speakers of other languages. The *BCS* textbook also echoes the nation-building role that such pedagogical tools played in Yugoslavia. During the rise of Yugoslavia as an idea, whether as a synthesis of South Slav culture or as a supranational Yugoslav culture, national distinctions and cultural heritage were largely elided in textbooks, anthologies, readers, almanacs and journals (*Making Wachtel* 60, 101). However, when the Yugoslav idea moved away from one of synthetic or supranational unity towards one of multinational identity, where the “nations” (i.e., ethnicities) identified with the various republics were encouraged to emphasize their cultural distinctions, the content and order of these collections of works changed radically. Serb and Croat readers categorized writers by ethnic-national label and included mostly works by poets associated with their respective ethnicities (187). Only readers from Bosnia were organized chronologically and thematically instead of ethnic-nationally and included more international works (181). The more “Yugoslav” order and content of the Bosnian readers is most closely aligned with the order and content of the literary chapters in the *BCS* textbook. Although the textbook divides the literature of the successor states according to ethnic nationality, this identity category is not highlighted. Furthermore, by placing the literary chapters side by side, similarities in history and literary culture are highlighted just as similarities in the national languages are highlighted in the side-by-side placement of passages from the three languages in the other chapters.



The walls of the National Library (formerly the Town Hall) in Sarajevo, all that is left standing of the library after it was shelled and burned during the war.



Promenade by the National Library ruins along the Miljacka, Sarajevo.

The words for **history** in B, C, and S are *historija* [B], *povijest* [C], and *istorija* [S]. Bosnian usage vacillates between *istorija* and *historija*, although Bosnian grammarians (and most recent usage) tend to prefer the latter. This fact, of apparent change in progress, explains the seeming discrepancy between the usage by the modern Bosnian poet F. Duraković of the form *istorija*, and the usage in this textbook's lessons of the form *historija*. The title of the poem by A. G. Matoš, to be found in Lesson 18, illustrates change over a longer time period. Namely, the spelling of the second word in the title of the poem *Jesenje večer* is no longer encountered in modern Croatian, which now uses only the spelling *večer*.

Page from Bosnian literature chapter of the BCS textbook (263)

Figure 8: Page from the Bosnian literature chapter of the BCS textbook (263)

Although the *BCS* textbook emphasizes cultural and linguistic similarities between the Yugoslav successor states, it also subtly draws out the national particularities of each literary tradition. Furthermore, it emphasizes efforts to invent national differences. “Beauty and the

beast” is followed by a page of questions about the poem and a photo of the National Library, captioned “The walls of the National Library (formerly the Town Hall) in Sarajevo, all that is left standing of the library after it was shelled and burned during the war” (244). The library was destroyed soon after Duraković composed the poem; in the context of the image of the destroyed library, her poem stands out as a testament to the works that survived such destruction. The textbook then draws out the linguistic implications of post-war national politics. Although much of the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian language is held in common, several nationally distinct word triads are often referred to as representative of difference. The word for “history,” *historija* in Bosnian, *povijest* in Croatian and *istorija* in Serbian, is one such triad. The *BCS* textbook notes the three terms and states, “Bosnian usage vacillates between *istorija* and *historija*, with Bosnian grammarians (and most recent usage) preferring the latter. This explains why the modern Bosnian poet F. Duraković uses the form *istorija*, while the textbook lessons use *historija*” (245). The claims to a separate Bosnian language occurred alongside similar nationalizing tendencies to distinguish Croatian and Serbian from their counterparts (e.g., preference in Croatian for “ij” sounds and Slavic over Latin root words, the Serbian preference for the Cyrillic over the Latin alphabet, and the Bosnian preference for “ij” and “h” sounds).

Whether in response specifically to this commentary in the textbook or more generally to the premium placed on establishing a distinct Bosnian identity, Duraković changed the word “*istorija*” in “Beauty and the beast” to “*historija*” when the poem was later reprinted in her collected works, *Locus Minoris: Sklonost Bosni kao melanholiji (Locus Minoris: Inclination toward Bosnia as Melancholia)*.⁹⁰ She also changed the “*istorija*” in “A Writer” to “*historija*” for

⁹⁰ Duraković later relativized the difference between the terms. In a statement of artistic mission, she uses both *historija* and *istorija* in the same sentence, then uses all three in the following sentence (*historija/istorija/povijest*) (“Genocid”). “*Historija* nije magistra vitae. Više istine o ratu ima u književnosti, dakle u privatnom poduhvatu pojedinca, nego u cjelokupnoj pisanoj *istoriji* ovih naših trusnih prostora. Previše ovdje ima

the same collection, in a self-translating move that reflects the profusion of symbolic translations between Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian that took place during and after the war (Longinović “Serbo-Croatian” 288). As an anecdote relevant to Chapter One of this dissertation, Susan Sontag commented on the delay caused by having to wait, ironically, for *Waiting for Godot* to be translated from Serbian to Bosnian (“On Being” 336).

By incorporating Duraković into its Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian literary history, the textbook performed a politically saturated canonizing move. Her poetry becomes a part of a literary history that refuses total national separations between the languages and literatures of the former Yugoslavia even while acknowledging distinctions and sociopolitical trends toward separation. When framed by the textbook’s mission to restore some unity to the post-Yugoslav cultural fragments, “Beauty and the beast” becomes more about the lost “Homeland” that is one of its themes than about the heart of darkness implications of the beauty and the beast illustrated in the close reading of the poem performed earlier in this chapter. The lost homeland is established as being false, as having lied in order to be admired and died for. Although nation remains the foundation for the beauty-Homeland simile (i.e., her falseness can be understood through reference to the obvious falseness of the Homeland) when the poem is framed by the *BCS* textbook, the poem loses the possible analogs for the beast enabled by the *Heart of Darkness* framing. Without reference in the body of the poem or analog in the context of a poetry collection, the beast’s potential allusion to civilizing mission and to savagery is lost. The beast instead becomes most closely associated with the war that dissolved the Yugoslav nation and the Serbo-Croatian language.

historije/istorije/povijesti raznih kolektivâ, a premalo istine o pojedincu i njegovoj sudbini” (emphasis added) / History (*Historija*) is not a *magistra vitae*. More truth about the work can be found in literature, therefore in the private enterprise of individuals, then in the entire combined print history (*istorija*) of our seismic/shaky space. There are too many histories (*historije/istorije/povijesti*) of various collectives here, and not enough truth about the individual and his/her fate (my translation).

From civilizing missions to human rights in “A War Letter”

A Map of Hope: Women’s Writing on Human Rights, an international anthology published by Rutgers University Press and edited by Marjorie Agosín, includes the anti-war work of Bosnian poet Ferida Duraković alongside multi-ethnic American and international works. Approximately a third of the texts in the international anthology are by US authors who are either themselves an ethnic or racial minority, if Jewish Americans are included in this category, or are stories that focus on the experiences of such minorities. The anthology enables “small literatures,” works from around the world written in languages and locales without strong publishing infrastructure and audiences, to appear alongside works written by ethnic and racial minorities in the US as of the same kind. Through their resonance with works from other contexts, the themes and metaphors intimated in Duraković’s poem “A War Letter” are fleshed out in the anthology.

In this section, I address how Duraković’s *Heart of Darkness* poem “A War Letter’s” fits the paratextual frame and internal categories of the international anthology *A Map of Hope*. The poem becomes one example of the texts connected by the thin but ethical categories of “human rights,” “multi-ethnic international” and “women.” In this new frame that emphasizes the unqualified good of human rights, the poem loses some of the specificity of its *Heart of Darkness* critique of civilizing missions and imperial violence. The loss of the critique is not total, however, and the poem simultaneously puts pressure on the thin concepts upon which the frame depends, which I show later in this section. As discussed earlier, the poem “A War Letter” ends with the assertion that a plural and poor “we” remains (“We did not disappear”/“*Nismo nestali*”) and will be “here” in the palm of Mother’s hand. It therefore attends to the community, a “we” that includes the most vulnerable (“poor ones”/“*sirote*”). The “we” takes on a more

global scale in the context of *A Map of Hope*. The poem appears in the “War and Remembrance” section alongside works by authors such as June Jordan, Susan Rubin Suleiman, Barbara Kingsolver, and Marguerite Duras, among others, who address domestic and racial violence, memory of the Holocaust, and resistance to US imperial wars. In this context, “A War Letter” is also presented as being a poem exemplifying one of the ways that violence figures into cultural memory.

In her introduction, editor Marjorie Agosín generalizes the scope of Duraković’s work to claim that the poet “describes the total physical and spiritual devastation of countries at war” (xvii). Agosín follows up with the argument that the poems in the anthology do more than evoke loss, whether from war or human rights abuses; they also exemplify how literature can rescue victims:

This is a collection of creative works into which are deeply woven the themes of human rights and the ways in which these rights—or their absence—affect the daily lives of women. Literature moves us, rescues us from oblivion, and makes us witnesses to our history, here written by the hands of women (xvii).

As advanced in Agosín’s quote above and in the anthology’s full title, *A Map of Hope: Women’s Writing on Human Rights—An International Literary Anthology*, the poems by women and about women represent human rights abuses and human rights advocacy. The anthology opens with a forward by then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, and the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” is reprinted after Agosín’s introduction. The specificity of each writer’s context and experience matters less in this more homogenizing paratextual frame than does the broad and heavily US multi-ethnic designations “international,” the identity “woman” and the experience of human rights grievance and rescue.

The poem's political intervention receives no expository discussion, however; no bibliographic or other contextual information introduces the author or the poem. The text that comes the closest to performing an explicatory role is a nonfiction prose piece about the region that appears in *A Map of Hope*'s "Exiles and Refugees" section, Slavenka Drakulić's "Bosnia, or What Europe Means to Us." Like Duraković's poem, Drakulić's piece is designated in the table of contents as coming from Bosnia, even though it is clear in the story and in the "Notes on Contributors" at the end of the anthology that the author is from the Adriatic coast in what is now Croatia. The shared designation of being from "Bosnia," even if erroneous, as well as the reference to the nation in Drakulić's title, give the prose piece some authority as contextualization for Duraković's Bosnian poem.

"Bosnia, or What Europe Means to Us" provides some information about the ethnic cleansing agenda directed at Bosnian Muslims, of which the siege of Sarajevo was a part. However, as in Sontag's work, it advocates for Bosnian Muslims by reifying the common progress narrative of the Balkan need to develop toward European modernity. The Bosnian Muslims are described as being for the most part nonreligious—being religious appears to be defined as abstaining from pork and alcohol in this argument—even though Islam was practiced prior to the war in Bosnia, primarily in rural areas but also by those as urban and influential as the president of the newly declared nation, Alija Izetbegović. They are described as having been "forced to turn Muslim in order to survive" during the war (228), which accurately describes a more widespread ideological shift that occurred during the war but makes passive those people whose ideas shifted. Furthermore, the narrative continues by describing this appeal to other Muslim nations as the following: "Bosnians made a pact with the Devil, but there was nobody

else to make a pact with. After that, Bosnia was probably lost to Europe, as Europe was lost to the Bosnians a long time before” (228).

This claim to a loss to Europe underlines the foundation to Drakulić’s argument: that Bosnia would ideally develop towards an ideal Europe that does not include practicing Muslims in order to grow out of the immature fratricidal ethnic strife on display in the Wars of Succession. She describes Eastern European countries, without apparent irony, as being the “infantile nations of our continent” who “need to imagine something like ‘Europe’ to save [them] from [their] complexes, insecurities and fears. Because for us, the people from the Balkans, the biggest fear is to be left alone with each other. We have learned better than others what you do to your brother” (228). This call for Eastern Europe to grow up in order to become more like Western Europe is more explicitly articulated in another chapter of Drakulić’s *Café Europa: Life after Communism*, the book from which “Bosnia, or What Europe Means to Us” was excerpted: “One needs to understand that we, the people from the communist world, are still children in the political sense. We need a daddy, somebody who will look after us, so that we don’t have to look after ourselves. We don’t know how to be free and we are not ready for responsibility” (“A King for the Balkans” 107). She is speaking specifically about the benefits of the return to the political theatre of the formerly exiled Serb monarchs in contrast to autocratic leaders like Slobodan Milošević or Ante Pavelić. However, this “daddy” took the shape of the US via NATO intervention in the case of Bosnia, not a Europe that Drakulić describes as looking on “paralysed” during the war (*A Map* 229). If “Bosnia, or What Europe Means to Us” provides explicatory context for “A War Letter,” the contextualization it provides reifies the narrative of Bosnia’s need to progress into European modernity.

Although it certainly loses linguistic and contextual specificity, “A War Letter” also gains more than the distinction of being part of World Literature through its translation and anthologization. By emphasizing human rights’ abuses against international women, *A Map of Hope* calls for a focus on crimes against women. The new frame therefore draws attention to a historical condition simultaneous to the *Heart of Darkness* poems: in addition to the more general violence and forced displacement of the Wars of Succession, the rape of women as a form of intimidation and ethnic cleansing was widespread and present most systematically in the rape camps run by militant Serbs (Boose). “A War Letter” does not deal with such practices, however, but instead focuses on the “oblivion” that Agosín claims such poems rescue “us” from: the destruction of books, memorabilia and a (presumably) love letter. The poem therefore focuses on loss of cultural memory as the human rights abuse against women. As discussed in Chapter 1, the systematic destruction of the artifacts in Sarajevo’s cultural institutions was one strategy of ethnic cleansing. In the context of *A Map of Hope*, the destruction of the poet’s personal library as a symbol of her intellectual and emotional past offers an entry point into the broader affront to identity and emotional life that occurred through the “cleansing” practices of the war. Sexual violence and cultural violence thus stand side-by-side as two metonyms for the larger wrong of human rights abuse.

Furthermore, the *A Map of Hope* anthology emphasizes hope for women as an alternative to the crimes against them. This focus highlights the Mother figure upon whom hope rests in “A War Letter.” As discussed earlier, the poet turns toward a maternal deity instead of being inspired by the paternal gods of the three monotheisms upon which ethnic identity depended during the wars. The poem’s human rights’ framing affirms the ethical side of Duraković’s “po-ethical” work outlined earlier in this chapter. It furthermore upholds the poem “A War Letter’s”

claim to rootedness in the land through its emphasis on the right to redress. The thin solidarity of human rights advocacy may start to assimilate the poem's multiple valences in order to more easily fit the global scale of "human rights," however, and consequently erase the poetic side of the "po-ethics" portmanteau.

If "A War Letter" is categorized too neatly as a poem that challenges human rights abuses and rescues one from oblivion, it loses some of the richness of the contextualization that it had in the *Heart of Darkness* collection. In the latter, the desire for rescue is tempered by references to imperial violence and European civilizing practices. Furthermore, the critique of "great words" like "*responsabilité*" and "*Europe*" that the paternal Western European figure lectures "*mes enfants*" about in the *Heart of Darkness* poem "A Writer," which could by extension question the project of human rights, does not contextualize "A War Letter" when anthologized in the human rights anthology *A Map of Hope*. Civilizing missions, of which human rights are a strain, sometimes have darker sides, after all. Joseph Slaughter argues that human rights are "extensions of the Enlightenment project to modernize, normalize and civilize (or, perhaps better, civicize) the individual and society" and they transform the individual into an "an instance of a universal human personality" in order to achieve better social organization (5, 20).

The desire for an orderly, normal, and even boring bourgeois European modernity expressed and then dismissed in "A War Letter" finds its universalized counterpart in the desire for a worldwide system of orderly and normalized organization based on thinly generalized ethics in *A Map of Hope*. Human rights is more conventionally based on thin ethics, in Spivak's sense, rather than of an erotics committed to engaging the dynamics of real difference between individuals and between societies. When "A War Poem's" *Heart of Darkness* frame, which

critiques the universalizing tendencies of European modernity, is juxtaposed with its *A Map of Hope* frame, the former puts pressure on the global fantasies of the latter. The darkness of imperial civilizing missions draws out the potential for darkness of the civilizing mission of human rights. In this context, the hope implied in the *Map of Hope* framed “A War Letter” comes into question. Indeed, if the poem is not framed as a rescue poem, its statement that “we” will find a home in the earth need not be interpreted as a sign of redress or progress toward the geopolitical nation-state. That earth might instead be the burial space for the “we” who will not voluntarily leave (i.e., be “cleansed” from) the land. Although plants that the mother figure grows may re-emerge from that earth, continuing the cycle of death and rebirth, they will not challenge the violence that occurred during British imperialism of *Heart of Darkness*, or that failed to be quelled a century later in Bosnia by declarations of human rights or UN “peacekeepers.” The Bosnian heart has been affirmed in the poem, but the desire for rescue remains in question.

Discontinuous montage in the international anthology

Duraković’s poems have afterlives through their translation, circulation, and anthologization after *Heart of Darkness*. Although the project of World Literature to study literatures identified as from “small,” “peripheral” or “minor” locales alongside the Western canon entails some flattening of linguistic and cultural difference, the solution is neither to announce the impossibility of translation nor to censure such canon-expanding projects. Instead, we should pay attention to what effects the “thin” solidarities of world literature produce and to how they compare to the singular one-to-one encounters with literary and linguistic difference of an erotics of translation. The *Heart of Darkness* poems’ critique of civilizing narratives contradicts their more globe-building role in the international literature anthologies. However, I

demonstrate below how the discontinuous montage produced when the poems are juxtaposed with other texts in the collections effectively replicates some of the critique that the *Heart of Darkness* frame enabled while providing more nuance to the global concerns laid out in the anthologies' paratextual matter.

Just as unconventional use of a language hints at the boundaries of its logic, so the reframing of the poems hints at the boundaries of their original framing as responding to the "heart of darkness." Translation and anthologization are therefore similar processes in that they destabilize the primacy of the original and frame it within a different context. The logic of the poems' initial placement within a collection titled *Heart of Darkness* is shown to be contingent via the poems' ability to be reframed under titles like *Women's Writing on Human Rights* or *Scar on the Stone: Contemporary Poetry from Bosnia* that refers instead to human rights, scars, and Bosnian national identity. I propose a cinematic reading of the discontinuities possible when texts are juxtaposed in world literary anthologies. This reading allows me to respond to critiques of world literary study that overemphasize the *loss* of cultural and linguistic specificity that results when a work circulates beyond its original locale. Reading for the insights produced by juxtapositions of decontextualized texts is an important supplement to reading for the loss produced when these texts become "global." As David Damrosch claims:

Works of world literature take on a new life as they move into the world at large, and to understand this new life we need to look closely at the ways the work becomes reframed in its translations and in its new cultural contexts. Translation is always involved in what Fernando Ortiz described in 1940 as *transculturación*, and if we do want to see the work of world literature as a window on different parts of the world, we have to take into account the way its images have been multiply refracted in the process of

transculturation. World literature can be described, to borrow a phrase from Vinay Dharwadker, as ‘a montage of overlapping maps in motion’ (*Cosmopolitan Geographies*, 3), and this movement involves shifting relations both of literary history and of cultural power (*What* 24).

The prevalence of cinematic terminology in this passage—frames, images, montage—hints at the relevance of the spatial elements of film (scene composition, ordering of shots) to the geographical emphasis of world literature as object of study. The translation and anthologization of works of “minor” literature, to borrow Deleuze and Guattari’s term for literature that breaks more dominant literary and linguistic conventions (19), multiplies the frames through which the work can be understood. Furthermore, these multiple frames create a montage of frames that do not always fit together in continuous ways.

Duraković’s poems have been re-framed as part of their entry into world literature. When poems circulate outside of their context of their emergence, the local structures of feeling registered are altered, amplified or exceeded by frames of a larger scale. Framing, both narratological and photographic, delimits a greater context through the focused point of view it provides. Montage is the juxtaposition of these frames into a narrative or a disjunctive ensemble. There are important distinctions between the kind of frame that encloses a framed story, an image, and the frames in a cinematic montage; for the purposes of this chapter, however, I draw on the delimiting and focusing roles that frames play across these forms.⁹¹

Walter Benjamin, Susan Sontag and Judith Butler all argue that placing frames side-by-side without creating a clear narrative can enable the contingency of the framing to be apprehended. Benjamin demonstrates this claim by radically juxtaposing quotation into montage

⁹¹ See Gilles Deleuze’s *Cinema: Movement Image* for a discussion of frames as delimited slices of *duree* that nonetheless hint at that which is outside the frame.

in *The Arcades Project*. His oeuvre influenced much of Sontag's critical work; she represents photographs as slices of space and time that can be separated or made adjacent via reframing ("In Plato's" 17). In *Frames of War*, Butler builds on the works of both thinkers to demonstrate how the intelligibility of photographs and poems in one context is shown to be contingent on that contextual frame when the works are recontextualized. Framing establishes knowability, but apprehending the frame, or that something exists outside of that frame, can "trouble our sense of reality" (9). This attention to what can be gained through reframing and re-assembling shifts the focus from the linguistic and contextual loss effected in the translation and anthologization of Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* poems.

Rather than only entailing loss, the curatorial processes of reframing and re-ordering can also yield insights into both the poems' original socio-political framing and their new frames. Here, theories of cinematic montage become especially relevant to theorizing world literature; Sergei Eisenstein's theory of montage as a dialectical process built on collision between images, shots, and thoughts presents a productive methodology for analyzing the translation, curation, and anthologization of small works like poems and story excerpts for world literature anthologies. In the "conflict-juxtaposition" of shots and ideas in Eisenstein's montage, the superimposition of sequential elements deepens the dimensions of both elements while simultaneously drawing out their contradictions (49, 82). Similarly, the superimposition of poems for world literature anthologies adds dimension to the individual works and simultaneously draws out contradictions that can trouble the anthologies' paratextual matter.

In *A Map of Hope*, "A War Letter" is part of a montage of texts that includes critiques of US racial violence and imperial practices alongside works like Drakulić's "Bosnia, Or What Europe Means to Us" that present the US as a "daddy" state for nations like Bosnia to learn

from. The anthology also puts on display representations of total loss alongside visions of radically alternative futures, and representations of figures that persist by making the best of abusive situations alongside representations of others who go mad or perish in their refusal to accommodate injustice. In a curatorial method similar to montage, Agosín placed various works side by side within unifying sub-categories. Duraković's representation of the darkness of cultural oblivion in besieged Sarajevo becomes one piece in the anthology's expansive representation of human rights abuse world-wide. When juxtaposed with other authors' representations of human rights abuses, the figurative constructions in Duraković's poem gain "thickness" by their overlap with the figurative constructions used by these, and vice versa. What results from these juxtapositions is an articulation through other means of some of the important themes of "A War Letter" and Duraković's *Heart of Darkness* collection.

Like the thematization of darkness in Duraković's allusions to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, darkness as a metaphor for that which an ethical poet must deal with appears in Adrienne Rich's "North American Time," where engaging the "field of light and darkness" is part of the responsibility of the poet "accountable to the life of your tribe / the breath of your planet" (119, 117). This poem is one of several in the collection that take a big picture view of patterns of war and violence. Barbara Kingsolver's poem "Deadline" places the First Gulf War in the context of a history of war that "old hearts" stand vigilantly against (70). Furthermore, authors such as Susan Rubin Suleiman, Gerda Weissman Klein, Diana Der Hovanessian, Demetria Martinez, Alicia Nitecki and Joy Harjo address the heritage that immigrants to the US carry with them of violence from all over the world, such as the Holocaust, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Armenian genocide, and the Salvadorian Civil War. These violent histories persist in the psyches of people who now reside in the US, but the US is also

shaped by racial violence and its legacies within its own borders, as attested to in works by June Jordan, Leslie Marmon Silko, Hattie Gossett, Hisaye Yamamoto and Mitsuye Yamada.

As was the case for many of the residents of a Sarajevo under siege and under daily mortar and sniper fire, Duraković lost her home to fire and was for the large part imprisoned within the city's limits. The imagery in "A War Letter" for expressing experiences of imprisonment, loss of possessions, and the effort to imagine recreating a world from ruins gains dimension through overlap and contrast with similar images in other texts in *A Map of Hope*. For example, the poet's home in "A War Letter" is "no more" after burning in the flame, and the only act that can continue is that of the Mother planting. In the same anthology, the total loss of home and possessions is also performed in Judith Ortíz Cofer's story "Nada" by the character Doña Ernestina, a Puerto Rican woman in the US who divests herself of all possessions when her son is killed in the US army. When the community finds the woman naked after she has committed suicide, they find she is "Cómo salió a este mundo" . . . Just as she had come into the world. Wearing nothing. Nothing around her except a clean, empty room. Nada" (258). In this story, possessions represent a life no longer solvent for the woman whose loyalty to the US has betrayed her. The home that is "no more" in "A War Letter" and the naked house and body in "Nada" attest to misplaced hope attached to national belonging and the material objects of a modern lifestyle.

If material possessions demonstrate belief in the security offered by national belonging and a modern lifestyle, then gardening becomes an act metaphorically charged with responding to having been betrayed by false security. Diana Der-Hovanessian's ode to Armenian-Americans, "Diaspora," represents gardening as display of suppressed anger at the destruction of homes and dispersion of a people:

Someone was explaining
why everything
is slightly different
in an Armenian home,
stared at,
as if it might melt. Someone was telling me
why Armenians love
earth and gardening so much
and why there is a hidden rage in that love (186)

Gardening signifies a refusal to acknowledge that family, possessions and homeland are transient, even while the legacy of genocide and displacement ensure that this knowledge simmers under the surface. This reflection on the long-term inheritance left by genocide and destruction that is generations older than that represented in “A War Letter” suggests that the suffering conveyed in the later poem is but the beginning. Yet this insistence in “Diaspora” on making gardens in an earth that is dangerous to claim also draws out the courage of the Bosnian poet who claims earth in the face of the threat of ethnic cleansing. Furthermore, “A War Letter” makes a political statement by claiming the land as the home, in contrast to other poets in *A Map of Hope* who claim a home only to be in relationship and in the body, such as Muriel Rukeyser’s “My home is where we make our meeting-place, And love whatever I shall touch and read / Within that face” (“Song” 191) and Joy Harjo’s “I am a house with many rooms. .../ And you have made / a fire in every room... / I will dream you a world ...” (“City of Fire” 289).

The montage of texts in *A Map of Hope*, which juxtaposes contrasting positions and perspectives, enables a thicker reading of the discursive and historical context of Duraković’s

Heart of Darkness poems. The ambivalence toward a European future when the poems were framed by the allusion to *Heart of Darkness* is re-animated in this new context through the juxtaposition of narratives that complicate each other's claims. For example, Hattie Gossett's poem "World View" calls on the thin solidarity of "poor colored women" to shake off the "big daddy industrial civilization" that they have been the backbone of. The US "daddy's" political interventions also produced the conditions for torture and displacement of the El Salvadorian refugee represented in Demetria Martinez's "Mother Tongue." The specter of the allusion in Duraković's "A War Letter" to an anti-imperial *Heart of Darkness* persists through the allusions in Martinez and Gossett to US imperial violence, a corrective to the valorization of US-led NATO intervention in a Bosnia in need of a "daddy," as advanced in Slavenka Drakulić's entry. Duraković's poems also put pressure on other claims in *A Map of Hope*. "A War Letter" offers an alternative to the suicide that accompanies the total divestment of belongings in "Nada" through an insistence on the seeming impossibility of staying on one's land, a claim given context by "Diaspora" and that stands out for its literal claim to home space in contrast to the more metaphorical ones in "Song" and "City of Fire."

"A Writer" and the unresolved Bosnian nation

A similar interplay of lost contextualization and newfound resonance occurred when several of Duraković's poems, including "A Writer Perceives his Homeland as a Learned Postmodernist Enters his Town," were included in the 1998 anthology *Scar on the stone: Contemporary Poetry from Bosnia*. The anthology was edited by Chris Agee and published by the British company Bloodaxe Books, which had previously published the international anthology *Klaonica: Poems for Bosnia* as a fundraiser for Bosnian relief during the war. Unlike *Klaonica*, which unevenly blends compassionate tone, stereotypical portrayals of the Balkans as

both barbaric and object of pity, and thoughtful meditations on memory and injustice, *Scar on the Stone* more carefully contextualizes the poems in relation to the region's historical present. In a curatorial method similar to montage, Agee intersperses the poems with short, mostly nonfiction, narratives as historical and cultural contextualization and to "create narrative framed in dialectic with the poetry" (20). The poems of a minor language from a peripheral country regain some of the context lost in their translation to English language and readership. What results from Agee's introduction and from the narratives that frame Duraković's poems is an articulation through other means of some of the important themes of her *Heart of Darkness* collection: racism and stereotypes, the darkness of civilizing and ordering narratives, and the horror and humiliation of being defined by ethnic identity or as from the heart of darkness.

The texts framing "A Writer" in *Scar* dramatize the shifting use of the term "nationalism" in reference to Yugoslavia and its dissolution. Danilo Kiš's oft-quoted "On Nationalism" is the first narrative that opens the section in which Duraković's poems appear. Kiš's claim that "nationalism is an ideology of banality. As such, nationalism is a totalitarian ideology" underlines his primary argument that the nationalist has no individuality and that nationalism is "the frustrated (collective) expression of this lack" (78-9). This denigration of nationalism is echoed by Agee's claim in his introduction to the anthology that the war in Bosnia was caused by a vampiric Nazi nationalism: the "undead corpse of Serb nationalism" revived by "a Wagnerian mythopoetics fusing oral epic, folklore, archaic Christianity and nationalism" (25).⁹² Duraković addresses both the traitorous nation in "Beauty and the Beast" and a redemptive vision for mythology and orality in "A War Letter," which could have challenged Agee's claims, but neither poem appears in *Scar on the stone*. The "A Writer" poem that is anthologized instead

⁹² Both Agee's reference to the undead corpse and Wagnerian mythopoetics reify the stereotypes of the Serb as vampire and Nazi that circulated widely during the wars of Yugoslav succession.

aligns more closely with the position on nationalism that that two narratives juxtaposed with Kiš's take. An excerpt from Hubert Butler's *Mr. Pfeffer of Sarajevo* distinguishes "nationalism" from "racialism." Nationalism is based on belief that "a country belongs to the people who were born in it and intend to die there and who make its welfare their chief concern" whereas racialism based on the belief in a national unity "that is racial, confessional or political" (80). Semezdin Mehmedinović's entry, "A Small Map of the World," follows this distinction in claiming that the use of "nationalism" during the war was simply a "euphemism for racism." He terms this "grotesque racism" because "the ethnic mix was so deep, that any separation could only be accomplished through extreme violence and enormous bloodshed" (86). The dual critique of racism and redemption of nationalism challenges oversimplified support for either ethnic national separatism or South Slavic unification, keeping the two in tension.

Mehmedinović and Butler's entries also contextualize and put pressure on the critique of Enlightenment epistemologies advanced in Duraković's "A Writer." Butler rebuts those who dismiss the "petty nationalism" of small nations, calling them universalists and imperialists who "believe that incompatibilities of language and culture are best ironed out by the kindly pressure of a dominant race" (80). The not so kindly pressure being exerted on Sarajevo by militant Serbs desiring to be the dominant race would thus be an extreme manifestation of the kindly pressure that the Parisian scholar in "A Writer" exerted upon his grey bearded Sarajevan pupils in order that they be civilized by his Enlightenment epistemologies. Furthermore, the performance of civility is framed as fundamentally unreliable in Mehmedinović's entry. Radovan Karadžić transformation from the founder of the Green Party in Sarajevo and the writer of books of children's poetry to a war criminal⁹³ serves as Mehmedinović's primary example of the "fundamental" instability of identity and underlines Mehmedinović's conclusion: "It is not only

⁹³ Although still alleged to be rather than convicted as such, at the writing of this dissertation.

my world that has been deconstructed, but the meanings of words as well. A 'library', for example, is no longer a building filled with books but a burned-out ruin. These days, if I ever find myself in a library and wander over into the children's section, my heart freezes" (87). As delimited by this narrative framing "A Writer," the scholar's big words may prove empty in the deconstructed world of war, or they may prove much more ominous than at first glance. Either way, the narrative frames "A Writer" with the claim that big ideas can betray, which reproduces the sense of betrayal that "Beauty and the Beast" and "A War Letter" frame "A Writer" with in *Heart of Darkness*.

Mehmedinović's narrative emphasizes betrayal and cultural oblivion in the anthology, and the series of poems that follow Kiš's, Butler's and his narratives are framed by this tone, in addition to the themes of racism and "thin" ideals. The section of poems introduced by these narratives concludes with an excerpt from Rezak Hukanović's *The Tenth Circle of Hell: A Memoir of Life in the Death Camps of Bosnia*, which is placed directly after Duraković's "A Writer." The narrative articulates experiences of humiliation ("Djemo just kept quiet, impotently gritting his teeth and sighing in despair, feeling almost unbearably humiliated"; "His body felt weighed down by helplessness and humiliation"; "Kasim felt unspeakable shame that his son had to see and endure such humiliation") and despair ("Their heads bend down, their eyes bereft of hope, the prisoners lurched forward as the bus led them into the unknown"; "The pale faces bore expressions of immeasurable suffering, irretrievable loss of peace of mind, and human dignity devastated beyond repair") (108-113). Furthermore, the scenes of abuse and cruelty in the narrative accumulate into an overall tone of horror. The expressions of humiliation, horror, and despair that permeate the narrative dramatizes the same affects produced by Duraković's *Heart of Darkness*. The montage of anthology pieces that juxtaposes *The Tenth Circle of Hell* with "A

Writer's" in *Scar on the Stone* emphasizes the tone of humiliation and adds to it the despair of "A War Letter" and the horror that frames the *Heart of Darkness* collection as a whole.

The montage of narrative and poetry in the *Scar on the Stone* anthology, which juxtaposes contrasting positions and perspectives, enables a thicker reading of the discursive and historical context of Duraković's poems than does the original *Heart of Darkness* frame. The ambivalence toward a European future when the poems were framed by the allusion to *Heart of Darkness* is re-animated in this new context through the juxtaposition of narratives that complicate each other's claims. Duraković's poems also put pressure on other claims in *Scar on the Stone*, however. "A Writer" offers a corrective to Kiš's reliance on enlightenment hierarchies in his prioritization of individualism. The uneasy exchange between the first-person and second-person voice in the poem addressed in the close reading and the ambivalence toward the professor's worldview that their disagreement dramatizes suggests a value to intersubjectivity that is further elaborated on through the "us" pronoun used in "A War Poem." Furthermore, "A Writer" also offers a corrective to the national frame that organizes the anthology (i.e., *Contemporary Poetry from Bosnia*) as a whole. The critique of the Homeland in "Beauty and the Beast" would highlight the destructive "mythopoeics" that Agee points to in his introduction to the anthology, but the turn to myth and orality in "A War Letter" would also challenge it with a redemptive vision for memory and communal storytelling. Duraković's anthologization in *Scar on the Stone* therefore enables a richer understanding of the poems' cultural and socio-political framing even while the specter of the *Heart of Darkness* frame puts pressure on the national organization that structures of *Scar on the Stone*.

Duraković's poems articulate narratives of globalization and nationalism in addition to local reactions against these. The *Heart of Darkness* poetry collection and the anthologies its poems are later included in display layers of emergent feeling, residue of the past, and dominant economic and political narratives. When the poems are reframed, the new framing further creates potential for new geopolitical and temporal connections. The shift in the logic that makes the poems cohere when they are reframed entails a shift in the community for whom the poems become significant, which opens up the possibility for ethical but, nonetheless, homogenizing solidarities. The shift in the effect of the poems' figurative use of language when juxtaposed into textual montages with that in other works, on the other hand, opens up the possibility for a more intimate engagement with linguistic and cultural difference that can put pressure on the "thin" generalizations that underlie some versions of the world-literature project.

In the next chapter, I build on the idea of montages of texts as multiple and sometimes contradictory expressions of belonging by analyzing a post-Yugoslav anthology film, which I argue can work as a smaller scale model for thinking about the series of films programmed at and framed by the Sarajevo Film Festival. I analyze how the curatorial work of programming and compiling films for the festival and the omnibus produces texts that sometimes put pressure on the Southeast Europe building projects that frame the works. Residual forms of belonging and identification emerge between the lines of works exhibited in succession in the anthology film and in the festival program.

Chapter Three - The Production of Post-Yugoslav Southeastern Europe at the Sarajevo Film Festival

“Every important festival needs to be more than merely stars on the red carpet; above all it needs to foster diversity and a responsibility towards global events... [The Sarajevo Film Festival] is a great way to re-identify the different groups who are living here in ex-Yugoslavia and find a new way to work together. . . you have to work together anyway in terms of making a film, but especially in terms of financing a film”

- Dieter Kosslick, Director of Berlin International Film Festival upon receiving Honorary Heart of Sarajevo Award for his support for young Southeastern European filmmakers (Džaferović)

“It is possible and desirable to conceive and reanimate the cultural space of ex-Yugoslavia on new foundations, which would not be sabotaged by the burden of the violent wars of the 1990s”

- *Some Other Stories* Film Press Kit

Two security guards in black suits block the entryway to Sarajevo’s National Theatre’s fenced-in red carpet. One of them explains to the crowd pressed up against the gate that entry will be limited for this screening to film professionals with a “Press” level festival pass. Even in the heat of the midday July sun, the crowd does not disperse. Eventually the guards stare stone-faced ahead, ignoring the sustained protests of people with tickets and lower level festival passes. Many in the mostly Bosnian speaking crowd had dressed up for this 11:30 am screening of *Jasmina* (2010), one of the two Bosnia-Herzegovinian films in this year’s competition program at the Sarajevo Film Festival (SFF). The director, actors, and other film professionals will walk the red carpet to attend the 10:30 pm screening that evening, but unless the film secures a distributor at one of these two screenings, the residents of Sarajevo may not have another opportunity to view it.

Jasmina, a sentimental tale about a baby sent to the Croatian coast while her parents stay in Sarajevo to resist the siege, was directed by Nedžad Begović, a Bosnian filmmaker best known for his documentary coverage of the siege for SAGA Productions.

Begović's war-time film credits and the film's theme of families fragmented by the war challenge the "festivity" of the festival (e.g., red carpet, cocktail receptions, fireworks). War themed films like *Jasmina* and *Sevdah for Karim* (2010), the other Bosnia-Herzegovinian competition film that follows a now-adult war orphan as he clears mines and deals with war trauma, add an element of public mourning to the festival's festivity. The persistence of films thematizing the war—such films have been included in the festival programming since its foundation in 1993—suggests public melancholia more than the "working-through" of mourning, however.⁹⁴ In a refusal to leave the Wars of Succession behind, and with it the Bosnian nation gained through the process of Yugoslavia's fragmentation, the melancholic return to nation-at-war contrasts with the festival's mission of enabling peaceful and productive transnational cooperation. Promoted as a festival for the nations comprising Southeast Europe, the SFF is officially presented as exemplifying a progressive move from ethnic nationalist "Balkanization" to transnational cultural engagement.⁹⁵ The festival's publicly stated goals therefore function as a "frame" for the films and events that occur at the festival; every film and forum that occurs at the festival hypothetically exemplifies progress toward peaceful

⁹⁴ The persistence of Bosnian films thematizing the war also reflects the financial constraints of film production. The most recognized and widely distributed post-war Bosnia-Herzegovinian films have been about the war and its aftermath (e.g., *The Perfect Circle* (1997), *No Man's Land* (2001), *Fuse* (2003), *Grbavica* (2006)), establishing this to be a theme that garners international recognition and, thus, distribution.

⁹⁵ The festival's emphasis on the cinema of a multi-national region, rather than the cinema of a single nation, in some ways parallels a growing emphasis in film studies on 'transnational film' as an improvement over national film. For examples of scholarship that presents transnational cinema as a less limiting concept than national cinema, see Higson's "The limiting imagination of national cinema" and Lu's "Historical Introduction: Chinese Cinemas (1896–1996) and transnational film studies."

transnationalism. The meaning attached to the films screened at the festival will therefore be filtered and, possibly, delimited by this frame.

Comprising a community announced to be more progressive than the national, the transnational festival produces a utopian vision of Southeast European regional belonging. This desire, what Raymond Williams would call an “emergent” structure of feeling, for a transnational region of a smaller scale than “Europe” or “World” puts stress on a more dominant trend toward Europeanizing and globalizing transnationalism. The festival’s utopian role as an example of peaceful and productive transnational collaboration plays out alongside the exigency of its more practical role of drawing investment, especially Western European investment, to Southeast European culture.⁹⁶ The challenge of funding regional films has been exacerbated by the loss of much of the state funding for film production that existed during socialist Yugoslavia. Films that promise an economic return that exceeds what can reasonably be attained at the national level are more likely to secure co-producers and film fund sponsorship (Iordanova “The Cinema”).⁹⁷ Southeast European filmmakers with limited access to the capital of more dominant film industries therefore develop relationships at the SFF that facilitate collaborative filmmaking; the financial relationships it enables are especially important for the often necessary aggregate financing.

The blend of festivity, commemoration, and publicity for the films at the festival produces a layered representation of a post-Yugoslav Southeast Europe, one where the

⁹⁶ Much of the activity at SFF revolves around attracting attention to films at various stages of their production, in what is the festival’s primary function as a trade show for Southeastern European films. Film professionals spend much of their time at the festival attending the numerous coproduction and networking forums for production or distribution support.

⁹⁷ For more on the post-1989 shifts in distribution networks, see Dina Iordanova’s “The Cinema of Eastern Europe: Strained Loyalties, Elusive Clusters.”

utopian and dystopian coexist dialectically, as do the regional and not regional, the emergent and residual. As a cultural institution that was established during the crisis of Sarajevo under siege and that has continued to adapt to the shifting context of the post-Yugoslav transitional period in the two decades following, the SFF has enabled many regional films to be publicly exhibited. The festival was established as a space for festivity in the face of the drawn out tragedy of the siege, but its role has since then partially reversed. It now provides a space for loss in the midst of festivity. In addition to films celebrating Southeast Europe's progress toward Europeanization, the SFF also exhibits works commemorating and mourning the region's Balkan and Yugoslav pasts. In this context, the transnational Southeast European region on display at the SFF is an alternative to Europeanization still complicated by residual traces of other models of regional relation.

I begin this chapter by positioning the SFF's goal of transnational regionalism in relation to another form of transnationalism impacting the region: Europeanization. In the context of the sometimes discordant and sometimes integrated goals of Europeanization and Southeast European regionalism, the Serbian film that won the 2010 Heart of Sarajevo award for best feature film presents an alternative form of belonging. I discuss how this distinguished film, *Tilva Rosh* [*Tilva Roš*] (2010), complicates the festival's ideal of a future Southeast European region characterized by political cooperation and collaborative production that frames the film. The film thematizes residual discourse about the "Balkans," a connotation-packed designation for the region called "Southeast

Europe” at the festival.⁹⁸ This discourse was produced by representatives from global centers (London, Paris, New York) for their readers back home, but it was also consumed by people categorized as *being* Balkan. In the film, these discourses are inscribed onto the characters’ bodies as ambiguously sexed and as both source of and subject to violence. The legacies of the past persist in the present and combine with the constraints of global capitalism in the film’s present. By identifying amateur media production and social-network distribution as a source of hope for the film’s characters, *Tilva Rosh* nonetheless reinforces the value of the regional festival—whether “Balkan” or “Southeast European”—as providing an alternative circuit to the global for producing and distributing minor cinemas.

I continue by analyzing the layers of cultural memory on display in the transnationally co-produced “women’s” anthology film *Some Other Stories [Neke Druge Priče]* (2010). A product of aggregate transnational funding and collaborative filmmaking, the film is marketed as exemplifying a hopeful vision for a future regional identity. The anthology’s promotional materials present it as being about future transnationalism and the empowerment of women, but I argue that some of the desires represented in the film segments exceed this designation. As a collection by young filmmakers from each of the Yugoslav successor states, the anthology film articulates a community of sentiment shaped by memories of a shared Yugoslav past. These memories are also inflected by the nationalizing narratives of Yugoslavia’s breakup, however, and by the directors’ marginal positions in relation to global film production and distribution.

⁹⁸ In what Todorova describes as ‘Balkanism’, the Balkans are “a symbol for the aggressive, intolerant, barbarian, semi-developed, semi-civilized, and semi-oriental” (194).

Some Other Stories reflects an ambivalent and sometimes skeptical structure of emergent and residual feeling that troubles the SFF's vision of progressive transnational relation by exhibiting the contradictions of cultural memory that persist in shaping public discourse in the region.

Europeanizing the Balkans: Wrecking the Yugo Body in *Tilva Rosh*

Each republic in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) received federal funds for film production.⁹⁹ Upon Yugoslavia's political breakup into multiple successor states in the 1990s, its film infrastructure also broke into multiple national ones. In contrast to the *national* compartmentalization that "balkanized" the successor states' film funds and infrastructure, the Sarajevo Film Festival draws together the cinemas of the *region* of Southeast Europe and includes films from each of the successor states in its competition program and screenings.¹⁰⁰ The festival provides an exhibition space for a regional cinema limited by the economic challenges of film production at the periphery of European art cinema and profit-driven film industries like Hollywood, Bollywood, or Hong Kong cinema.

⁹⁹ While the early films that this infrastructure enabled glorified the partisans and the new socialist state, later Yugoslav film movements like Novi Film [New Film] and Black Wave (Dušan Makavejev, Želimir Žilnik) and the Yugoslav Prague Group (Goran Paskaljević, Emir Kusturica) adapted aesthetic strategies from Neorealism and New Wave to engage in political and social critique. For more thorough histories of Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav film, see Daniel J. Goulding's *Liberated Cinema*, Andrew Horton's "Yugoslavia: Multi-Faceted Cinema" and *The Celluloid Tinderbox*, Dina Iordanova's *Cinema of Flames*, and Bohdan Y. Nebesio's "Yugoslavia" in the *Schirmer Encyclopedia of Film* (2007).

¹⁰⁰ The festival competition program requires that the filmmakers be from one of the following countries: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, FYR Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey or UNMI Kosovo. Many films are co-produced across several nations, these films are labeled according to the Southeast European nation(s) that produced or directed them.

The festival's mission as listed on its website is to fulfill "a specific goal of supporting and promoting regional cinema and authors." It emphasizes a region extending from Austria to Turkey as an alternative to national economies and cultures. In its role of promoting regional cinema, the festival gathers Southeast European national cinemas together into the transnational unit of the region for purposes of visibility and publicity. Commercial interests overlap with culture-building ones; the SFF also claims to "act as a catalyst for the development of South-Eastern European Cinema" by exhibiting regional films and connecting film professionals through its coproduction program Cinelink. The regional is presented as the best scale for supporting a cultural sphere in which cinema develops and achieves commercial publicity.¹⁰¹ The availability of international investment for regional film production depends on how well the festival films advocate humanist ideals, however, as seen in a speech by Dieter Kosslick, the director of the Berlin International Film Festival (a.k.a. Berlinale). The 2010 SFF opened with a ceremony offering him the honorary "Heart of Sarajevo" award for the role Berlinale's Talent Campus plays in helping Southeast European filmmakers

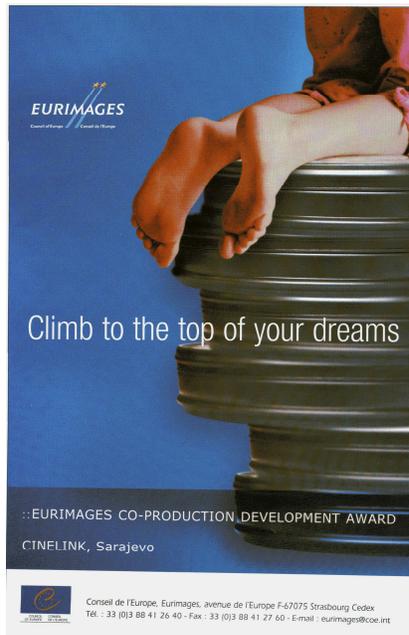
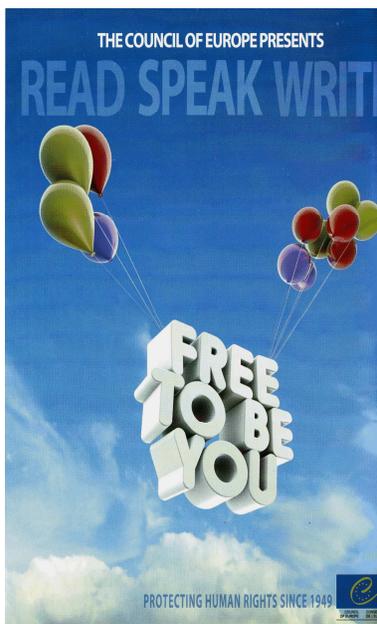
¹⁰¹ The logic that envisions greater opportunity for representation and profit in a cooperating Southeast European region parallels a prevailing logic that envisions the greatest equality and justice in global human rights that transcend any nationality. Rights that transcend national citizenship imply transnational citizenship to a human race or global humanity; the adjective 'transnational', however, is also used to designate those less utopian corporations that profit by breaking through national boundaries ('transnationals' or 'multinationals'). As the linguistic overlap suggests, transcending the bounds of nation implies neoliberal as much as humanist values. The spread of transnational corporations into Southeast Europe accelerated with the 1989 fall of cold-war economic bilateralism. In the case of the Southeast European states that once composed Yugoslavia, the transition to market economies took place alongside the violence and shifting borders of the Wars of Succession of succession and the process of repairing cooperative relations that followed (and continues). For Yugoslavia and its successor states, both transnational capitalism and transnational rights influence international interventions into the region.

access European markets and secure co-production funds.¹⁰² During his acceptance speech, Kosslick noted the importance of minor cinemas and emerging filmmakers. He began by advocating for “small cinematographies” and “young filmmakers who bring a new energy to the film industry,” in a celebration of emergent works and authors. His tone shifted, however, when he pronounced the role of festivals to be to “foster diversity and a responsibility towards global events” (Džaferović). Kosslick thus imposes guidelines on the issues these minor works should emphasize, privileging “diversity” and global social responsibility over other potential emphases. Kosslick represents Berlinale, a festival with the kind of tastemaking and publicity clout important for Southeastern European films to access. His prescription for the festival’s social role is one example of the vision for human rights and transnational cooperation advanced by many stakeholders at the SFF, including funding and awarding institutions like UNESCO, the British Council, the US, Turkish and Norwegian embassies, and multiple French cinema representatives.

Kosslick champions those works that fit within a predetermined framework of acceptable festival film themes; similarly, the Council of Europe (CoE) favors regional cinema that advocates freedom of expression and development. In the CoE’s advertisement in the SFF catalogue, it represents itself as protecting freedom of expression and access to information. The advertisement says, “The Council of Europe Presents: Read Speak Write. Free to be you” with “Protecting human rights since 1949”

¹⁰² Berlinale also has talent campuses in Durban, Buenos Aires, and Guadalajara. Past Honorary Heart of Sarajevo awards have gone to film professionals such as director Mike Leigh, producer Cat Villiers, and actor Steve Buscemi.

announced next to the CoE logo at the bottom (214). CoE protects a “you” that emerges via access to uncensored cultural consumption and production, but this you is presented as being child-like; the “free to be you” text appears to be held up in the middle of the page by multi-colored helium balloons, against a background of blue sky and white puffy clouds. The subject that is “free” to exist as oneself is also represented as juvenile in the advertisement on the opposite page for CoE’s co-production funding institution, Eurimages. An image of a child’s sparkly pink shorts and dirty bare feet as she climbs a stack of film reels to exit the top right corner of the frame is captioned, “Climb to the top



of your dreams” (215). The development (climbing) to a utopian future (dreams) in the clouds implies the necessity of maturation. It also suggests that the utopian end of “free” art production occur via the expensive and increasingly obsolete technology of “young” film technology, the reel (past), to end in the abstraction of the clouds (future). Little room is left for these cultural productions to attend to the material conditions of the present.

Figure 9: Council of Europe promotions in the Sarajevo Film Festival catalog

The CoE, the institution responsible for funding the SFF's highest competition award, also co-sponsors the festival's "Human Rights Day" with the Swiss Embassy. The day's events include the "Human Rights School," which teaches pre-teens about Human Rights via animated clips, the "European Court of Human Rights Mock Trial," which teaches law students how to debate a hypothetical ban by national authorities of a film critical of Islam, and the screening of *Toumast: Entre Guitare et Kalashnikov* (2010), a documentary by French filmmaker Dominique Margot about a Touareg soldier who traded in his gun for a guitar. These events support the CoE's objectives of "Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law," which it asserts on its website are "the foundations of a tolerant and civilized society and European stability, economic growth and social cohesion." This civilized and stable Europe where economies can grow is only possible with "co-operation between all member states," including the Southeastern European ones (CoE website).¹⁰³ Transnational discourse and collaboration are presented as being the more progressive modes of public engagement for the Southeastern segment of Europe's "civilized society." As an event that began in siege-era Sarajevo and that now includes in its program films from all of the former republics, the SFF aligns with the vision for progressive public discourse and transnational collaboration.

The CoE's project of including the Southeast European states within a greater economically and socially connected Europe echoes the Europeanization project of the European Union. Its region building project involves not only changing political

¹⁰³ Unlike the European Union, the Council of Europe includes in its membership all of the former Yugoslav and other Southeast European states represented at the Sarajevo Film Festival.

structures but also changing the ideologies that create consent for these structures. As some scholars argue, this kind of Europeanization relies on an expansion of Western European ideas, norms, and beliefs and extension of Western European order.¹⁰⁴ Although Western European institutions play influential roles at the festival and thus shape the transnationalism advanced there, the SFF's goal of a smaller scale Southeast European regionalism nonetheless creates a hopeful alternative mode of transnationalism to the EU and global neoliberal models. The term "regionalism" can refer both to geographic spaces within the nation (e.g., Dalmatia) and to spaces made up of several nations (e.g., Southeast Europe or European Union); generally, it implies a scale smaller than the global but greater than the local. Recent scholarship on area studies has emphasized the contingency of the "region" and its shifting roles in relation to the global and the local.¹⁰⁵ Gayatri Gopinath argues that some regionalism displays a hopeful "minor transnationalism" (citing Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih), a mode of relation that allows connections between peripheral spaces in addition to the standard metropole-metropole or metropole-periphery senses of transnationalism ("Queer Regions").

¹⁰⁴ See Jurica Pavčić's "Cinema of Normalization"; Alun Jones' "Narrative-Based Production of State Spaces for International Region Building: Europeanization and the Mediterranean"; Danijela Majstorović's "Construction of Europeanization in the High Representative's discourse in Bosnia and Herzegovina"; and G. Knaus and F. Martin's "Lessons from Bosnia and Herzegovina: Travails of the European Raj."

¹⁰⁵ Gayatri Gopinath's helpful overview of region studies distinguishes between 1) critical regional studies, which analyzes international subsystems like the EU that grow out of economic and political interests; 2) critical regionalism, which analyzes small local communities that cooperate to preserve the local against the global; 3) poststructural South-Asian and American Studies, which trouble the stable referent of conventional area studies and emphasize its contingency in relation to smaller and greater scales (e.g., local, continental, global). She favors the third model ("Queer Regions").

The transnational connections among the nations of Southeast Europe, which are all peripheral in terms of economic, political and discursive influence, create a regional structure of power and influence of a scale smaller than the global but greater than the national. Political and economic institutions like the South East European Cooperation Initiative (SECI), the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe (SP), and the Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEEC) have emphasized the benefits of transnational regional alliance; this smaller scale grouping allows more self-determination than does the European one (Bechev). The SFF's hoped for Southeast European transnational public sphere similarly posits regional co-production configurations as a solution for culture industries considerably weakened in the region's post-1989 transition (Iordanova "Feature" 519). The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), for example, sponsored the "Regional Forum" on Southeast European film production and distribution at the 2010 SFF. The regionalism at the SFF exceeds purely economic and political considerations, however. Questions of regional identity also play an important role, whether in the post-1989 revival of the North-South distinctions previously overshadowed by the Cold War West-East division (Iordanova "The Cinemas") or in the anti-Balkanist assertion of European identity enacted by renaming "Southeast Europe" the region previously known as the "Balkans" (Bechev, Todorova).

The CoE and Berlinale support the production of Southeast European films that fit within their liberal humanist missions. The films at the SFF are not simply stylish advertisements for the diversity, freedom and human rights that the CoE and Berlinale advocate, however. They express layered and ambivalent claims shaped not only by the

norms of liberal humanism but also by cultural memory of the recent wars and post-war arts' "transition" within an increasingly global and neoliberal economic structure. The films reflect "structures of feeling," Raymond Williams's term for ephemeral circuits of emergent or residual emotion and sensation, that challenge the future orientation of the festival's progressive transnationalism and the rational civility of its liberal inclusiveness. In addition to addressing more dominant ideologies like liberal humanism and neoliberal globalization, the festival also hosts alternative visions of culture and society that reflect emergent and residual affect and put pressure on the conventions of the globally aware transnational festival film. The expression of a residual "Balkanist" discourse, as seen in the film *Tilva Rosh*, is one instance where memory and feeling puts stress on dominant Europeanizing ideologies.

At the 2010 SFF, a film about skateboarders in Serbia making a YouTube adaptation of MTV's *Jackass* won the Heart of Sarajevo for best feature film. In *Tilva Rosh*, filmmaker Nikola Ležaić's first feature film, the characters act out the stereotype of violent and primitive Balkan masculinity to protest the effects of neoliberal capitalism in Serbia. Using neorealist and home video stylistics, the film follows two 19-year-olds as they film themselves performing painful "stunts" for their YouTube video "Crap: Pain is Empty." The narrative that frames these stunts centers on the feelings experienced by Marko, the aimless son of a blue-collar mine worker. Marko's frustration at the time he must spend at the unemployment office instead of with his friends is compounded by his resentment towards his best friend Stefan. Stefan will soon go to university in Belgrade, the capital, and increasingly spends his time with Dunja, a cosmopolitan Serbian girl

visiting from France. Ultimately, Marko begins subjecting himself to beatings by older men to replace the pleasure he once gained from reciprocally inflicting and receiving pain with Stefan. Refused a coming-of-age transition to the promise of a better future, Marko instead returns melancholically to the emptiness of pain.

The provincial Marko's bleak future is contrasted with the prospects available to the urban Stefan and the international Dunja. The metropolitan center (Belgrade) offers economic opportunities to those like Stefan who can afford the increased fees associated with a university education.¹⁰⁶ Western Europe offers economic opportunities for those like Dunja with access to the European Union.¹⁰⁷ On one level, Marko's self-mutilating and frustrated coming of age works as a metaphor for Serbia's painful entry into a post-socialist global order, an especially painful transition for those at the margins of Western Europe who also live outside of the metropolitan centers. The increased marginalization of the provinces is represented through the film's sub-narratives about the loss of social services and the layoffs associated with the privatization of the copper mine in Bor, the town in Serbia where the film is set. The blue-collar Marko is unable to enter economic and social relations in metropolitan or Western centers, thus his future is as bleak as the setting he skates in, stripped landscapes and abandoned concrete structures.

¹⁰⁶ Marko's claim that he would not attend university *even if he could afford it* reveals the economic impossibility of imagining a Belgrade escape for his character. Fees for the formerly socialized university system in Serbia have rapidly increased in the past decade. See Igor Jovanović "Serbia: The Slow Pace of Change" for more on the impact of the Bologna process on Serbia's education system. For a description of the student protests against rising fees and neoliberal changes to education, see Tadej Kurepa's "Directna Demokratija."

¹⁰⁷ Dunja lives in France but spends the summers in her parents' native Serbia. She maintains a transnational cosmopolitanism, as she has not been assimilated by either nation (e.g., she speaks both languages, she spends the school year in France and the summer in Serbia). This cosmopolitanism is contrasted with her French step-grandmother's inability to make sense of either her Serbian friends' stunts or the language they speak.

The skaters in *Tilva Rosh* submit to the symbols of neoliberal privatization more than to the symbols of their socialist past. The symbols of the former Socialist Yugoslavia pose no threat because they exert no authority over the skaters. The relics of socialism surround them; Marko lives in government-built block housing, he and Stefan sing a song by Yugoslav icon Dino Merlin at karaoke, and both of their fathers work for a copper mine that reached the height of its productivity during socialism. The skaters' response to a broken-down "Yugo" car¹⁰⁸ in the countryside best exemplifies their relationship to the remains of socialism. In a moment of frustration, Marko jumps on the car and begins wrecking its body with his. Others join him and together they mutilate this symbol of socialist-era industry. Marko's aggression is rewarded in this act of destruction by support from the group, but he is later censured by Stefan when he tries to similarly wreck a different power symbol; Stefan's father's Mercedes Benz. He received the car as a bonus for selling out the lowest-level smelter workers he had previously protested with, including Marko's father, during the copper mine's privatization negotiations. It is unacceptable to wreck this car because it symbolizes current neoliberal power structures rather than being a relic of a power structure of the past. The bodies of Bor's youth and the mine workers are wreckable like the Yugo car within the structure of neoliberal privatization, but the body of the Mercedes and its owner must be respected.

The transition to a European capitalist order does not directly cause the aggression and masochism portrayed in the film, however. Instead, these appear as the inscription of

¹⁰⁸ "Yugo" is the short name for the Zastava car once manufactured in Yugoslavia. Its production weakened during sanctions against Serbia and its factory was bombed twice by NATO. The Italian car manufacturer Fiat is preparing to expand to the former Zastava site. See Tom Walker's "NATO Missiles Destroy Car Plant. Yugoslav Industrialist Condemns 'Tomahawk Democracy'" and Gilles Castonguay's "Fiat to Revitalize Tito-Era Factory."

residual “Balkanist” stereotypes on the characters’ bodies. The pain that results becomes a critique of both the region’s current material exclusion from the benefits of global economic flows and of the persistent use of Balkanist stereotypes to justify such exclusion. *Tilva Rosh* exemplifies how a film categorized as belonging to a “Southeast European” minor cinema in transition can play with assumptions about the region’s developmental anteriority and imagined European future. By highlighting residual Balkanism alongside current economic conditions, it lays bare the limiting discourses and limited modes of production shaping Europeanizing institutions, including film festivals like the SFF. It brings these regionally relevant themes into view by drawing on the style of the globally circulating *Jackass* franchise.

The skaters’ “Crap” video project is inspired by MTV and Paramount Pictures’ *Jackass* series and film, which features young men performing painful and nauseating stunts. In his reading of the *Jackass* film and television series, Sean Brayton argues that it represents white men claiming the status of “victim” in response to the anxieties of social displacement. It nonetheless also disrupts heteronormative and idealized versions of masculinity through the transgressive carnivalesque of “grotesque realism” and burlesque. Some scenes in *Tilva Rosh* are directly adapted from ones that appear in the *Jackass* franchise, and its themes of working-class disruptiveness and sado-masochism are translated into the characters’ experiences of physical and emotional pain as a coming-of-age into Europeanizing capitalism. *Tilva* adapts images and narratives from *Jackass* into a regionally relevant commentary on Balkanist discourse about Southeast Europe and on the limits of access to modes of cultural production. The skaters’

performances build on a recent tradition in the region's cinema of performing Balkanist stereotypes of the violent and virile Southeast European male in a carnivalesque way, and meld these with the transgressive carnivalesque that circulates globally through *Jackass*.¹⁰⁹

Performances of violent Balkan masculinity motion towards the residual discursive stereotyping of Orientalism and its local variant, Balkanism. One of the ways the discourse-geography about the Balkans differs from that about the Orient is that the region was characterized more by its poverty than by Ottoman wealth. This poverty led to the region being associated with “masculine” rugged dishevelment alongside the “feminine” opulence associated with Orientalism. Todorova claims that in most Western accounts, “the standard Balkan male is uncivilized, primitive, crude, cruel, and without exception, disheveled” (14). Much Western travel and ethnographic writing also represented Balkan men as “virile” as proof of their savagery. This claim of primitivity was used to legitimize Western power, as the self-proclaimed more developed society, but also idealized as a “natural” heterosexuality believed to be on the decline among civilized men in Western Europe (Bjelić and Cole 281).¹¹⁰ Discourses of South Balkan sexuality therefore perform a double role: first, a differentiation of Balkan men as more

¹⁰⁹ Many of Emir Kusturica's films (*Underground*, *Black Cat/White Cat*), Danis Tanović's *No Man's Land*, Goran Paskaljević's *Powder Keg/Cabaret Balkan*, and Pjer Žalica's *Fuse* are some examples of films where performances of stereotypical Balkanist masculinity sometimes reify and sometimes subvert the stereotypes. These films draw on contemporary discourse about the Wars of Succession but also build on the politically incisive representations of sexuality of earlier Black Wave filmmaker Dušan Makavejev (*WR: Mysteries of the Organism*, *Sweet Movie*, *Montenegro*). See Tomislav Longinović's “Playing the Western Eye: Balkan Masculinity and Post-Yugoslav War Cinema” and Aniko Imre's chapter in *Identity Games* on Eastern European masculinity, “From Poetic Pornography to Creative Consumption: Masculinity in Play.”

¹¹⁰ As Bjelić and Cole show, this discourse is then actualized through a normative heterosexuality that screens the nationalist homosocial brotherhood that drove recent warfare and nation-formation. See “Sexualizing the Serb.”

“primitive” through their inability to discipline their libidos and second, a normalizing of heterosexual behavior as “natural.” That this discourse of primitive virility runs alongside an Orientalist discourse of exotic (and feminine) mystique complicates the representational system, disrupting any neatly sexed Balkan masculinity.

As a liminal space where the “Orient” and the “Occident” overlap in ways more layered than implied in Edward Said’s epistemologically and ontologically distinct categories, the Balkans are described in both the feminizing discourse of Orientalism and in the masculinizing discourse of Balkanism. *Tilva Rosh* is part of a recent history of filmic representations of both primitive and violent Balkan masculinity. Anikó Imre identifies two character types for males in films from Eastern Europe during the transitional period leading up to and following 1989. Masculine identities tended to be represented as either “artist/intellectual” or “violent/corporeal” (the latter more common in Southeast European films). She argues that the artist type, with his masochism and proclivity for abstract universals, symbolizes “collective desire” to be a part of Europe rather than categorically different (171). In contrast, the “violent/corporeal” type both reifies and subverts Balkanist stereotypes by performing them in the context of a carnivalesque aesthetic. She claims this play with stereotypes about the Balkans to be empowering but also to express the actual disappointment of angry young men let down by the post-1989 transition. I extend her argument to claim that this violent and corporeal masculinity portrays a rejection of dominant Europeanizing discourses not only by performing the stereotypes excessively but also by insisting that residual Balkanist

discourse persists in shaping experiences of the Southeast European present in a way unacknowledged by the rhetoric of European normalization.

In the context of the discursive histories of Orientalism and Balkanism, the aggressive and submissive behaviors portrayed in *Tilva Rosh* exceed the film's *Jackass* source text. The Bor skaters' self-mutilation is produced in part through mimicry of the *Jackass* stunts. However, they extend the masochistic blue-collar masculinity of the mass-mediated source text into a performance of submission and violence that reflects the tension between the discourses of Balkanism and European normalization. As provincial residents of a post-socialist Southeast European nation, the skaters are still subject to residual Balkanist discourses. This residual form of belonging to "the Balkans" is nonetheless unrecognized in the dominant rhetoric of the aspirational European belonging. As the character in whom the aggression and vulnerable submission are most in tension, Marko expresses both the frustration of a disempowered young man defined as virile Balkan and the vulnerability and masochism of the "artist" type who desires European belonging. He expresses his position through corporeal pain rather than poetic abstraction, however, which reflects the structural rupture that shapes his everyday life. In Lauren Berlant's discussion of "aspirational normativity," which is the effort to approximate a received vision of pleasure in the context of neoliberal globalization, she argues that it allows only a cluster of feelings rather than a lifeworld ("Nearly"). Marko expresses an ambivalent and inconsistent cluster of feelings in relation to this position as a post-socialist Balkan.

The ambivalence toward Europeanization in *Tilva Rosh* is mitigated by a sub-narrative of hope for the region through alternative media production and distribution networks. The videos that the skaters who play Marko and Stefan had originally posted online to prove that the “crap theory of pain is not correct” were filmmaker Ležaić’s inspiration for *Tilva Rosh*. The skaters had neither the professional credentials of the *Jackass* cast of extreme athletes nor the financial backing of funders like MTV or Paramount. They instead created their “Crap: Pain in Empty” video on a small handheld digital camera and distributed it through the social network YouTube. In portraying the characters’ strategic use of limited modes of production and exhibition, *Tilva Rosh*’s interpretation of the skaters and their video project presents small media and social networking as partial counterbalance to more dominant media production industries. The characters watch YouTube videos of “Crap” on Dunja’s iphone and Stefan’s computer, aspiring to textual production and distribution even as they perform an ambivalent blend of aggression and submission toward their marginal Europeanizing

Tilva Rosh presents relation based on independent media circulation as an alternative to forms of relation under socialist governance or under private neoliberal enterprise. The rural Marko, urban Stefan, and cosmopolitan Dunja come together to create, distribute, and consume videos. Stefan and Marko videotape each other, and Dunja watches the videos via YouTube on her iphone. They establish relations across geographical distance through small media rather than relying on large entertainment industries or on national film funding. Where neither the remains of socialism nor capitalist relation offers succor to the cluster of feelings experienced by Marko, small

media is presented as an alternative form of relation. The characters' relation through media partially parallels the media relations that occur at the Sarajevo Film Festival, where *Tilva Roš* screened.¹¹¹ A "Yugoslav" film infrastructure may have been "Balkanized" when the country broke into separate successor states with independent film industries, but a Southeast European regional infrastructure now exists. Films like *Tilva Rosh* circulate through this regional relation of minor cinema production and viewing. While characters like Stefan and Dunja can participate in media production and distribution, Marko owns neither a video camera nor a working cell phone (let alone an iPhone). His participation only occurs through his relations with the urban Stefan and the cosmopolitan Dunja, which troubles utopian narratives of democratic media access.

The film's representation of the emotional undercurrents of a post-socialist transition into privatization and neoliberal economics was well-received at the SFF, where it exhibited to a sold-out theatre and was awarded the "Heart of Sarajevo" for best feature film.¹¹² Although the few English reviews of the film fault its "fidelity" to its MTV "source" text for its "idiocy,"¹¹³ I argue that the *Jackass* intertext instead allows *Tilva Rosh* to adapt themes of masochism and blue-collar discontent into a reflection on Southeastern Europe's submission to Europeanizing normalization, even while

¹¹¹ At the Sarajevo Film Festival's "The Future is Unwritten: Celebrating Cinema Across Borders" panel, producer Christine Vachon argued that older filmmaking and distribution models are increasingly not viable. She claimed that Southeast Europe needs new models for making films, like switching from film to HD, and tailoring productions to iPods and computers. The Sarajevo Talent Campus, SFF's program for helping emerging filmmakers in partnership with Berlinale, presented a lecture by film director Boris Mitić on the potential for amateur media production entitled "Homemade Documentary Storytelling."

¹¹² The feature film competition jury included some members from Southeast Europe (Romanian director Cristi Puiu, Turkish actress Saadet Isil Aksoy, Croatian actor Leon Lučev), as well as US Producer Christine Vachon and US San Francisco Film Society programmer Rachel Rosen.

¹¹³ See Jay Weissburg's review for *Variety* and Dan Fainaru's for *Screen Daily*.

confronting its cinema's marginal access to resources and continued experience of Balkanist discourse.

As a festival film with high production values and the early support of institutions like the Ministry of Culture Film Center Serbia, the Connecting Cottbus East-West Co-production Market in Germany, and the Crossroads Co-Production Forum at Thessaloniki International Film Festival, *Tilva Rosh* accessed the necessary resources for festival film production and exhibition unavailable to the amateur "Crap." *Tilva* nonetheless harnessed some of "Crap's" ambivalent structure of feeling within the form and style of the festival film. The award in Sarajevo marked the peak of the film's success, although it also showed at the Locarno Film Festival and received an open-air screening to promote the Rotterdam International Film Festival. In the following analysis of *Some Other Stories*, an anthology film that screened at the same festival, I more explicitly address the constraints of film production and distribution for regional films to show how the "festival film" designation partially obscures the film's otherwise complex reflections on memory, loss and deterritorialization in Southeast Europe.

Some Other Stories: A Film About a Formal [sic] Country

In the country that used to be called Yugoslavia,
men didn't ask women whether war is the right thing to do.
Now, those women are asking what kind of a life can they be expected
to bring into a post-war world (Soul Food 3)

In the above excerpt from the Soul Food distribution company's description of *Some Other Stories* [*Neke Druge Priče*] (2010), the film is presented as being women's response to the Wars of Succession. Organized as an anthology, the film's five segments

were directed by women from each of the five Yugoslav successor states.¹¹⁴ The filmmakers wrote their own screenplays (with the exception of Marija Dzidzeva) and each directed her segment according to her interpretation of the “bringing life into the world” theme. Initially articulated by the project’s designer, Serbian film critic and producer Nenad Dukić, as an anthology film composed of five short films about pregnancy (Rossi “Interview”), the film’s title plays on the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian euphemism for pregnancy as being a state of alterity, when a woman is located in “the other state” (*u drugom stanju*). Although the English title loses the connotation of pregnancy, *Some Other Stories* is still presented as offering an *other* understanding of life in the post-Yugoslav successor states, one that focuses more on everyday life in homes, on streets, and in hospitals than on the spectacle of war and political platforms.

Dukić’s SEE Film production company recruited young female directors from the five successor states, and each was tasked with obtaining support for the project from her nation’s film fund. The project as a whole was then granted additional funding from the Council of Europe’s Eurimages fund and from Irish DIG Productions (*Some Press Kit*). The national film segments are presented as being brought together through transnational collaboration, most basically in the form of economic co-production; the five co-producing nations (minus Ireland) are each formally articulated in the five anthology segments. As a collection of free-standing segments connected by theme, the anthology film’s form reflects multiplicity. The marketing and festival descriptions emphasize this

¹¹⁴ The five represented countries, in order of appearance in the film, are Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Slovenia. The film project began in 2005, before Montenegro and Kosovo’s independences (*Some Press Kit*).

multiplicity rather than presenting the film as a coherent whole, describing it through lists of fives, whether of five plot summaries, five director descriptions, or five nationalities. In the film distributor's catalogue, for example, *Some Other Stories* is described as follows: "Five countries, five women, five stories... Film films directed, in fact, by five [young women in the country formally known as Yugoslavia]" along with a synopsis of each story (2).¹¹⁵ That the five stories are named after the five Yugoslav successor states reinforces the nation as the organizing unit, but that the stories are compiled into one film suggests something closer to the transnational.

Descriptions of the film in marketing and festival publications tend to emphasize its organizing concept over the content of the segments, a practical strategy for communicating the logic of the compilation but also one that affects how the individual films are read. In these descriptions, each anthology segment is presented as representing the nation named in its title. Furthermore, each anthology segment in the film itself is introduced by an inter-title designating the filmmaker's nationality (e.g., "Croatian Story", "Serbian Story"). In this naming, the anthology producer's intervention limits the complexity that segments titled differently by each director/screenwriter might have enabled. For example, the "Bosnian Story" segment was excerpted and screened as part of the Sarajevo Film Festival's short film competition under the title "Ispočetka" ("Starting Over"). This alternative titling diminishes the short film's nationally representative role and suggests instead a continual cycle of loss.

¹¹⁵Soul Food's film press kit also includes a list of individual statements from each director (4). Other publications that use lists to market the film include the following: the Montenegro Film Festival's catalog description, which includes a synopsis for each director (6); the Sarajevo Film Festival catalog and in Soul Food's publications, which list the directors' countries of origin (7); and the Sarajevo Film Festival's catalogue description, which emphasizes the five different perspectives that each segment provides (68).

Anthology films receive little attention in film scholarship. This reflects anthology films' general failure to attract the attention of critics and viewing audiences, poor documentation and archiving practices, and a preference in much film scholarship for analyzing classic Hollywood films. The criticism that anthology films do receive argues that the form troubles the boundaries of national cinemas, however. In Mark Betz's chapter on omnibus films, his choice of terms for the multi-director episode compilations also referred to as anthology, collective, or compilation films, he claims that the form destabilizes monolithic national and historical narratives by more realistically portraying multiplicity (41, 179, 198). In David Scott Diffrient's dissertation on episode films, his choice of terms for films that collect narrative units, he similarly argues that they disrupt categories like authorship, national cinema and film genre through their narrative multiplicity and fragmentation (39, 53). Betz and Diffrient ultimately find the anthology/omnibus/episode film form to be hopeful through its disruption of politicized ideals like coherent national and historical narratives, although in a critical and sometimes hesitant way that acknowledges that the form is often presented as a univocal entity.¹¹⁶

Rather than modeling a utopian alternative to the national film, however, *Some Other Stories* reinforces an ideology of the transnational that depends on a reification of the national. In the packaging of *Some Other Stories*, its anthology form is presented as modeling the transnational re-unification of the Yugoslav successor states. The film distributor's catalogue identifies the five segments as coming from women "in the

¹¹⁶ Film scholars like Robert Stam and Hamid Naficy also celebrate films that exceed the frame of "nation," whether by representing marginalized or diasporic positions.

country formally [sic] known as Yugoslavia” (2). The catalogue is in English, but grammatical errors throughout lead me to believe that “formally” is mistakenly used for “formerly.” The use of “form” is nonetheless suggestive, as Yugoslavia becomes the model for the formal gathering of the anthology’s segments. In the film distributor’s Press Kit, the transnational collaboration and cultural compilation are framed as being a form of re-unification for the former Yugoslav republics. The film’s stakes are presented as follows:

The film project *Some Other Stories* rests on the conviction that it is possible and desirable to conceive and reanimate the cultural space of ex-Yugoslavia on new foundations, which would not be sabotaged by the burden of the violent wars of the 1990’s. This concept has been developed through conversations, exchanges of ideas, and positive synergies between colleagues and cineastes from the former Yugoslavia and is implemented by South East European Film (SEE Film), Belgrade. The idea was to make an ex YU omnibus film to be directed by young, mostly first time women directors from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia (FYROM), Slovenia and Serbia (*Some Press Kit 2*).

The distributor emphasizes the more diplomatic *cultural* collaboration as a model for a transnational cooperation between the former republics rather than political reunification.

Through the formal uniting of segments named for each nation, the collection suggests a cultural togetherness of another kind than a politically reunited Yugoslavia. Rather than national unity, this transnational alliance is based instead on cultural memory of past Yugoslav unity and on the future possibilities of renewed collaboration between

the former republics. In the distributor's Press Kit, lead producer Nenad Dukić argues that the film achieves economically what had not been possible politically between the Yugoslav successor states. The project replicates a joint financing model that occurred between the republics during Yugoslavian film production but had not happened between all of the former republics since 1991 (3). Dukić then quotes one of the directors, Hanna Slak, as claiming, "[the film project] is a small revolution, the turning of a new page. And it is happening first in cinema! Other fields will follow, and I am sure more cooperations will emerge in the years to come" (3).¹¹⁷ In highlighting the innovation of the transnational co-production between the successor states with an emphasis on Slak's claim that other fields would follow in the film's revolutionary path, Dukić suggests that cultural and economic collaboration is a hopeful future for those unified by memories of an integrated Yugoslavia—and of the productivity that the new transnational model for this integrated wholeness would enable.

Economic collaboration has become a significant part of contemporary filmmaking in Southeast Europe. Montenegrin filmmaker and film scholar Marija Perović claims that the region's films have the best access to promotion and distribution when they are co-produced by at least three countries, one of which should be a Western European country (personal interview). Based on the French funding model and heavily dependent on the Council of Europe's Eurimages fund, Southeast European filmmakers apply to different funding sources for pre- and post-production. Producers cannot apply

¹¹⁷ A significant anthology film that preceded this one was *After the War: Life Post-Yugoslavia* (2007), a collection of documentaries featuring two shorts by Bosnian Jasmila Žbanić and four by Serbian Želimir Gvardio. Unlike *Some Other Stories*, which emphasizes its equal representation of each successor state, *After the War* emphasizes the remains of the war and includes in its list of filmmakers actually from post-Yugoslavia only the two above-mentioned directors.

for Eurimages funding unless they have already confirmed at least two co-producers for at least 50% of the film's budget ("Eurimages").¹¹⁸ Private sources (branding, sponsorship) often supply additional funding. Producers thus play an important role, as they negotiate the complex funding system that enables filmmaking. In her introduction to the SFF, programmer Elma Tataragić argues that the growth of Southeastern European cinemas depends on successful *producers* rather than just directors ("Section" 21). *Some Other Stories'* multi-director organization may appear to be post-author, but the film's lead producer Dukić is the one named the film's author in the distributor's Press Kit.¹¹⁹

As the film's author, Dukić established the film's concept and also ordered the segments into the narrative whole of the film. The first segment, "Croatian Story," was directed by Ivona Juka, who had previously been awarded a Heart of Sarajevo for her documentary *Facing the Day* (2006). The final segment, "Slovenian Story," was directed by Hanna Slak, the only contributor among the five to have previously released a feature film. Both nations represented by these films were also the closest to inclusion in the European Union (already within or soon to be) and considered the most "Western" of the Yugoslav successor states. The three segments in the middle were made by new and relatively unknown directors from Serbia, Bosnia and Macedonia. Diffrient suggests that the most privileged sections in episode films tend to come first and last, to function as a

¹¹⁸ For more on Eurimages regulations and its effect on film production in Europe, see Sophie De Vinck's "Europudding or Europaradise? A Performance Evaluation of the Eurimages Coproduction Film Fund, Twenty Years after its Inception;" Dina Iordanova's "Feature Filmmaking within the New Europe: Moving Funds and Images Across the East-West Divide;" and the application criteria, including the "European character of the project" at the Eurimages website, www.coe.int.

¹¹⁹ Designating the producer as author acknowledges the importance of the producer's role in economically depressed contexts. Diffrient takes the role of episode film producers a step further, suggesting that they act as collectors of films. He bases this on several prominent episode film producers that were also collectors, and on producer Regina Ziegler's claim, "I collect my directors like jewels" (qtd in 46).

narrative beginning and end that will smooth over audience discomfort or disinterest (25). The order of the segments in *Some Other Stories* serves not only to highlight more recognizable directors but also to produce a narrative line more palatable to audiences used to the unity of feature film narrative, which eases the shock of the continual shifts between stories.

The combination of a strong beginning and end with the unifying theme of new life does not totally cover over the shifts in style, genre and focus that distinguish each director's interpretation of the theme, however. As audience member Aleksandra from Herceg Novi claims, "The omnibus form annoyed me. You had to watch each film before you could judge the film as a whole [Malo me nervira što je omnibus. Treba svaki film pogledati, onda možemo da kažemo kakav je]" ("Publika" 21, my translation). She responded with discomfort to the experience of having to resolve distinct and sometimes discordant meanings as part of the process of omnibus viewership. The film's ready-made meaning according to its packaging, as an example of a reanimated cultural space that reflects the transnational and the feminine, does not foreclose other experiences of this cultural space. The compilation of works emerged not only through the constraints and direction setting of the production process but also from the experiences and sensibilities of the individual filmmakers. It reflects the nuanced and layered negotiations of an idealized transnationality that exceeds both its regressive (re-create Yugoslavia) and progressive (Europeanizing transnational collaboration that emerges independently of the past) frames.

The concept of the transnational co-produced women's anthology establishes part of each segment's value to be in the national funding its government contributed to enabling the transnationally coproduced whole. The segments' value also depends on the gendered emphasis of the film's marketing and exhibition frame. The film's promotional materials present it as a platform for young women's voices to be heard. Hope for future collaboration within the region is placed in women of reproductive age as the alternative to the war-making men accused in the Soul Food catalogue of breaking up Yugoslavia. This suggestion relies on more widespread gender stereotypes that designate "woman" as morally pure victim to the chauvinistic nationalism of men and as the symbolic mother of the nation (Helms).

As the "givers of life," the female protagonists are presented as residing between the devastation that the war caused them and the imperative on them to bring to life a new future from these ruins (Šuta 4). This framing assumes a progress from death (war) to new life (the future) that does not account for residual traces of Yugoslav belonging that shape and nuance the Europeanizing future. Additionally, the newness that the female directors are presented as providing for audiences in their role as "givers of life" is already constrained by the predetermined sense that the packaging gives their narratives as representative of their gender, representative of their nation, and representative of a future already defined as being transnational and co-producing.¹²⁰

Rather than demonstrating a thoughtful engagement with the tensions and questions that

¹²⁰My attention to dominant discourse and to the statements that get erased by it is influenced by Gayatri Spivak's conceptual "subaltern," whose voice-consciousness is erased from hegemonic discourse because they cannot be heard according to its terms.

the segments themselves animate, the film and festival publications instead point to Dukić's collaboration concept and gendered metaphor of new transnationhood as the model for the future, and relegate the directors' segments to representative samples of the typical young person's everyday life in their respective post-Yugoslav successor state.

This representativeness makes the works stand for a generation within a nation, in a tokenist way that still partially silences by predetermining the significance that the segments can have. Rather than functioning as visions of "new life," the segments are instead interpreted as reproducing typical everyday life in each of the represented nations. The Soul Food press kit claims that the segments "reflect the sensibility of the new generation—their temperament, dilemmas, doubts, hopes, and fears" (2). Dukić argues, "There are huge differences between the countries the films were made in: economic, sociological, cultural, religious, and others. This is reflected, on all levels, in the differences among the films" (3). Alissa Simon's review of the film in *Variety* claims, "The episodes reflect the economic, sociological, cultural and religious differences among the various countries." Each of these descriptions defines the segments as typical representations of the post-war generation in each of the directors' respective Yugoslav successor states. What these descriptions foreclose by essentializing the segments as token representations are the critical and questioning uses to which the anthology segment form is put in the works themselves.

The segments intersect at some points. Both the opening "Croatian Story" and fourth segment "Macedonian Story" employ elements of melodrama, such as stereotypical characters (eccentric artist, nagging mother-in-law, corrupt politician) and

emotionally charged plots. In “Croatian Story,” the emotion stems from the protagonist Sonja’s sense of being imprisoned, as shown through repeated shots of barred windows, gates, and her husband Marin’s arms as he contains her during one of her fits. This sense of containment is most explicitly caused by the couple’s upward mobility in a scene of them hosting a party; Sonja responds to the conversations about 5-star hotels in Riyadh and sailing trips by painting a dark tunnel around the birds in one of her paintings. If progressing towards a *future* of successful integration into the wealth and order of EU membership produces Sonja’s madness, the stranglehold of *the past* in the absence of a future produces Irena’s desperate act of switching her baby with the baby belonging to a high government official in “Macedonian Story.” Irena’s advanced phase Hepatitis C from past drug use authorizes the hospital officials to adopt out her baby without her consent. The pathos that saturates the close up of Irena when she is allowed to hold the baby legitimates her distrust of the expert knowledge provided by doctors. This distrust parallels Sonja’s similar reaction to her doctor; she calls his recommendations “brainwashing.” Both characters respond to authority and order in transgressive and irrational ways, creating mess and disorder in Sonja’s luxurious home and in Irena’s hospital.

The protagonist of the second segment, “Serbian Story,” also expresses some distrust of medical expertise, although she deftly deflects the doctor’s recommendation that she talk with a psychiatrist. More subtle in terms of plot and emotion, both this and “Slovenian Story” portray characters ill at ease with the urban civility and Europeanizing progress they perform. In “Serbian Story,” Milena’s depression is alleviated by neither

the Valium she overdoses on nor the psychiatrist that the doctor recommends; she instead finds relief by conversing with and then poisoning her charming hospital roommate. The murder remains morally ambiguous, not only because the man reveals himself to be the rural ruffian who carelessly shot her husband but also because through the act of revenge, Milena transforms from the depressed woman he called “lutka” (doll or puppet, i.e., inanimate) to one walking with a smile through the streets of Belgrade to an upbeat jazz soundtrack.

“Serbian Story” employs elements of Film Noir (themes of murder and the city’s underbelly, dark setting contrasted with fluorescent light, jazz soundtrack). In stylistic contrast, elements of the more whimsical styles of silent film and fairy tale predominate in the concluding segment, “Slovenian Story.” Former nun Magdalena has taken a vow of silence; her pantomime contrasts with the speech of those around her, until she finds a husband who also pantomimes. Immediately after their union, a decorated inter-title, another element of silent film, announces that a year has passed. Slovenia is now in the EU, and Magdalena’s husband and baby sit in a rocking chair in their living room. Magdalena’s fairy-tale journey—begun when she was expelled from the convent for pregnancy by artificial insemination (a twist on the religious themes of immaculate conception and of Mary Magdalene as a “fallen woman”), in crisis when told she must be married to qualify for work and resolved in her serendipitous union with the man whose sperm she had ordered online—is put into question by her expression in the final scene. She appears on the intra-diegetic television screen that her husband watches in a broadcast about how life has improved with ascension to the EU. Company logos

proliferate in the *mise-en-scène* and the grocery store she works in is piled with fruit. Yet as her husband and baby watch her face on the television screen, her smile becomes forced and then falls into a dull stare.

Both the dream of EU inclusion along with critiques of its civilizing and ordering requirements hovers at the edge of all of the segments; “Bosnia and Herzegovinian Story” most explicitly problematizes the power hierarchy structuring interventions by Western Europe. The short lived intimacy between the Bosnian Haris and his Dutch lover Heder only lasts for the first minutes of the segment, when the composition includes a warm palette and close-ups of both of their faces in the same frame. Her cell phone and their halting and accented English conversation soon disrupt the intimacy. They do not share a frame again until near the end of the segment, when he proposes to her so she will stay with the child they conceived together rather than follow her next mandate to Afghanistan. In this scene, she has neither the English nor Bosnian words to make meaningful to him her decision to take the mandate that will secure her career. Her later gesture of communicating through money instead is rebutted in his refusal to be located by the mail carrier bringing her consolation gift, as he and his family must find yet another temporary home. This middle segment, in a mirroring of Bosnia’s central geography in the former Yugoslavia, portrays a bleak post-war landscape physically (ruins of the protagonist’s shelled home and a grey palette), emotionally (his father’s war journal project) and economically (his grim employment prospects), which coincide with the protagonist’s helplessness in the face of circumstances and his lover’s will. Heder’s

job at the Office of the High Representative (OHR)¹²¹, the highest authority in Bosnia, amplifies the power imbalance in their relationship. Upon finding out about the pregnancy, Haris tries to enter the OHR building. Heder looks down from her office above as the security guard stops him. He yells, “You think we’re a fucking colony?” (“Šta ti misliš da smo jebena kolonija?”), making Heder’s personal act of power and abandonment symbolic of a broader structure.

The five anthology segments’ stylistic and thematic inflections function as more than representations of national typicality. They also contain elements of critique and investigation that exceed ideologies of transnational collaboration and equal gender representation. The segments’ thematic overlap receives no discussion in the publications about the film, however, even though these elements also exceed the transnational co-produced women’s anthology frame. As the most pre-established theme, that of “bringing new life into the world” ironically becomes the most questioned ideal, in what had been a source of contention for the directors from the beginning. “Serbian Story” director Ana Maria Rossi claimed discomfort with the “women’s film” designation, for its oversimplification of the variety of perspectives women can and do have in the anthology (“Pet”). In an interview, she described how she had informed Dukić that a project about

¹²¹ The Office of the High Representative and EU Special Representative (OHR) is 53% funded by EU and 22% by US (“OHR General Information”). Its mandate is to ensure civilian compliance with the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The OHR still has final authority on all political processes in Bosnia, including the ability to impose or veto laws and to remove officials from office.

pregnancy did not interest her, but that she would consider a more broadly understood one about “creating new life” (personal interview).¹²²

The directors’ interpretations of “new life” complicate the theme’s utopian inflection. Each film segment revolves around a pregnancy that is somehow impossible, in a critical engagement with the gender essentialism that asks women to birth a better nation. In “Croatian Story,” birthing the perfect baby into upwardly mobile middle class Croatian society involves killing its deformed twin. In “Serbian Story,” revenge allows the recently widowed pregnant character hope and energy for a future that the embryo had been unable to provide her. In “Bosnia and Herzegovinian Story,” the Dutch character’s mandate to Afghanistan requires that she forego family. In “Macedonian Story,” disease from the protagonist’s past requires that she forfeit her future as mother. Finally, in “Slovenian Story,” the fairy-tale ending of marriage and family in the European Union is presented as a farcical ideal. Newness is represented as being impossible within the existing structures. These include structures that privilege rationality and civil behavior (“Croatian Story”, “Slovenian Story”), force rupture and deterritorialization (“Bosnia and Herzegovinian Story”, “Macedonian Story”), and inadequately provide for health and justice (“Serbian Story”, “Slovenian Story”). In each of these critical-investigatory narratives, “bringing new life into the world” is presented as being a naïvely optimistic concept that does not acknowledge the social, political and economic barriers to catharsis and newness.

¹²² “Bosnia and Herzegovina Story” director Ines Tanović’s claimed that directing films and raising families are often irreconcilable responsibilities for local female directors, who choose to forego pregnancy (MFF Bilten 5, p 13).

The five directors' critical interpretations of "bringing new life into the world" also complicate the previously mentioned Press Kit claims that the film creates a cultural space "which would not be sabotaged by the burden of the violent wars of the 1990's" (2). The economic and social legacy of the wars, and of the fall of the Berlin Wall that preceded them, is a key focus of the segments' engagement with questions about the lingering traumas and broken infrastructures of war, the questionable values of global capitalism, and the stakes of post-war revenge and victimhood. The effect of this legacy varies; "Bosnia and Herzegovinian Story" emphasizes lost homes and lingering memories of war while "Serbian Story" presents violence as a chain reaction at the intersections of victimhood and aggression. As a whole, the segments express a tone of guarded pessimism that complicates the political optimism of the transnational anthology form. This tone arises from the directors' representations of the tensions of contemporary life, representations that may not be typical but that reflect the directors' located responses to the anthology genre and "new life" theme. It also reflects their response to the transnationalism of the anthology, a transnationalism that connects the former Yugoslav republics according to a residual order of Yugoslav belonging but also according to a progressive Europeanizing transnational order.

The anthology as a form of transnationalism cannot create a "cultural space of ex-Yugoslavia" that is free from the "burden of the violent wars of the 1990s" as long as the memory and effects of the wars persist. The film's collaborative production model, for example, reflects cooperation but also the continuing precarity of arts production within the smaller funding and audience units of the individual post-war nations, especially

within an increasingly profit driven atmosphere of film production. Furthermore, the film's transnationalism does not erase borders, it emphasizes them by reinscribing the nation onto the narrative units collected into the anthology through their titles. In the suggestions that the segments represent national typicality, the anthology reinforces questionable forms of nationalism based on cultural insiderism and ethnic homogeneity.¹²³ Furthermore, in the mobilization of typicality for purposes of transnational collaboration, the anthology's frame exhibits characteristics of what Arjun Appadurai calls culturalism, "the conscious mobilization of cultural differences in the service of a larger national or transnational politics" (15).

If the transnational co-produced women's anthology frame simplifies the directors' work into a model political and economic collaboration, the works themselves exceed the national frame of transnationalism and economic frame of co-production to express a "community of sentiment," to borrow Arjun Appadurai's term for local affinities that converge transnationally. Gilroy's "Black Atlantic diaspora" similarly exceeds the national frame with affinity built from "desire, kinship, affect and affiliation" (21), as do Gayatri Gopinath's "impossible desires" as alternative rationalities and alternative visions of collectivity to the national narratives of genealogy.¹²⁴ For all of these scholars, memory, emotion, and stories shape communities in ways that exceed and oppose the spatial constraints of the nation. The directors of *Some Other Stories* all live in a different nation than the Yugoslavia they were born in. For many of their peers,

¹²³For more on such nationalism, see *The Black Atlantic* by Paul Gilroy and *Provincializing Europe* by Dipesh Chakrabarty.

¹²⁴See Gayatri Gopinath's *Impossible Desires*. Other relevant discussions of nation and genealogy include Anne McClintock's *Imperial Leather* and Brenna M. Munro's "Queer Family Romance: Writing the 'New' South Africa in the 1990s."

deterritorialization occurred through the version of “ethnic cleansing” that involved people moving across borders, from mixed ethnicity spaces to the imagined homogeneity of single-ethnicity nations. For others, the deterritorialization occurred on the level of memory and narrative, from memories of belonging to the imagined Yugoslav nation to ones of belonging to the imagined Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian, or Slovenian (and later Montenegrin and Kosovar) nations. While ambivalent, fragmented and resistant responses to this rupture occurred, Dubravka Ugrešić argues that it was the Yugoslavs, those who understood themselves to be multi-ethnic and would not self-identify as a national ethnicity, that were most marginalized and left without public space (“Library” 153).¹²⁵

The disappearance of a homeland for those who imagined themselves to be “Yugoslav” has produced a mode of remembering termed “Yugonostalgia.” Yugonostalgia can mean a longing for the mobility and international networks of nonalignment, for the services of socialist governance, and for a political imaginary that celebrates mixed-ethnicity families and communities. In “The Confiscation of Memory,” Dubravka Ugrešić discusses the difficulty of defining a nostalgia for a Yugoslavia that is neither nostalgia for communism nor for the Yugoslavia (now named Serbia) that was at that time led by Slobodan Milošević (231). The protagonist of one of Ugrešić’s novels best describes yugonostalgia as the recognition that a remembered past is the only territory that she and other diasporic Yugoslavs still belong to. She determines that by remembering the Yugoslavia that they once shared, she revolts against the nationalist

¹²⁵ Ugrešić defines Yugoslavs as “an ethnically indifferent, ‘mixed’ minority living in the former Yugoslavia that was actually larger in number than the more nationally conscious Slovenes” (153).

project of the politicians then leading the Yugoslav successor states to erase memory by stigmatizing the literature, films, jokes and other remains of a Yugoslavia they based their political platforms on delegitimizing. She claims, “Amidst such lunacy ... “Yugonostalgia,” the remembrance of life in that ex-country, became another name for political subversion” (*Ministry* 57). In contrast, Zala Volčič argues that film and television have been crucial media for expressing supranational identity, but that in them yugonostalgia is wielded as brand for consumerist ends instead of as a way of addressing the ethnic violence of the wars of succession.

Some Other Stories, as a collection of stories from each of the Yugoslav successor states, expresses elements of Yugonostalgia, but this nostalgia is complicated through located negotiations of gender, economy, and the legacy of the war. The directors, who are presented as being the representatives of their nations within the new transnational region, also express layered responses to their memories of Yugoslavia. The post-war generation has been shaped by dispersal and disruption, and the critical questioning of their narratives reflects this generational perspective. In the series of statements by each director published in the Press Kit, the directors communicate feelings about their memories of Yugoslavia and the “loss” of their country of birth (4). The following excerpts are worth quoting at length for the ambivalent responses to national and remembered Yugoslav belonging they express, with italics added for emphasis:

Ana Maria Rossi: “These memories of [the country we were born in] can be more or less nostalgic... There are no reminiscences here or any invocation of

a better past, because *the greater part of our lives has taken place in countries that have been acquiring their national emancipation...*”

Marija Dzidzeva: “We grew up *together*, in the *same country* and believed in the *same values*... We are now telling some *other stories*.”

Ivona Juka: “[Croatia’s] neighbors are separate countries that once belonged to one unified larger country... All that remains are the neighbors, *always the same*, neighbors speaking the same language as I do, and *whom I understand*.”

Ines Tanović: “Five Female directors...*were born in the same country, and now they live in five different states*... Five different stories make up *a film about a former country*...”

Hanna Slak: “...the diverse universes this part of world has developed into in the past decade. My voice speaks from the position of paradise [in Slovenia]: EU membership, no major problems, low unemployment, we are all happy, looking good and doing quite well. *But...*”

These statements are then further layered by statements in other contexts. Rossi opposes invoking a better past in the statement above, but in an interview told me about how important it was for her to work together with directors from the other republics. Tears appeared in her eyes as she spoke about unified Yugoslavia, reflecting residual emotion that complicates her other claim about Yugonostalgia being irrelevant to her generation. In a press conference at the Montenegro Film Festival, Tanović nuances her claims of a

prior nation or state belonging by describing the *community* that Yugoslavia allowed (“Bilten 5” 13).

The blend of emotions towards the former Yugoslavia expressed in the statements and interviews exceeds the political and economic emphases of the “transnational co-produced women’s anthology” metatext but also do not ignore the “burden” of the rupture and war of the 90s. The anthology builds from ambivalent feelings toward Yugoslavia and memories of its rupture to express the complexity of regional arts production. In festival and distributor documents, *Some Other Stories* is framed as being a transnational co-produced women’s anthology that is free from the legacy of the war. Instead, it critically challenges prevailing ideals of national independence and transnational alignment. In the directors’ statements and interview responses, the film was an opportunity to express a community of sentiment built out of complicated memories of and feelings toward their childhoods in Yugoslavia and the deterritorialization that ruptured it. In the segments’ content and style, “bringing new life into the world” is an impossible project, as all pregnancies take place within social, political and economic contexts that shape and limit possible futures.

The transnational political “region” as a productive sub-unit to the global economy is privileged in the Sarajevo Film Festival’s framing. While privileging this form of relation partially obscures alternative forms, it does not foreclose them. Memory, in the form of insistence on Balkan identity as a mode of protest and of nostalgia for the idea of Yugoslav (literally “South Slav”) association, complicates the progressive future-

oriented goals for transnational regional and global affiliation. A remainder persists in the films, a value that exceeds their property value as nationally labeled texts aimed at global distribution and their political value as exemplifying cooperation on the path to Europeanizing normalization. Their publicity is nonetheless made possible within the structure of the festival as trade market, and made available to a transnational public when exhibited to the international audiences at the festival. It is in the festival's publicity and in its institutional role of bringing together a collection of national cinemas that the utopian wish for a regional public sphere is produced.

In the next chapter, I continue to address the role of memory and residual feelings of belonging in two literary works. The previous chapters have used the "collection" as a heuristic for thinking about the formal effect of texts that are compiled and framed as displaying coherence. This final chapter continues the formal inquiry into multiplicity in a short-story collection and a novel of fragments. It takes the analysis of collections a step further, however, by analyzing how the act and product of collecting functions as metaphor for ex-Yugoslavs in the texts themselves.

Chapter Four - Museum Novel and Story Montage: The Poetics of Cultural Memory in the Literature of ex-Yugoslav Exile

Shaped in the nineteenth century, research on the Balkans was influenced heavily by the traditions of romanticism and evolutionism. The first resulted in an extreme fascination with, coupled with a methodical study of, folklore and language, in search of the specific Balkan *Volkgeist(s)*; the second, in the framework of the taxonomical obsessions of nineteenth century academics, grounded the Balkans firmly in the dawn of humanity (Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* 129)

I was mortified imagining what this—this meal, this apartment, this family—looked like to him, what he made of our small, crowded existence, of our unsophisticated dishes designed for ever hungry people, of the loss that flickered in everything we did or didn't do. With all the cheap African crap and all the faded pictures and all the random remnants of our prewar reincarnation, this home was the museum of our lives, and it was not Louvre, let me tell you (Aleksandar Hemon, *Love and Obstacles* 202-3)

In the Berlin flea-markets, people, a museum race, sell things which have gone out of use. . . moth-eaten rabbit fur, old medals, steam-irons, iron weighing-scales with lead weights, ancient radios, gramophone records. . . A man with a blue military helmet, my countryman, sells cassettes. Beside him on a wooden chair is a cassette player. Folk songs whine, the sounds circle round the seller like dying flies and expire (Dubravka Ugrešić, *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender* 222)

When the Balkans are represented as barbaric and chaotic, they can be cast as Western Europe's antithesis. When they are represented as not-quite modern and not-quite developed, they become Europe's recent history, a living museum of its folk past. What if the Balkans, and the former Yugoslavia more specifically, were represented as a model for accommodating difference in messy and contradiction-filled categories of belonging? In this chapter, I address how post-Yugoslav and post-Communist fragmentation are accounted for in literary texts. I analyze the work of two diasporic writers who critically engage the motif and poetics of museum collections in relation to ex-Yugoslav identity. Dubravka Ugrešić's "museum-novel," *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, and Aleksandar Hemon's short-story collection, *Love and Obstacles*, represent the curatorial processes of collecting and arranging fragments of Yugoslav culture into meaningful ensembles. I argue that their works simultaneously

represent the fragmentation of balkanization and the gathering together enabled by post-Yugoslav curatorial and collaborative arts production to express ambivalence towards the future promised by the US and Western Europe. Both authors use the museum as a metaphor for the space where the ex-Yugoslav, whose identity is now obsolete, finds her or himself. They also employ a literary style that approximates the multiplicity of the museum through the short-story cycle (Hemon) and fictional museum catalogue (Ugrešić). They attend critically to the material and human debris left in the wake of change but do so with a touch of irony, in a playful critique of the potential destructiveness of modes of remembrance taken too seriously. In these works, the artifacts and stories of Yugoslav identity contribute to a dynamic practice of memory and uncertainty, rather than nostalgic recovery or single-minded progress.

Yugoslavia's violent dissolution gave rise to a period of dramatic cultural transition in the region. During this time, the advocates of identitarian ethnic nationalism embarked on a political offensive against any material traces of the inter-ethnic fellowship idealized by the "brotherhood and unity" motto of Yugoslav federalism. This offensive included strategic historical revisionism, whereby cultural memory associated with Yugoslavia was erased and each ethnic identity's folk and religious heritage amplified. In this atmosphere of fragmentation qua "balkanization," the person who identified as "Yugoslav" more than as "Serb," "Croat," or "Bosniak" had two primary options: assimilate to the hegemony of ethnic identity or assimilate to the West. Authors like Dubravka Ugrešić and Aleksandar Hemon imaginatively took stock of the quickly narrowing options available. For both of these ex-Yugoslav writers forced to settle

abroad because of the war, assimilation to the stylistic and thematic standards of American, Western European and World Literature would appear to increase their competitiveness in a larger market. Hemon's *Love and Obstacles* and Ugrešić's *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender* acknowledge the appeal of such assimilation, but they also keep it in tension with the imperative to represent an identity in fragments, in formation, and differing from the identity of Balkan developing into modern European.

In 1992, Aleksandar Hemon, a journalist and fiction writer in his late 20s from the Yugoslav republic of Bosnia, traveled from Sarajevo to Chicago to take part in the International Visitor Program run by the US Information Agency. The war that followed Bosnia's vote to separate from Yugoslavia prevented his scheduled return, so Hemon stayed in the US. He has since established himself as a US citizen, an acclaimed writer of fiction in English, and a Guggenheim and MacArthur fellow. Much is made of his transition from writing in Serbo-Croatian to writing in English as an adult, and he is often compared to other English as a second language writers like Vladimir Nabokov and Joseph Conrad. Three years after his arrival in the US, he published his first English story "The Life and Work of Alphonse Kauders" in *TriQuarterly*, an adaptation into English of a story he had written and published in Yugoslavia (*Best Yugoslav Short Stories 1990*). Most of his work since then has been written and published in English, although his characters' dialogue sometimes includes code-switching into Bosnian/Serbo-Croatian. In addition to his English language fiction, he also writes a regular column in Bosnian for the Sarajevo based periodical *BH Dani* called "Hemonwood." His publications in English include the highly acclaimed novel *Lazarus Project* (2008), which was a bestseller and

finalist for the National Book Award and National Book Critics Circle Award, in addition to being named a *New York Times* Notable Book and *New York* magazine number one book of the year. He has also published three short-story collections, *The Question of Bruno* (2000), *Nowhere Man* (2002), and *Love and Obstacles* (2009), and he edited the 2010-2013 *Best European Fiction* anthologies (Knight, Rohter, Hemon website).

Described by literary scholar Andrew Wachtel as “One of the most talented prose fiction writers in Eastern Europe” (*Remaining* 151), Dubravka Ugrešić established her reputation in Yugoslavia with literary works like *Fording the Stream of Consciousness* (*Forsiranje romana-reke*, 1988) and *In the Jaws of Life* (*Štefica Cvek u raljama života*, 1981). Her early work, which she labels “patchwork fiction,” interweaves high art and the everyday to explore themes of feminine collectivity, intertextuality, and the limits of genre (Ugrešić in Boym 77). She received multiple awards in Yugoslavia, including the prestigious NIN prize for the best novel of the year for *Fording the Stream of Consciousness*. As the separation of the Croatian republic from an increasingly Serb-dominated Yugoslavia became a hot political issue, however, Ugrešić was deemed insufficiently patriotic. She was labeled a “witch” in the Croatian daily *Globus* for taking a stand in her essays against the chauvinism of Croatian and Serbian ethnic nationalism and, along with four other female writers in Croatia, for allegedly representing Croatia as an unsuitable place to hold the Congress of the International PEN due to the war crimes it was concurrently carrying out. Ugrešić was ostracized and blacklisted, and she left

Croatia in 1993 as a result of this sustained harassment (Tax “Five,” *Nobody’s* 299).¹²⁶

Although she writes all of her works in Serbo-Croatian, those with the strongest critiques of Yugoslavia and its dissolution (*Culture of Lies* and *Museum of Unconditional Surrender*) were published in Dutch, German, and English years before being published in Croatian or Serbian. She has received literary awards in the US, Italy, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, and has been translated into dozens of languages, from Swedish and Portuguese to Korean and Arabic.

Ugrešić and Hemon publish first in major languages other than their native ones, which they both claim liberates them as writers and makes their work available to a wider and more diverse audience. For Ugrešić, publishing in English, Dutch, and German allowed her to avoid the self-censorship that securing a Croatian or Serbian publisher during the height of nationalist sentiment would have required. It also continues to allow her to refuse to choose a nationally labeled language variant in the post-Serbo-Croatian literary landscape (e.g., Croatian or Serbian); she instead speaks the “subversive” “retro-variant” language of BCS (Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian) (*Nobody’s* 148). She claims that she can now publish in more “important” literary languages that provide less shelter for “eccentricities” and that allow her to belong as a writer to a broader literary milieu than the book-burning and author-deleting one of the Croatian independence movement from which she was rejected (qtd in Spitz 142). Like Ugrešić, Hemon began publishing outside of Bosnia out of necessity; when he recognized that the war in Bosnia meant that he

¹²⁶ Ugrešić is often referred to as a writer in exile, but she denies this label as too glamorous. She says her primary challenge is not exile but surviving as a writer of serious literature in a market that privileges the mass market (Boym 75).

should stay in the US, he also recognized that it would make sense for him to represent that experience in English. Unlike Ugrešić, he actually began writing in English, which he claims liberated him from the control over meaning to which he was attached when writing in the language he already had mastery over (Hemon in Berman 6). His relative newness to the English language at least partly accounts for his unconventional idiom; in his words, “I’m not programmed to be uncomfortable with certain usages because they’re old or pretentious, or folksy. The whole language is my domain” (Hemon in Knight 96). Hemon’s English usage may push at the borders of convention, but it benefits from the wider reception that more pervasive, or “important,” to use Ugrešić’s designation, languages provide. Like Ugrešić, Hemon claims to benefit from this access to literary milieus more vibrant than the smaller one in which he began his writing career. Whereas the Sarajevo scene consists of “a few writers, many of them with drinking problems, and a few struggling publishers who also happen to own struggling bookstores,” New York is “the Hollywood of the publishing industry” and Chicago offers “solidarity and friendship” (Hemon qtd in Kaiser).

Living and publishing outside of the milieus where they began as writers exposes Hemon and Ugrešić to wider markets and to the possibility of a more diverse readership. It also means that their work is labeled as representing the minor Balkan literature (e.g., Bosnian, Croatian, ex-Yugoslav) associated with their ethnic and historical identity. Ugrešić resists being labeled a Croatian writer. As an author who was forced out of Croatia because of explicitly gendered attacks on her writing, refusing a national or ethnic identity allows her to follow Virginia Woolf in stating, “As a woman I have no

country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world” (qtd in *Nobody's* 296). As a representative of a region made famous by conflict, she is nonetheless labeled “Croatian” even if she rejects and her countrymen disallow her this identity (Ugrešić in Boym 78). As Ugrešić notes, the global marketplace is “happiest in dealing in ‘identities’ and rewards writers who provide something ‘made in the Balkans’” (*Nobody's* 168). Hemon is similarly labeled a Bosnian writer and the reviews of his works and the questions asked by interviewers inevitably turn to how his work expresses the Bosnian migrant’s experience of trauma and displacement.¹²⁷ Whereas Ugrešić opposes being labeled “Croatian,” Hemon owns the impact that his shifting Bosnian identity has on his writing and claims that the “multiplication of personalities” that his forced immigration caused benefits his craft as a writer (97).

Ugrešić takes a more resolute stance against claiming an ethnic national identity than does Hemon, who categorizes himself as Bosnian and participates in its political sphere through his column in the Bosnian periodical *BH Dani* (Hemon in Knight 86). By doing so, Ugrešić resists the chauvinist nationalism and historical revisionism that she associates with the identity label “Croatian.” The project of building a distinct Croatian identity while erasing the residue of Yugoslav culture intensified in the years leading up

¹²⁷ See, for example, Lania Knight’s “A Conversation with Aleksandar Hemon: Interview” and Jenifer Berman’s “Alexander Hemon: Interview.” Hemon’s fiction also alludes to the too easy equation between his Bosnian identity and language and the appeal of his writing. His narrator in *Love and Obstacles* describes how he spent a book tour “talking about Bosnia to a mixture of international relations and South Slavic language students, simplifying the incomprehensible. . . I was Bosnian, I looked and conducted myself like a Bosnian, and everyone was content to think that I was in constant, uninterrupted communication with the tormented soul of my homeland” (71). The narrator also attributes his being hired as a magazine salesman to his accent: “My employers thought that my Bosnian accent, clearly manufactured in the nether area of ‘other cultures,’ was quirky, and therefore stimulant to the shopping instinct of suburban Americans” (87).

to and following Croatia's separation from Yugoslavia. The proponents of Croatian national sovereignty challenged the Serb political majority and Serbian president Slobodan Milošević's repressive policies in Kosovo and plans to restructure the federation to increase his power (Lampe 259 *Balkans*), but they did so by advocating a Croat nation purged of its cultural and ethnic complexity. As justification for their political project at the structural level, the militant Croats suppressed the symbols and institutions of communist Yugoslavia and highlighted the symbols and institutions aligned with Croatian identity, whether the white and red checkered flag (also associated with the Nazi puppet Ustaša led Croatian state of 1941-5) or the Catholic church (Lukić and Lynch 178). Ugrešić terms "false memory syndrome" the altered library bookshelves, revised textbooks, destroyed monuments and other excesses of historical revisionism that characterized this period (*Nobody's* 165, 170, 215, 267). She especially criticizes the rehabilitation of the fascist Ustaša regime that this revisionism entailed and argues that by stigmatizing Yugoslavia's communism (renamed totalitarianism by the Croat nationalists), the Croatian leadership also stigmatized the minority who identified as "Yugoslav," rather than as a homogeneous ethnicity (153, 170, 269). She describes the "ten-year ban on the culture of the former Yugoslavia" as an "imposed amnesiac limbo" (170).

Ugrešić addresses the vagaries of history in a region whose past is continually reinvented; furthermore, both she and Hemon respond to the characterization of the Balkans as a museum of Europe's past. As scholars like Maria Todorova and Vesna Goldsworthy have shown, the Balkans were represented in the 18th and 19th centuries by

Western Europeans as a “living museum” of Europe’s folk heritage. Following Johannes Fabian’s formulation in *Time and its Other*, they were temporally distanced from being co-eval with the West by being made the object of ethnographic inquiry. Johann Gottfried von Herder and Abbé Alberto Fortis were at the forefront of 18th-century scholars who presented the Balkans as objects of folkloric study not yet at the level of rational civilization (Todorova 129, Goldsworthy 23). Later, the folk songs that Serbian philologist Vuk Karadžić recorded and published in the early 19th century were greeted with enthusiasm throughout Western Europe, lauded by Goethe and Jakob Grimm and inspiring a trend in poems with an “ethnic look” (Goldsworthy 24, Wolff 325). The claim by the 1920s linguists Milman Parry and Alfred Bates Lord’s that the improvisation formulas of Homeric verse were still being practiced in South Slavic oral performances further characterized the region as unchanged since antiquity.

Todorova argues that representations of Balkan backwardness relegate it temporally to the era of Europe’s folk past (183-4). Such representations characterize the region as developmentally prior to Western Europe’s modernity. This model of social evolutionism, whereby societies develop from primitive social and economic organization to modern civilization, assumes all societies to be at various levels of maturity on the linear path towards the model Western civilization. Such progress narratives account for some of the more paternalistic interactions between “the West and the Rest.” Hemon and Ugrešić critically engage the poetics of museum collections in relation to Southeast European identity in order to express the ambiguity and contradiction of Europe’s past and a western future. By assembling and ordering the

detritus of a Yugoslavian past, their narrators strategically distinguish their museums from those associated with post-Enlightenment ordering impulses and development narratives. They deconstruct the existing ordering categories and show how constructed and filtered by point of view both dominant and alternative orders are.

The poetics of collecting employed in Ugrešić's novel and Hemon's short-story collection follow in a tradition of historical materialism that attends to the past by imagining alternative arrangements for the refuse and remains of modernity's relentless progression. Walter Benjamin and Edward Said have both criticized the implied teleology in linear narrative, whether imaginative or historical, when it serves to support the dominant power structure. In "Theses on the Philosophy of History" and *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin argues that "historicism" presents the past as a linear progression that authorizes the dominance of the capitalist "victors." In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said also argues that the teleological narratives attending imperialism make their conclusions necessary and natural, which translates historiographically into the state of affairs in the present also being necessary and natural. As discussed in earlier chapters, Benjamin develops what he calls a "literary montage," a collection of thought-images based on the refuse of modernity, juxtaposed in a way that stages their contradictions and unexpected intersections (*Arcades* 460 [N1a,8]). The dialectical constellations that result acknowledge both the unassimilated past and the "residuum of imperialism," to use Said's term for the persistence of imperialist modes of thought and action (*Arcades* 462 [N2a,3] and *Culture* 20).

Ugrešić and Hemon both take the process and form of memory production as a key subject in their work. In so doing, they invariably follow their Yugoslav literary predecessor, Danilo Kiš, who took as a central theme in his work the processes of history making and revisionism. His short-story collections *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* and *Encyclopedia of the Dead* are full of scenarios in which memories are suppressed, revised and reinvented. The title story of Kiš's *Encyclopedia of the Dead*, for example, describes a secret record of the lives of all those people not recorded in other encyclopedias. Those omitted from institutional history appear in this volume kept in a locked and guarded archive. Ugrešić addresses the story in an article about how she views herself as an "archive amateur" ("The Elusive" 341). In addition to Kiš, she has been influenced by writers like Konstantin Vaginov, artists like Ilya Kabakov, and texts like the collaborative project to rescue symbols of the Yugoslav everyday, the *Lexicon of Yugoslav Mythology* (*Leksikon Yu Mitologije*). Hemon also lists Kiš as one of his primary influences, along with Bruno Schulz, Franz Kafka and Isaac Babel (Rohter par. 12). He follows Kiš in his focus on history making and the importance of memory; he also follows his stylistic proclivity for the short-story collection and the mock historical narrative. For example, Hemon's first published story in English, "The Life and Work of Alphonse Kauders," is written in the style of archival excerpts about a historical figure. The excerpts are excessive and contradictory, but when the story was aired on radio, some listeners still called in to comment on this compelling historical character they believed to have actually lived (Hemon in Knight 99).

Hemon and Ugrešić's work is in dialogue with a strain in Yugoslav literature that imaginatively and critically assesses modes of memory retrieval and history production.¹²⁸ Unlike the encyclopedia portrayed in Kiš's "The Encyclopedia of the Dead," which includes even the most minute detail of each person's life to form an exhaustive archive, Hemon and Ugrešić's narrators carefully select and organize the contents of their collections. Their projects intersect in their emphasis on the amateur curator who collects and organizes material artifacts and descriptive vignettes. Their collections are neither linear nor unified however, which reflects attention to a fragmented and unruly world. As Hemon claims, "I think art should be disorderly, a little confusing, with loose ends and odd corners sticking out. It should not provide an alternative to a disorderly world, but drag you into it, help you understand it and live in it" (qtd in Berman par. 25). This disorderly world is best represented through fragments juxtaposed in a way Benjamin would be proud of: "Fragments are always the order of the day, it is only a question of organizing them, if they need to be organized at all. My preferred way of organizing them is to have them juxtaposed, feeding off or contradicting one another, reveling in discontinuities, producing noise. . ." (qtd in Berman par. 7). Through the unconventional and fragmented arrangements in Hemon and Ugrešić's work, they emphasize cultural memory as a way to complicate and question the revisionist histories and progress narratives. Revisionist histories erase Yugoslavia from its successor states' memory and progress narratives make the successor states' assimilation into Western Europe the necessary resolution to their conflicted past.

¹²⁸ In addition to Danilo Kiš, Slobodan Selenić, Milorad Pavić and Serbian-American poet Charles Simić also play with narrative and forms of personal and institutional memory.

Ugrešić and Hemon's work acknowledges that everyday life produces culture that does not always fit seamlessly with more established structures of power and meaning.

Aleksandar Hemon's *Love and Obstacles*

Hemon's *Love and Obstacles* (2009) is a collection of stand-alone stories, linked by recurring themes, phrases, characters and images.¹²⁹ His fourth book in English opens with a young Bosnian narrator who journeys into Africa's "heart of darkness." In the stories that follow, the same narrator comes of age in the Yugoslav republic of Bosnia and immigrates to the US. The collection concludes with a story in which the narrator finds that his life is best represented through an otherwise random collection of objects and memories to which he attaches significance. The personal collection of objects and memories that the narrator finds to be the most apt form for representing his experience is illegible to a representative of US literary prestige, however. Within the story, an acclaimed American author misreads the tensions and contradictions of the narrator's life represented in the collection and instead categorizes the Bosnian narrator, his family, and his city as flat object of violence.

Love and Obstacles collects locations (Kinshasa, Sarajevo, Chicago) and instances of "darkness" (neocolonialism, the war in Bosnia, exploitation of US immigrants) into a series of tales that the book's back matter describes as being "as cohesive and impressive as any novel." Like most novels, this collection provides

¹²⁹ Six of the eight stories in *Love & Obstacles* appeared independently in *The New Yorker* before being revised for the collection. The stories are therefore framed by the cosmopolitan and satirical style of *The New Yorker* before they are gathered together into the works of Hemon and woven into narrative through the attention to collections and museums.

continuity and character development; the narrator appears to be the same in each story, and he changes between the stories that portray him as a youth and those that portray him as an adult refugee. His circumstances alter enough between the first and the final story that he goes from imagining himself to be a privileged writer representing African darkness to recognizing that he is the “dark” subject of another privileged writer’s representation. The collection is more of a short-story cycle than a novel, however. The collection is billed as “stories” on its cover, the stories can and for many of them have stood alone as independent works, and they are connected more by the themes of displacement and the search for identity than by continuity of plot or narrative.

Collections of linked stories are a common form in the US and in Yugoslav/Bosnia.¹³⁰

Scholarship has variously named this form the “composite novel,” the “short-story sequence” and the “short-story cycle.” Like the anthology film genre discussed in Chapter Three, the composite novel can communicate multiplicity and community by aggregating stories into a coherent whole (Dunn and Morris 2). *Love and Obstacles* has a coherent effect because its narrator remains constant. It might be better understood as short-story sequence or cycle, however, which Forrest Ingram defines as “a book of short stories so linked to each other by their author that the reader’s successive experience on various levels of the pattern of the whole significantly modifies his experience of each of its component parts” (19). The short-story cycle is an especially helpful heuristic because

¹³⁰ Danilo Kiš’s *The Encyclopedia of the author Dead* and *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* are notable examples. Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić and acclaimed Miroslav Krleža both published several short-story collections. Bosnian literary critic Enver Kazaz has argued that the short story is Bosnia’s most foundational and developed genre (5). Works from the US, such as Sherwood Anderson’s *Winesburg, Ohio*, Louise Erdrich’s *Love Medicine*, and Sandra Cisneros’s *The House on Mango Street*, also exemplify the form.

the narrator of *Love and Obstacles* finds his circumstances completely overturned between the first and final stories. The reversal he experiences in the final story modifies the effect of his writerly efforts in the first, and vice versa.

That the stories are linked and provide the continuity and approximate length expected of a novel may work in *Love and Obstacles*' favor on the literary marketplace. Hemon claims that short-story writing is conventionally thought of as a writer's initial "in" to the industry, which then enables him or her to publish the novels required for acclaim and financial success:

Short stories do not sell, this is something people in the publishing industry in New York widely believe and they don't like writers to write short story books even after successful novels. My first book was a book of short stories and I refused to promise that my second book would be a novel. But I think the short story has been revived by these so-called immigrant writers; they do not know what the common lore is so they don't care about it (par. 34 Hemon in Reyn).

Hemon did return to the short-story collection after his successful novel, however; his first, second and fourth publications are all short-story collections. Other immigrant and minority writers, such as Edwidge Danticat, Jhumpa Lahiri, Junot Diaz and Sherman Alexie, have also returned to the short-story collection form even after publishing one or more novels. Hemon furthermore continues to show his support for the short-story genre in his role as editor of the annual *Best European Short Stories* anthology.

In a global literary market that privileges the novel genre and the English language, Hemon's novelesque collection written in English and published in the United

States is better mobilized for visibility and recognition than many less coherent short-story collections and most fiction from Bosnia, however. Hemon's proximity to US literary culture and ability to publish in English do not align him uncritically with US interests, however. As seen in his fiction but also in his English- and Bosnian-language op-ed columns, he actively critiques policies and cultural tendencies in both the US and Bosnia. Similarly, the narrator of *Love and Obstacles* functions neither as a native informant about the exotic lost home nor as a proponent of a romantic rags-to-riches American success. While the text bids for belonging within World Literature as designated by centers of discursive and economic power through its use of American English and its references to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, it also draws on this literary intertext rich with connotation to critique the hierarchy and limiting categories of "world" literary production and distribution. The use of English and references to the literary canon aligns *Love and Obstacles* with the demands of the literary market, but its short-story form and attention to marginal, forgotten and dismissed places and people simultaneously critique the hierarchies of such global systems. As a whole, the collection playfully displays the tension between the narrator's desire for world literary acclaim and his recognition that Bosnian spaces and people lose some of their complexity when represented to this world.

The map of world literature

In the opening story of *Love and Obstacles*, "Stairway to Heaven," the narrator travels to central Africa in the 1980s just as his literary hero Joseph Conrad had in the 1890s. He hopes to be inspired by his surroundings to write as Conrad had been. The Led

Zeppelin song that the story's title alludes to provides more insight into the narrator's position than any words he manages to write, however. Lyrics, such as "sometimes words have two meanings" and "There's a feeling I get when I look to the West, /And my spirit is crying for leaving," allude to the problems the narrator himself faces in the story when he comes into contact with the English language and US bias of his new American friend, Spinelli. The 16-year-old narrator, whose Yugoslav diplomat father is stationed in Kinshasa, Zaire, spends time with the US operative Spinelli, whose name might reference the European federalist Altiero Spinelli, considered to be the European Union's founding father.

The narrator initially assumes himself to belong to the cosmopolitan elite within the hierarchy of neocolonial Kinshasa. He rubs shoulders with the British, French, U.S. and Russian diplomats as they hobnob in hotels and at garden parties and treat the African residents in dismissive and sometimes abusive ways. The narrator's father describes Kinshasa as "a hive of neocolonial pleasures" where a young man's career can be made (7). The American Spinelli, a Kurtzian character with an unremarkable pedigree but an oversize ability to tell stories about his world travels, delivers anthropological lectures about Kinshasa's residents. Zaire in the 1980s is represented as a place where neo-imperial profiteering, stereotyping and violence persist. It is a male-dominated setting that privileges whiteness. The Croatian Natalie's "pallor was luminous in the dark room" (13) and she "was from out of this world, a displaced angel" (14); the "immaculately white" Belgian supermarket is represented as being the "pallid heart of Brussels" (26). In contrast to this immaculate whiteness, Kinshasa is represented as being

a “human jungle,” its leaders vegetation (“Big Vegetables”), and its markets full of creatures “that seemed to have been slapped together in hell” (16).

The story’s setting in non-aligned Zaire and the narrator’s belief in his significance as a global player allude to the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia’s status in as a leader of the Non-aligned Movement. Yugoslavia and, more specifically, Josef Broz Tito, played a key role in organizing the Non-aligned Movement. He hosted India’s Shri Jawaharlal Nehru and Egypt’s (UAR) Gamal Abdel Nasser at Brioni island for the initial planning, raised support for it throughout West Africa during a 1961 good-will tour, and hosted the first summit of the Non-aligned Movement in Belgrade in September of 1961 (Hehn 629; Griffith 121).¹³¹ Yugoslavia’s other foreign policies, such as strategic and military support for the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) in Algeria, advice to the Burmese during their revolution, and support for African nationalism and pan-Africanism made of them, as Paul Hehn claims, “the only European nation with *bona fide* acceptance among the newly emergent states as a ‘non-aligned’ power” (Griffith 122; Hehn 620, 627, 634).

Yugoslavia’s involvement with the movement was motivated in part by shared ideology and shared experiences of being small and less powerful nations in a world

¹³¹ Yugoslavia had already developed foreign relation ties with many of the leaders of anticolonial and independence movements prior to these activities for the Non-aligned movement. Tito and Nasser’s relationship was particularly strong: the two leaders and their dignitaries met often, Nasser’s ‘Arab socialism’ was modeled on Yugoslavia’s, the countries shared trade credit agreements and artist troupe, student and professor exchanges, and Nasser’s United Arab Republic (Egypt+Syria) used Yugoslav industrial goods, scientists, technicians, and facilities (Griffith 121, 125). A chair for the study of Serbo-Croatian was even established in Cairo (Hehn 626). Tito also backed Nasser during the international military standoff over his nationalization of the (Suez Canal) (Hehn 639). Relations with Indian leaders were also strong: Nehru claimed Yugoslavia to be its source expertise on questions of Europe, and itself that source for Yugoslavia on Asia (Hehn 628), and Indian communists cited Yugoslav Foreign Minister Kardelj as powerful intellectual influence and model for their positions (Hehn 620).

increasingly defined by a bi-polar bloc structure, but it also had more pressing political and economic investment in the movement. Yugoslavia's 1948 break with Stalin and expulsion from Cominterm made it especially vulnerable to attack from the Soviet Union and, consequently, overly dependent on financial and military aid from the United States. Third-world alliance enabled Yugoslavia to gain support for its claims to national sovereignty by advocating an egalitarian "socialist commonwealth" of nations with national peculiarities instead of a bloc system dominated by the Soviet Union, which Tito characterized as being as imperialist as the West (Griffith 127, 138, Hehn 625).¹³² Furthermore, these alliances would also open up trade markets as alternatives to economic dependence on either the European Economic Community (EEC) or the Soviet Council of Mutual Economic Aid (CMEA) (Griffith 130).

Although *Love and Obstacle's* "Stairway to Heaven" is set in Zaire, one of Yugoslavia's Non-aligned partners, the story does not idealize the third-world movement. Instead, it debunks the myth that it played out as egalitarian global solidarity. The international relations it represents are interest-driven rather than a fulfillment of the humanist ideal. Furthermore, the Africans are foreign and strange to the narrator and his family. Although his Yugoslav parents do not treat the Africans as poorly as the French and US characters do, neither do they treat them as equals in a solidarity of international workers. Furthermore, the narrator aligns with the US character and his father with the Russian character in the story, in an expression of alliance that nonetheless shows both Yugoslav characters to submissively follow the lead of their more powerful ally.

¹³² Tito also differed from other Europeans by making fascism of Axis powers parallel with colonial and neocolonial subjugation, rather than Nazis being exceptional.

The narrator of *Love and Obstacles* borrows freely from Conrad for his literary endeavors, whose style he emulates as he tries to narrate what he envisions to be his own entry into the “heart of darkness.” The first story in the collection opens with a direct reference to *Heart of Darkness*: “It was a perfect African night, straight out of Conrad: ... the darkness outside was spacious and uncarvable... The most troubling was the ceaseless roll of drums: the sonorous, ponderous thudding hovering around me. Whether it meant war, peace, or prayer, I could not tell” (1). In addition to this and other references to the fat and slim women knitting black wool and the “haze” (25, 30), the narrator also tries his hand at Conrad’s ominous and verbose prose. He describes “the hallway of hell: the cone of smoke rising to the light above the blackjack table; the hysterical flashing of the two slot machines in the corner...” (12). References to *Heart of Darkness* appear throughout the collection in an intertextual move that incorporates both the novella’s critique of imperial authority and its simultaneous representation of the incomprehensibility for outsiders of the symbols and speech of the Africans.

The narrator’s admiration for Conrad, another Eastern European immigrant who went on to become a highly acclaimed English writer, includes the desire to attain similar international literary exposure. Through his experiences as a budding writer in Kinshasa, however, the narrator discovers that centers of culture exist just as centers of power do, and he discovers that he is at its margins. Cold-war inspired expressions of power among the diplomats seeking to influence Zaire keep the narrator from spending time with Spinelli. His bid for literary recognition similarly comes up against what Franco Moretti calls a literary core-periphery system; dismissed by the representatives of the US and

Russia, the budding writer learns that his position as a Bosnian carries little weight with the heavier geopolitical players and, therefore, that his work is of little interest. Bosnia is presented as being a “blank canvas of our socialist provincialism” (7), analogous to Conrad’s Congo as once an undeveloped blank spot on the map. In a satirical commentary on the narrator’s overblown literary and political ambitions, the title of his other intertext, a Bosnian children’s book called *Dwarf from a Forgotten Country*,¹³³ becomes a more apt representation of his location relative to literary centers of production and distribution than does Conrad’s novella.

The narrator might have achieved literary recognition by assimilating to the conventions of the world literary market. He could have erased all trace of Bosnian specificity from his work as the poet Dedo does, for example. In “The Conductor,” the now 24-year-old narrator hangs around a café in Sarajevo called the “Dom Pisaca” (Writer’s Club) with the “anthology veterans” from the Bosnian Writers’ Association, those “imprisoned in the lofty dominion of poetry” (62). Poets like Dedo, whom the narrator envies, have achieved literary success as demonstrated by their having been anthologized. Dedo’s poetry has been translated by a world traveling scholar of Slavic Literature, adding to his status as a locally anthologized poet with that of being an internationally circulating and studied one.¹³⁴ Dedo is characterized as having abandoned “primitive” Bosnian poetry in favor of a “modern” style recognizable to literary centers.

¹³³ A translation of the title to Ahmet Hromadžić’s *Patuljak iz Zaboravljene Zemlje* (1963).

¹³⁴ Dedo may reflect Hemon, an anthologized writer who circulates in English and employs technique of postmodern fiction like *mise-en-abyme*, more than the narrator does in this story. Hemon’s preference for short stories nonetheless reflects the importance of the genre in Bosnia (Kazaz).

Instead of the oral poetry studied by scholars like Milman and Parry, his poems are mystical and reference Beethoven and Islamic practice (67).

The narrator appeals to literary centers through reference to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* as world literature more broadly recognizable than the "primitive" Bosnian. The intertext allows him to acknowledge and keep in tension both the neocolonial subjectivity he imagines himself to inhabit in the opening Kinshasa story and his more minor subjectivity when he recognizes Bosnia to be politically marginal (forgotten) and his immigrant self to be a dwarf in the US literary scene. In *Love and Obstacles* as a whole, the narrator's desire to achieve international literary recognition is in tension with his desire to represent life through piecemeal and sometimes illegible collections of material artifacts and remembered sensations that he finds most apt for representing small and fragmented literatures. The friction between the two desires plays out in his attempts to join the ranks of English literature while simultaneously representing an accented perspective and attending to history's losers. The refugees and immigrants that he encounters do not blend seamlessly into the language and conduct of more dominant languages and traditions. Instead, they communicate in an accented manner that differentiates their perspective from the norm. Furthermore, they do not follow teleological paths to success and fulfillment but are instead represented through collections that do not continuously fit together into a legible whole. The narrator insists on a collection aesthetic in the face of a cultural value system that privileges novels over story collections and authors from centers of power over "dwarves from forgotten countries."

Accented English

The characters in *Love and Obstacles* stand out for their unconventional use of English, which betrays their position at the margins of the language but also puts pressure on its standards and hierarchies. The narrator's irregular use of language, which includes descriptions like a "mouthy and squeally" voice and "carmine" lips and phrases like "I waited for everything to make sense until it couldn't" (*Love* 27, 185, 3), may or may not be what Ugrešić calls the "Bad English" (BE) (Ugrešić in Boym 79) fast becoming the global *lingua franca*. Bad English may simply be a convenient trade language, or it may have more political stakes like the syncretic "rotten English" that Nigerian writer-activist Ken Saro-Wiwa argued enabled his work to supersede the linguistic oppression of dominant languages like Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba in Nigeria (156). Either way, this unconventional English makes evident how linguistic and experiential difference can alter more dominant forms and structures, in something akin to minor writing. What Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari call "minor literature," based on Kafka's "small literatures," refers less to the literature of minorities than to the possibility for "revolution" within established literatures (*Toward* 18). Minor literature is a new way of using a major language, which Deleuze and Guattari characterize as a dominant language cut off from the masses. Minor writing disorganizes the artificiality of the major language's forms and established literature. It produces a "deterritorialization of language" by emphasizing the intensives and tensors at its limits (e.g., Franz Kafka in German) (22). Minor writing foreignizes the dominant language, to bring in a term from

translation theory; as such, it breaks rules and conventions within language that communicate established order and hierarchy.

The foreignizing of language need not only occur across languages, as in the Bosnianization of English in *Love and Obstacles*. As Mikhail Bahktin argues, every language is already a heteroglot blend of many ideological, social and professional positions, orientations in time, and tendencies. Writers appropriate ways of speaking associated with these positions and blend them together, sometimes inflecting them with “accent” by altering the conventional usage (*Dialogic* 291, 293). Hemon’s narrator comes into English usage by mimicking the conventions of speech he hears, whether in the “chewing-gum” accent he uses when he pretends to speak American English as a child or in the “mindless repetition of prefabricated phrases” he practices as a door-to-door magazine salesman in Chicago (89). Many of the English phrases that the narrator learns reinforce the hierarchy of English as a global language and the US as a global power, however. For example, after spending several pages listening to Spinelli claim US geopolitical hegemony, such as hashish is “why God gave *us* Afghanistan” and the US embassy is “where I defend freedom so I can pursue happiness” (19, emphasis added), the narrator refers disparagingly to the language that his father speaks with the Russian Anton as “Slavic gibberish” (28).

Although he mimics uses of English associated with US power, the narrator’s foreignness to the language also accounts for his curiosity about and misuse of its idiom. He acknowledges his discomfort with English, as in his admission that “I do not like reading in front of an audience, because I am conscious of my accent” (78), but he also

experiments with it in a way that foreignizes its conventions. For example, the narrator, who listens to Spinelli play the bridge to Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven," reports every other usage of the word "bridge" that he encounters. In a narration that either demonstrates Spinelli's misuse or the narrator's misapprehension of common English sayings, he quotes Spinelli as saying "It's all bridge under the water" and "We'll burn that bridge when we get to it" (25, 32). The narrator later describes a picture of "two children crossing a bridge over troubled water" in a recontextualized mimicking of lyrics from the Simon & Garfunkel song (137). These phrases make strange the many commonplace and hardened usages of the word "bridge" and, consequently, demonstrate how learned such figurative usage can be. They foreignize rote usage through their mangling by the foreigner who has not assimilated their conventional meaning.

Similarly to how the English narration undergoes a change when accented by the narrator's immigrant sensibilities, the personal meaning of private collections undergoes a change when opened up for interpretation to a wider public. Disrupting the standard order and hierarchy of language at the level of syntax and diction can disrupt the power relations assumed in these hierarchies. Hemon also disrupts the hierarchies within literary production at the formal level, through a return to the short-story collection instead of continuing the industry standard of producing novels. Such a move underlines a commitment to the piecemeal and fragmented that is substantiated by the emphasis on collecting thematic to the stories. If the minor writer can make strange the hierarchies built into English by disrupting them, so too can the collector make strange the hierarchies of the world by proposing alternative taxonomies, both of which occur in this

short-story collection. One of the themes that reappears with increasing frequency in *Love and Obstacles* is that of the amateur museum. Collecting, whether of objects, poems, or images, occurs throughout the stories. Starting with the collection of objects in the neocolonial Spinelli's room in the opening story and ending with the collection in the narrator's family's Sarajevo apartment in the final story, *Love and Obstacles* puts on display the objects that characters pull together to represent their worlds. Objects in disuse gain new life in these collections, just as out-of-use English words and turns of phrase are revived in the narrator's accented English.

Collection, museum, and montage as modes of storytelling

Each story in *Love and Obstacles* is set in a scene composed of objects to which the characters belong and through which they can be understood. In the opening story "Stairway to Heaven," the narrator describes the objects in Spinelli's apartment: "a pile of formerly glossy *National Geographics*, on top of which was Natalie's camera; an overflowing ashtray and a bottle of J&B; ebony sculptures of stolid elephants and twiggy warriors, one of them draped in [Spinelli's] T-shirt" (23). The objects suggest the influx of imported commodities and the mapping and documenting project of the colonial and tourist industries. A less glamorous mixture of memorabilia makes up the setting for the story "Szmura's Room," which inventories the contents of Szmura's Chicago apartment, including the new Bosnian refugee Bogdan that it houses. Every space in Szmura's apartment except for Bogdan's room displays an assortment of personal artifacts. On the mantelpiece are a bullet casing from Smurza's father's time in Vietnam and a bottle of Grolsch beer carried to Chicago from Florida, in the kitchen are a mug inscribed

МИКОЈА and two shelves of alphabetically ordered canned soups, and in Smurza's bedroom are a copy of *Chicken Soup for the Baseball Fan's Soul* and a confirmation from an escort service in South Beach. In contrast, Bogdan's room, which displays only a suitcase in the corner and blanket on the floor, stands out for its emptiness. Bogdan adds to his few belongings by keeping the aggressive notes written in verse for him by Szmura (e.g., "Your socks are all over / How many fucking feet do you have? / You are not alone here, buddy / Not alone"), a collection the narrator imagines being discovered in the future ruins of Chicago and interpreted to be "the soul of a perished civilization" (100). Bogdan also finds solace in the dusty Museum of Ukrainian Culture and History, with its "cracked bread trough; an eagle-shaped medal coated with psoriatic rust; a letter whose cursive was melting into bluish waves" (105). Each roommate is characterized by the material objects he can organize his identity through; the Bosnian refugee is most characterized by lack and decay.

In the collection's final short story, "The Noble Truth of Suffering," the narrator addresses such lack through an assortment of objects he believes round out the Bosnian elements of his character. The narrator's family apartment in post-war Sarajevo becomes the repository for the material artifacts of their past. There, the souvenirs from Africa and the remains of their life in Sarajevo before the war come together to make it "the museum of our lives" (203). On a visit to Sarajevo during the US intervention in Iraq, the narrator meets the famous Vietnam War novelist Dick Macalister and hosts him at his parents' apartment for lunch. The narrator believes this "museum" will reveal to Macalister Bosnia's backwardness. He was "mortified" at how Macalister would read their

unsophisticated lunch rituals, “small, crowded existence,” and “the loss that flickered in everything we did or didn’t do” (200-3). The objects in the apartment tell a more complicated story about the layers of geopolitical influence and the personal stories that inflect them, however. The narrator mentally inventories the artifacts arranged throughout the apartment, such as a malachite ashtray full of paperclips, a lace tablecloth with “prewar coffee stains,” and “all these familiar things that had survived the war and displacement” (200). The objects are likely handmade, the result of artisan handiwork, and they have been used as part of everyday living rather than being set apart as artwork or relic. The narrator transforms them from everyday objects into a museum exhibit when he interprets them as being of the same kind, however, all reflecting his and his family’s stories: the handmade ashtray from Central Africa sits next to the Southeast European tablecloth stained with Turkish coffee. Rather than being the commodities of globalization defined only by their exchange value, these are objects collected for their personal resonance and united as of the same kind based on personal interests and affinities. The family museum becomes suffused with memory and emotion in the narrator’s reading of it, and comes to stand for the accumulation of experiences that he recounted in the previous stories. The sensations the apartment produces and the artifacts it contains—the carved ivory tusk, the distinct smell of the hallway, and the view from the window of the ruins of a playground, for example—are references to his safari trip in “Stairway to Heaven,” his failed romance in the hotel corridor in “Everything,” and his playground antics in “American Commando.” The amateur museum of his life is thus also a museum of the objects and sensations recounted in the short-story collection.

The meaning that the narrator finds accumulated in the family apartment-museum is interpreted very differently by Macalister, however. The short-story collection closes with the narrator's realization that Macalister had not understood the personal and revealing reflection of himself on display for the visitor. Instead, his collection of personal objects was illegible to the US writer. When Macalister renders the encounter in his newest book, he reproduces only a sense of loss, translating the memory filled room into an empty scene able to produce only grief. Sarajevo, of which the novelist could only say that it reminded him of Beirut, is translated into the empty landscape of rural Wisconsin in wintertime and the narrator's parents become empty and flat, with "nothing inside them, *nothing except grief*" for their soldier son, based on the narrator, who is represented as having committed war crimes and been killed while stationed in Iraq (210). In addition to the apartment being emptied of its artifacts, Sarajevo is also emptied. It does not serve as the kind of setting the narrator imagines for it, with its "minarets lighting up simultaneously at sunset on a Ramadan day" or the "morning clatter of wooden shutters in Baščaršija" (186). Rather than being a place with distinct history and material presence, it is instead the same type of ravaged place as Vietnam or Beirut or Baghdad that produces broken characters. It is scrubbed clean of difference, rendered as barren as Wisconsin in wintertime's "nothing but immaculate whiteness" (208). The assorted collection of objects is illegible to the Western reader Macalister.

In contrast to how Macalister reads the family apartment, the apartment on display for readers of the short-story collection as a whole is a carefully curated composition. The back-stories for this otherwise disjointed assortment of objects have

been provided by each of the other stories in *Love and Obstacles*, making available the narrator's interpretation to extra-diegetic readers. Each of the objects and sensations that make up the scene accumulate to produce a complex and layered history from the fragments. *Love and Obstacles'* form as a compilation of short-stories overlaps with the form of the collection of artifacts in a museum, curated for repetition and layering but also conducive to multiple readings. The prior stories make meaningful the memories and sensations inventoried in the final story. The various artifacts and rituals had been sorted into the appropriate life tale and thus labeled as representing the narrator's adventure tale, his sexual coming-of-age tale, his literary coming-of-age tale, and so on. The short-story collection form reflects the order the narrator has given his life; this order produces an inconclusive personal museum that may be illegible to the outside observer but can also be a resource for opposing more institutional or visible forms of knowledge.¹³⁵

Dick Macalister closely resembles Tim O'Brien, an acclaimed US writer from the Midwest whose works include the collection of linked stories *The Things They Carried*. Like *Love and Obstacles*, the title story of *The Things They Carried* emphasizes material objects that symbolize memory and feeling. Furthermore, both draw on the *Heart of Darkness* intertext. O'Brien's stories work to universalize the experiences of those associated with the Vietnam war to "the whole of humanity" and "any war (O'Brien *Missouri Review* 98, Myers 153). In addition to O'Brien claiming this universalization to be his intent, the collection also covers a wide range of experiences through multiple

¹³⁵ See Ann Cvetkovich's *An Archive of Feelings* for more on the oppositional potential of ephemera: "In the absence of institutionalized documentation or in opposition to official histories, memory becomes a valuable historical resource and ephemeral and personal collections of objects stand alongside the documents of the dominant culture in order to offer alternative modes of knowledge" (8).

settings, characters, and themes to make the work representative of a more universal human experience (O’Gorman 295). The final story in Hemon’s short-story sequence challenges the “whole of humanity” effect, however, by addressing the impoverishment of specificity that equating a Bosnian war refugee with a US war criminal in Iraq produces. The collection of linked stories in *Love and Obstacles* disrupts a universalizing tendency. It does so by demonstrating how illegible the narrator’s personal museum is without each of the stories that contextualizes it. It challenges the universalizing and representative effects to which the short-story cycle can be put.

As a series of tales with a series of object compositions, *Love and Obstacles* functions as a montage of impressions that culminate in the narrator’s personal collection in the final story even though they do not fit together into a unified and continuous whole. In the short-story collection, the significance of the personal collection of objects, categorized and arranged according to taxonomies specific to the details of the narrator’s setting and experiences, is too particular to be universally legible. Without the story collection’s ordering and labeling functions, the objects do not communicate the nuanced significance that they receive when filtered through the narrator. They do not fit into easily universalized categories; the stories overlap and the objects suggest connections rather than verifying them. Furthermore, the opaque surface of these personal collections does not offer up the stories automatically. The collections nonetheless speak to the specificities of located experiences and sensibilities that become available to those attentive to and open to the objects’ back-stories. Although conducive to

misunderstanding, the inventory of material artifacts enables otherwise overlooked affective milieus to be apprehended.

Dubravka Ugrešić's *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*

Hemon's *Love and Obstacles* represents collections of personal objects as metaphors for Bosnian and immigrant identity. Similarly, Dubravka Ugrešić's *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender* (1998) (published in Dutch as *Museum van Onvoorwaardelijke Overgave* in 1997 and in Serbian and Croatian as *Muzej Bezuvjetne Predaje* in 2001) explores the collections that result from amateur curatorial practices as metaphors for belonging after Yugoslavia. Composed of lists of descriptions and literary images, *Museum* represents the museum as a metaphorical space where ex-Yugoslav and ex-Communist memory is gathered. Ugrešić adapts the form of the museum catalogue into a novel that attends to the material and human debris left in the wake of progress and at the outskirts of Europe. Descriptive vignettes about this debris appear in a discontinuous montage in some chapters and as series of stories in others. Rather than presenting Yugoslav and other Eastern European refugees as a common front, *Museum* describes the details of everyday life without drawing explicit connections and with a splash of irony to keep nostalgic recovery at bay. Keeping in tension desire for coherence and distrust of totality, the novel emphasizes the cracks in post-Yugoslav and post-Cold War "modern" Europe. It brings into relief alternative temporalities and orders of belonging.

The Museum of Unconditional Surrender is a first-person novel structured more by pattern than plot. Four chapters consisting entirely of catalogues of descriptive vignettes drawn from the narrator's diegetic present alternate with three chapters of narrative that the narrator constructs from memories of her Yugoslav past. *Museum* follows in the historical materialist style of Walter Benjamin's literary montage of "thought-images": the dialectical images found in language, when thought comes to a standstill, "a caesura in the movement of thought" [N2a,3]; [N10a,3]. Benjamin claims that in dialectical montage, the debris of history can be re-ordered to alter normative temporalities, hierarchies, taxonomies. By reordering objects according to a logic that differs from the dominant one, Benjamin's collector envisions an alternative world. In *Museum*, the narrator also quotes the Russian formalist Viktor Shklovsky, who claimed "I have no desire to be witty. I have no desire to construct a plot. I am going to write about things and thoughts. To compile quotations" (9). In *Museum*, the rags and refuse of folk, Yugoslav and socialist pasts are collected and arranged alongside representations of Europe's underbelly and of the forms of belonging that the refugees living there try to create.

The kind of epigrammatic "thought-images" used by Benjamin, and to a different effect by his colleague Theodor Adorno in *Minima Moralia*, are alluded to in *Museum* by the narrator's friend Mihajlo P. when he calls "verbal photographs" the "cold, melancholy, objective images" of everyday life in the former Yugoslavia that he describes in a letter (229). The narrator of *Museum* similarly provides cold, melancholy and objective descriptions of life in Berlin throughout the catalogue chapters in the novel.

“Snapshots” of everyday life are collected and exhibited for the reader; descriptions of refugees, artists and exiles are laid out alongside descriptions of collectors of refuse, museums in disuse, and discarded family albums sold at flea markets. The vignettes are numbered and loosely organized into the following chapters, which remain in German in the English translation of the novel: “*Ich bin müde*” (I am tired), “*Guten Tag*” (Good day/goodbye), “*Was ist Kunst?*” (What is art?), and “*Wo bin ich?*” (Where am I?).

Although some thematic threads emerge between the vignettes in each particular chapter—“*Wo bin ich?*,” for example, includes many more descriptions of museums and Yugoslav refugees than do the other chapters—other themes and motifs appear that do not “fit” the respective chapter’s order, and still others repeat across the chapters.

Variouly described as a “framework novel,” “museum-novel,” “postmodern narrative,” “writerly text” and example of “literature as mnemonic art” (Bahun, Popescu, Vervaeet), *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender* is dialectical in form and historical materialist in content. As a montage of thought-images, it requires readers to actively participate in making meaning from its pieces.

Sequences of short stories from the narrator’s past break up the more epigrammatic sections in the novel. The first of these, “Family Museum,” includes short pieces in narrative essay, journal entry and episodic form that focus on how autobiographies are constructed in photo albums, a diary, and a primer. The stories in “Archive: Six Stories with the Discreet Motif of a Departing Angel” allude to Benjamin’s “angel of history,” which I will address shortly. The final story section returns to this motif; “Group Photograph” uses an overexposed blank photograph as the jumping-off

point for describing a magical evening between the narrator, her group of literary friends in then-Yugoslavia, and a clumsy but prophetic angel named Alfred. The short-story collection chapters imaginatively render motifs and themes from the catalogue vignettes; for example, a vignette about the narrator interpreting a stranger's photo album at the Berlin flea market highlights the story in "Family Museum" about the narrator's mother's efforts to organize from a pile of photographs an album to represent her life.

Unlike Hemon's stories, the three narrative chapters that interrupt the catalogue chapters in *Museum* do not serve to explain the collections of vignettes in the catalogue chapters. They overlap thematically with them, but do provide the final interpretive word on what the vignettes mean. Whereas the stories in *Love and Obstacles* provide narratives out of which to make sense of the collection of objects that the post-Yugoslav Bosnian character identifies with, the catalogue images and the short stories in *Museum* are instead mounted into a discontinuous montage that troubles normative national and temporal unities. Like the vignettes, the stories are also arranged as collections that sometimes overlap and sometimes contradict each other. The images and stories are conducive to being reordered and elements can be synthesized, but they do not ultimately align into a coherent whole.

Through the recurring motif of angels, *Museum* draws on Benjamin's critique in "Theses on the Philosophy of History" of homogeneous and progressive models of time. In "Theses," debris piles up behind the "angel of history," inspired by Klee's "Angelus Novus" print, even as it is relentlessly propelled forward by the forces of progress ("Theses"). This catastrophic progress is one of the objects of Benjamin's critique of

“historicism,” the teleological method of approaching the past that assumes a linear progression of causal events that culminate in the necessary present. Benjamin sees alternative temporalities emerging from the “arrest” of time rather than the “flow,” when “thinking suddenly stops in a configuration pregnant with tensions” (255).

Like Benjamin, Ugrešić challenges determining order and linear time through the montage of thought-images in *Museum*. In this novel and in her oeuvre in general, Ugrešić critiques two models of history with destructive impact on the daily lives of those she represents: the historical revisionism of the Yugoslav successor states’ ethnic-nationalist leaders and the “progress” towards becoming European that ex-Yugoslavs and others outside of Western Europe face. As Ugrešić discusses elsewhere, most famously in her essay “The Confiscations of Memory,” historical revisionism was a key tactic for justifying the legitimacy of the successor states’ sovereignty claims. She particularly emphasizes the process in Croatia of erasing cultural traces of Croatia’s Serb minority and Yugoslav past during the formation of the sovereign Croatian nation, which she terms “a time of erasing one memory and constructing a new one” (225). In *Museum*, this confiscation of memory plays out as the narrator’s mother hides the traces of her husband’s Yugoslav military (partisan) past and in a narrative about the narrator’s first primer and the destruction of the Yugoslav cultural symbols she associates with it (77). “Europeanization” has also been an important process after 1989 in the former Yugoslav and Soviet states, and Ugrešić addresses its elusive promise for immigrants and refugees in *Museum* and elsewhere. In contrast to the grand narratives of History and Modernity, the desire for coherence expressed by *Museum*’s narrator and in the many collecting

projects that are the novel's subject is tempered by a distrust of totality. The ordering impulse underlies their projects, but the collectors instead choose small-scale and affective modes for engaging with the historical present.

Collectors

Alfred the angel of oblivion plays a central role as a collector of quotes in the story "Group Photograph." He creates a bewitching amalgamation of quotations and references from classical, religious and contemporary texts, a "jumbled rosary of words without beginning or end" (185) that temporarily hypnotizes his listeners.¹³⁶ The vignettes in the catalogue section "*Ich bin müde*" suggest that this desire to create order may be rooted in the "seductive and terrifying" possibility that the exile's path was fated; the exile thus "begins to decipher the signs, crosses and knots" for "a secret harmony, a round logic of symbols" (20, 9) to make metaphysical sense out of his or her tale. The narrator opens *Museum* by exploring the impulse to create order and teleology out of otherwise disparate pieces. After describing the contents of the deceased Berlin zoo walrus Roland's stomach, which include a pink cigarette lighter, a child's plastic water pistol, and a padlock, among other objects, the narrator states:

The visitor stands in front of the unusual display, more enchanted than horrified, as before archaeological exhibits. The visitor knows that their museum display has been determined by chance (Roland's whimsical appetite) but still cannot resist the poetic thought that with time the objects have acquired some subtler,

¹³⁶ The rosary image implies a critique of the militant Catholicism tied to Croatia's militant ethnic-nationalists. It also alludes to Benjamin's critique of history as the "beads of a rosary" instead of the "constellation" or "monad" he prefers ("Theses" 263).

secret connections. Caught up in this thought, the visitor then tries to establish semantic coordinates, to reconstruct the historical context (it occurs to him, for instance, that Roland died one week after the Berlin Wall was erected), and so on and so forth” (xi)

The visitor is described as being seduced by the desire for coherence. The narrator goes on to instruct the reader to approach the novel in a way similar to how the zoo visitor reads the contents of Roland’s stomach because the “connections will establish themselves of their own accord” (xi). While some of the novel’s critics take these instructions at face value (Bahun, etc), I find the narrator to be too committed to paradox and contrast to accept this promise of coherence as the final word. On the other hand, while I agree with Marija Cetinić, who also questions the narrator’s instructions, that “the structure of desire” of visitors wanting to reorder a collection “on our own terms” is part of what can make archival projects violent, I also do not believe that the novel forecloses the productive potential of this impulse to create order (79). The narrative privileges a play within chaos through paradox, repetition, and irreconcilable fragments that do not fall into place on their own. Pulling together the debris of a shattered world is a serious activity, but it is one that can also enable the amateur curator to approach the world with fewer constraints, thus enabling a more playful and ironic sense of identity.

The dialectic of contradictory and irresolvable vignettes can better represent those who have experienced first-hand the vagaries of “History” and “Nation.” For example, the narrator visits the museum dedicated to the writer Odön von Horváth and describes in one vignette the major events in his life by narrating the height he was when each event

occurred. The vignette concludes by stating, “Horváth’s biography measured in centimeters and geographical points is confirmed by museum photographs” (5). The next vignette describes how the war criminal Ratko Mladić, who was shelling Sarajevo, decided to call an acquaintance in the city below to give him five minutes to collect his albums before his house would be shelled. The vignette comments that Mladić “‘generously’ bestowed on his acquaintance the right to remembrance” (5). The next vignette states, “‘Refugees are divided into two categories: those who have photographs and those who have none,’ said a Bosnian, a refugee” (5). Whether having photographs is better than having none remains in question in this quote, based on the cold documentary role they play in the Horváth vignette and the value they are given in the logic of the war criminal in the Mladić vignette. Together, the vignettes draw out the power of photographs as memory objects, but they do so in an ironic and contradictory way that does not resolve the value of those photographs.

The potentially mystifying and unresolved product of the ordering impulse is described as art in vignette 61: “‘*Was ist Kunst?*’ I ask a colleague. // ‘Art is an endeavour to defend the wholeness of the world, the secret connection between all things . . . Only true art can assume a secret connection between the nail on my wife’s little finger and the earthquake in Kobe,’ says my colleague” (161). Striving for a secret and mystical order may be a hopeful rejection of chaos; it may also be the creative mode that enables alternative future to be imagined by the exiles, refugees, and labor workers that seek the European good life in Berlin. When Monica Popescu praises Ugrešić for an ethically engaged work, she points to precisely those elements of tension that Benjamin

argues enable a reader to apprehend the tyranny of progressive time: “the liberating character of [*Museum*]’s form of remembrance emerges from its caesuras, the impossibility of fitting all the pieces together and therefore of arresting the meaning of the past” (Popescu 346).

In an essay on archives that Ugrešić wrote more than a decade after *Museum*, she highlights the “amateur archivist” who can bypass the professional archivist and the established archive to construct meaning from the world (Elusive 345). In *Museum*, the narrator encounters numerous such amateur archivists, collectors who pull together objects and thoughts. Kira from Kiev collects semi-precious stones and “as though apologizing for something . . . smiles the pale smile of a convalescent” as she admits ““Threading, I like threading things”” (10). Lyova the minimalist Russian writer presents the narrator with his book made up of a hundred file cards (102). Ex-Yugoslav Miloš B. has a sack with over a thousand matchboxes upon which he has sketched miniature drawings. The narrator tells him, “Rilke once said that the story of a shattered life can only be told in bits and pieces...” (107). She interprets these collections to be alternative forms of storytelling, ones that playfully construct order from fragments when a more linear narrative is unimaginable. However, she keeps this desire for coherence in tension with requisite irony; in her narrative about her mother’s efforts to create order out of piles of photographs by establish chronology and hierarchy and strategically omitting what is better forgotten, the narrator claims, “Compiling an album and autobiography are activities guided by the hand of the invisible angel of nostalgia. With its heavy, mournful wing, the angel of nostalgia brushes aside the demons of irony” (29). In the context of

this insistence on keeping irony at play, it is notable that the narrator's favorite file card from Lyova's "book" is the one with the sentence "Once I saw such an enormous caterpillar, that I still cannot forget it" (102) written on it.

The museum race

The amateur collectors works to reorder the world, which the narrator treats with some suspicion, some admiration, and ultimately follows in her own project of thought-image and vignette arrangement. *Museum* keeps the desire for coherence in tension with a belief in the importance of destabilizing coherence through irony. Its narrator arranges descriptions of everyday thoughts, images and objects into a collection form that gives special priority to the lost, forgotten and abandoned. She makes use of such detritus in her own project, and also describes others with similar goals. For example, she describes various exhibits that her artist friend Richard builds from objects retrieved at the Berlin flea market. In one such vignette, Richard describes the basis for such projects, "Richard found forty-four abandoned chairs in the streets of Berlin and showed them at his exhibition. / 'They were so tired. I wanted everyone to recognize that they aren't chairs but former chairs. Remembering is actually an act of love,' says Richard" (164). For the narrator, remembering as an act of love involves recovering the debris of "Yugoslavia" and Eastern Europe in Berlin and rearranging them. When the detritus of history, those objects, thoughts and people that no longer fit within the current economic and political order, are given alternative uses in collections, museums and flea markets, it puts into question the dominant orders that had designated them obsolete.

Time's relentless push leaves behind it all kinds of unincorporated debris; people displaced by war, political changes and economic marginality figure throughout Ugrešić's catalogue of vignettes. Rather than being lost to state or capital imposed amnesia, the remains of Yugoslavia reappear in *Museum's* disjunctive montage. The novel's closing chapter, *Wo bin ich?* (Where am I?), attends most closely to this "museum race." The narrator designates the "Turks, Poles, Russians, Gypsies, former American soldiers, ex-Yugoslavs" who sell at the Berlin flea markets to be the ethnically coded museum race in the "museum-city" of Berlin (221-2).¹³⁷ Like Richard, the narrator returns regularly to the Berlin flea market, which she calls "the rubbish heap of time" (229). There, she finds discarded photo albums, broken watches and obsolete military insignia. More importantly, she also finds evidence of the unincorporated human "wreckage" of history, the political and economic refugees who gather there. Richard portrays the Berlin flea markets as "the most intoxicating and most terrible image of an open digestive tract that I have yet seen" (166); the narrator appreciates it precisely because it fails to digest and expel its contents. She compares it instead to "the slit stomach of Roland the walrus who swallowed too many indigestible objects" (229). The

¹³⁷ Ugrešić continued to write about national "detritus" in her collection of essays *Nobody's Home*, where the non-Western European figure in Western Europe appears in essays like "A Requiem for the Yugoslav Guest Worker," "A Monument to the Polish Plumber" and "All Foreigners Beep." These breach the boundaries of an idealized Western European and inhabit its infrastructural and economic underbelly. The essays focus on people at the interstices of cosmopolitan spaces and on how their personal memories often challenge official histories. In *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*, Fatima El-Tayeb includes Eastern and Southern Europe in the category of the "racialized minorities" living in Western Europe (xiv). El-Tayeb distinguishes between the more inclusive racialization and "ethnicization of labor" categories and the "visible minorities" and "Europeans of color" that she focuses her analysis on which limits racial difference to people from Africa, Asia and the Middle East (xv). The "museum race" category that Ugrešić uses in *Museum* is closer to the more inclusive "racialized minorities" category, however. The narrator of *Museum* demonstrates the ways that "white" minorities are still ethnicized via their accents, clothing, gestures, and the cultural memory they display in an accumulation of minute difference.

objects ingested by Roland lost their use-value as commodities when he swallowed them, and they also failed to be useful as digestible sustenance; as such, they could not be incorporated into sustaining the walrus's life. They are nonetheless allowed within the alternative logic of the museum exhibit to Roland's "whimsical appetite." This exhibit thus works as a metaphor for *Museum*, a "museum-novel" as Sanja Bahun coined it (66). Instead of circulating within the logic of neoliberal European progress, the objects and people described in the novel—the indigestible rags and refuse of commodity-culture—are not processed and eliminated. Instead, they are ordered, catalogued, and thus persist as resources to be used in creating new stories.

When the "museum race" walks through the streets of Berlin, they revive the ghosts of lost public spheres and embody the possibility of alternative political and economic orders. They create moments of haunting, in the sense laid forth by Avery Gordon in *Ghostly Matters*, "when things are not in their assigned places, when the cracks and rigging are exposed, when the people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving, when disturbed feelings cannot be put away, when something else, something different from before, seems like it must be done" (xi). For example, one vignette describes an elderly Bosnian refugee who "pretends to sell" her crochet works at the flea market as an excuse to meet and talk with the other ex-Yugoslavs who gather there. She is arrested and fined for selling without a permit (225). One of her survival strategies had been to participate in the public space of the flea-market. She should have been invisible, should not have disrupted the status quo by being present without being productive or documented. But she appeared, exposing the cracks

and rigging, and her survival strategy was disturbing enough to the status quo to be disciplined. Another vignette describes the actual Museum of Unconditional Surrender, a relic of the Cold War that is in disuse and will soon be closed down. The museum basement's café is described as a place where Yugoslav refugees gather to drink Turkish coffee. In the underbelly of this space, the narrator's "countrymen," "black-haired, drained, with dark, sunken faces," are the newest exhibit of an outdated political system that bring into relief an absence of institutional or national space for them (224). In both of these cases, the "invisible" museum races who haunt the interstices of Berlin made their presence felt publically, and thus also exposed the cracks and rigging in Berlin's performance of European modernity.

The Museum of Unconditional Surrender closes, but the narrator's "countrymen," remains of the obsolete Yugoslavia, are nonetheless collected into the museum-novel's final chapter. The novel thus collects and exhibits the forgotten "museum race" in an insistence on the importance of their stories and memories. As the narrator's friend Zoran, also an ex-Yugoslav, repeats, "All of us here are museum exhibits" (221). During a visit to the Deutsches Historisches Museum, the narrator and her friends Mira and Zoran see a replica of a West German kitchen from the 1940s. Mira notes that she had the same kitchen "at home," which sparks the following conversation:

"'We'll never have a museum like this,' says Zoran.

'How could we when the country has disappeared,' says Mira.

'That's why we're all walking museum pieces . . .' says Zoran.

‘But if the country has disappeared, then so has collective memory. If the objects that surrounded us have disappeared, then so has memory of the everyday life that we lived. And besides, memory of the former country is tacitly forbidden. And when the ban is one day lifted, everyone will forget . . . There’ll be nothing left to remember,’ I say.

‘Then everyone will remember something that never existed . . .’ says Mira.

‘I remember everything,’ says Zoran” (233-4).

The characters continue by providing an inventory of what they remember, demonstrating that for now at least, memory of a failed political and social space persists through them, its scattered remains. Although their past is not memorialized in a way equivalent to the German History Museum, and although the public spheres of the Yugoslav successor states that they fled emphasize any history but the Yugoslav one, their memories find space in the disjunctive montage of visual photographs and vignettes collected in *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*. It participates in the project of “minor literature” by incorporating an inevitably collective dimension even while dissolving the idea of fixed identity (Bogue 105, 109).

Within experiences of fragmentation—whether caused by the fragmenting of a political system (Yugoslavia, the Cold War), the experience of exile, or of a life in which angels do not provide guidance—collecting and ordering pieces can be a way of imagining ways to belong in and make sense of a messy and contradiction filled world. The vignettes composing *Museum* as a montage of the post-Yugoslav “other Europe” within Western Europe’s interstices makes intelligible, or readable, a Yugoslav critique

of European modernity. Ugrešić argues that the “Yugoslavs” were the minority most effectively cleansed from international memory by the wars of Yugoslav dissolution, even though more people identified as Yugoslav than as Slovene, for example (*Nobody’s* 153). As a disappeared people, they and the other exiles and migrant laborers who haunt *Museum’s* Berlin setting are gathered together into an exhibition of “museum races.” Rather than remaining the debris piles up behind relentless progress toward modernity, the exhibit of museum races can challenge the homogenizing and forward-looking bent of progress missions through the display of lost futures they represent, and through the curatorial impulse that suggests they will not stop looking for other possible futures. As Ugrešić claims in her essay on Ostalgia (nostalgia for communist East Germany), “The business of remembering sometimes resembles a resistance movement, and those who do the remembering become like guerilla warriors” (*Nobody’s* 23).

Ugrešić’s *Museum* and Hemon’s *Love and Obstacles* advance the amateur curatorial mode as a survival strategy for the Europeanizing ex-Yugoslav subject. Characters who construct messy and fragmented representations of their worlds trouble the fixed taxonomies and paths to development used to define them. These representations of the everyday lives of ex-Yugoslavs living in Western Europe and the US tap into what Raymond Williams calls the affective consciousness that registers unease between the fixed and what emerges from the contingencies and irresolution of life-as-transition (“Structures” 132). Amidst the wreckage of history, the erasure of memories, and the abandonment of locales, a poetics of collecting the fragments can represent the feelings

and sensations of an everyday life that is in perpetual flux, and of a future that accounts for that contingency.

Conclusion

When I was in Serbia earlier this year, a series of events was being held to commemorate the 1,700-year anniversary of Constantine's Edict of Milan, which established tolerance to Christianity in the Roman Empire. The events, which took place in the Serbian town of Niš to publicize the fact that Constantine came from what is now Serbia, included concerts, plays and operas, as well as a liturgy of the superiors of the Orthodox churches. This last event shifted the tone from commemorative to assertive of the Serbian Orthodox Christian roots upon which religiously defined Serb ethnicity is imagined. Several months later in Bosnia, I witnessed a similar assertion of identity based on historical events. A series of architectural renovations was being planned in Sarajevo to commemorate next year's centennial of the Austro-Hungarian archduke's assassination; the commemoration conveys nostalgia for central European belonging and simultaneously condemns the Serb ethnicity of Gavrilo Princip, interpreted to be more "terrorist" than "freedom fighter" in this tribute to the Habsburg Empire. Furthermore, the pro-Habsburg commemoration ignores the Bosnian Muslims who also belonged to the anti-Habsburg movement before WWI. These state sponsored commemorations exemplify how national identity is interposed, but I would venture that a careful reading of the events of even such official expressions of national history could draw out contradictions between their themes and styles. In a location with a recent history of dramatic and repeated fragmentation, even history making projects that aim to seal together the fragments will most often still reveal other memories and other dreams.

When I look back on the process through which this project emerged and took shape, I recognize that working with texts from a dynamic geopolitical context means addressing an ever transforming frame of reference. I began my research with a set of theoretical questions inspired by study of cultural memory, postcolonial and comparative literature theories, but these would not easily “fit” a setting accented by multiple histories of imperial subjecthood and with ever changing politics of remembrance. Of course. To my surprise, I found productive some of the questions in world-literature studies—a field I had otherwise dismissed as too universalizing, too homogenizing. For small states on the margins of Europe and largely ignored in literary studies in the US, questions about how works come to circulate more widely, how they come to be translated, and how they are then read become crucial modes for inquiring into the dynamics of cultural circulation.

As I grappled with the limits of my theoretical training, I began to develop a methodology for thinking with the materials available to me: collections of works, anthologies, and film programs. I recognized that I would need to develop a reading method appropriate to the geopolitical region but also to the predominance of cinematic texts and collections of short/excerpted texts. In keeping with my commitment to addressing an ever evolving context, I addressed these texts with an eye to cultural currents rather than to finding hidden masterworks. The cases that I present are not meant to be read as newly discovered classics ready to squeeze their way into a canon of timeless masterpieces. The work that the texts do is instead firmly planted in their historical and geopolitical moment. I strategically focused on several cases in order to

analyze the *processes* by which works are produced, circulate, and are gathered together under the unifying headlines of film festival programs, literary anthologies, and personal archives. For example, the region building processes at work in the Sarajevo Film Festival's focus on Southeast European films that I analyze in the first chapter of this dissertation also shape the "Europe out of Europe" program for non-EU European films at FEST in Belgrade, the Regional Program at the Belgrade's Student City Cultural Center's Alternative Video/Film Festival, and the entire program at its Balkanima festival for animated films. I did not analyze these other festivals in this project, but each of them would demonstrate in different ways how the processes of production, circulation and anthologization are shaped by political and economic contingencies that delimit the public role each included film can play. For countries with little political and economic sway, such trans-regional projects furthermore enable a sizeable enough body of work to be amassed and thus become visible.

That many of these are film collections should not be surprising. A cultural form key to artistic innovations in the 20th century, film played an especially important role in the former Yugoslavia. On my most recent research trip, I visited several cinema clubs, which Yugoslavia had provided each republic, equipped with filmmaking technologies and funded; filmmakers used these resources to build a rich cinema culture that often critically responded to social and political problems. The socio-political critiques and avant-garde aesthetics of the Yugoslav "Black Wave" became especially influential in the 1960s (DeCuir 407). These cinema clubs shared resources and organized film festivals, such as MAFAF (Alternative, Experimental and Amateur Film Festival, founded in 1965)

and GEF (Genre Experimental Film Festival, founded in 1963) (Bencić). This tradition of artistic collaboration and social commentary continues in festivals like the Sarajevo Film Festival, in its role as an engine for anti-war activism and southeast European region building. At the festival, the fruits of the critical aesthetic practices across the republics and successor states are shared with other filmmakers, and they are received and responded to by the audiences that form around them.

The Sarajevo Film Festival is thus the newest surge in the wave of film and film festival movements in the region. The SFF continues to thrive, even as Western European film festivals founded under less desperate circumstances shrink in response to recent austerity cuts to cultural programming. The resourceful cultural production that thrived during the siege of Sarajevo re-emerges in this context. The SFF ran a full program this year, even after losing 20% of its budget. Film is perhaps the best supported cultural form in the successor states, however, and most so in Bosnia. On the other hand, poetry is produced in an even more guerilla mode. This past July, the custodian of the National Museum of Literature and Performing Arts, who had not been paid in almost a year, unlocked the gate to its charming courtyard, which had been closed for lack of funding for almost a year, for me and fifteen or so others. The Museum's new director, writer Šejla Šehabović (hired without a salary), interviewed Claudio Komartin, who had just translated poems by Bosnian poets Goran Simić and Adisa Bašić into Romanian. I then settled in for a lovely poetry reading next to Ferida Duraković, who had helped to organize the event in her role as administrator for PEN (for which she is also unpaid).

Such resolute insistence on arts production despite a scarcity of support is inspiring. It also sheds light on the significance of collections in a setting unable to support more sustained works and for which there is too weak a market for texts longer than film length to be translated for wider circulation. Collections of work thus result from resourceful editors and programmers responding to limited funding even as they speak to ideas about whose work belongs together and what categories unite those works. One such category, which I will call “European but not EU,” is worth dwelling on for a moment or two for how it challenges the Western European focus of the SFF’s Southeast Europe category. It appears, for example, in the FEST (Belgrade International Film Festival) competition program “Europe out of Europe,” which was established in 2006 to promote “new domestic film in Europe” (2006 program). This category claims European status for the Yugoslav successor states and other non-EU places such as Turkey and Kazakhstan, even while acknowledging their exclusion from the European Union. A similar organizing logic underlies the documentary *Crossborder Experience*.

Crossborder Experience is co-produced by local peace institutes in Slovenia, Croatia and Turkey and sponsored by the European commission. The film consists of eight segments respectively for each of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey. Each segment consists of a series of interviews with people in that country about their thoughts on and feelings toward EU accession. The responses were varied: some invested unqualified hope in the idea, others were unreservedly pessimistic, and yet others articulated a combination of hope and reservations. Overall, most respondents saw their

country's integration into the EU as inevitable. The segments were arranged alphabetically and therefore ended with Turkey, which meant that the film concluded with skepticism about the EU, particularly in the critiques voiced of Western European racism and prejudices against Islam. As a collection, *Crossborder Experience* articulates a unity similar to that in Serbia's FEST program, "Europe outside of Europe." Although close to a post-Yugoslav collection, the exclusion of Slovenia and inclusion of Albania and Turkey make of this more of a Southern Balkan collection – those countries in Southeast Europe not included in an imaginary that accepts the *mitteleuropa* of Austria, Hungary and Slovenia or the Christian Eastern Balkans of Romania and Bulgaria.

The ongoing developments in the Yugoslav successor states provide a continually expanding range of cases to address, but my work on this region does more than to simply highlight an understudied set of cultural texts. It also demonstrates a significant new direction for the scholarly reception and teaching of works from the Balkans. This project raises questions relevant to research and teaching in English departments, where the need to address texts that do not fit the "British" or "American" designation also comes up against the common delegation of work on literature from non-English locales to the few remaining Comparative Literature departments. The discrete comparisons of works from different locales and different languages upon which Comparative Literature approaches are based remain important, but addressing the works that become Anglophone because of existing hierarchies and that flow in and out of traditionally "English" geographies is also important. My project attends to the texts from "small" nations in regions with relatively little economic and political influence. In such contexts,

English's significance as a global language cannot be underestimated, nor can the widespread use of and proficiency in English be ignored. Such work certainly belongs in an English department, but my proficiency in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian has also confirmed for me that such work requires foreign language proficiency in order to carry out responsibly.

My project also raises questions about the use of anthologies in literature classrooms. Rather than just functioning as a convenient text for the time constraints of the semester and students' limited book buying resources, anthologies are also amenable to a reading practice that emphasizes overlaps and discontinuities between texts. Such a reading practice must be taught, of course, and supplemented with contextualization that attends to the ellipses inevitable to the anthology. Although most specific to the category of "world literature" in this dissertation, anthologies such as *This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* and *Aiiieeeee!: An Anthology of Asian American Writers* and the many film festivals that focus on diasporic or lesbian and gay audiences attest to the important role collections play in minority publics in the US as well. The work in this dissertation on collections in small nations and regions could be expanded in useful ways through comparison to the role of collections in minority communities in the US. On a more speculative note, this project opens up questions about the emerging role of digital curatorship and collections. For example, bookmarking sites such as Tumblr and Pinterest enable users to find and arrange multimedia content into various self-designed categories. From the predictable—"home décor" and "wedding plan"—to the enigmatic—"meander" and "the first river of healing," these categories and the images,

quotes and videos posted within are ripe for analysis into the desires, frustrations, and forms of imagination that show up between the texts and their labels. These and the many institutionally sanctioned digital archiving projects provide a rich terrain for continued tilling of cultural memory practices.

Appendix

Ljepotica i zvijer	Transl in <i>Heart of Darkness</i> Beauty and the Beast	Literal Translation Beauty and beast
<p>Lažljiva ljepotica Zalupila je vratima Konačno Kao Domovina I nestala U Istoriju.</p>	<p>Untruthful Beauty Slammed the door Finally As the Homeland did, Then vanished Into history.</p>	<p>The false beauty Slammed the doors Finally Like the Homeland And vanished Into History.</p>
<p>Lažljiva, dakle, ljepotica I Domovina Imaju zajedničko: Obje za sobom ostavljaju Dječake Koji će umrijeti Zbog njih.</p>	<p>Nonetheless, Beauty, Untruthful one, And the Homeland Have something in common— Both leave behind The boys Who will die For them</p>	<p>The false, thus, beauty And the Homeland Have this in common: Both behind themselves leave Boys Who will die Because of them.</p>
<i>rat 1991.</i>	<i>War, 1991</i>	<i>war 1991</i>

Katino Pismo

U pismu od prije rata

Vratio se mrak iz svemira u našu kuću :
rije više nema. Knjige i pismo
jedno, i druge stvari, sve u gomilu
predvorilo se slihu. No, mislo

nestali mi! Ni rukopisi ne gore, veći,
što znači da bitaču ponovo
to drugo pismo, gdje želiš, gdje žele
slova da dugo stradanje ovo

u dugo dosadno popodne zimsko svedu,
kad ne volim miso, i palim
što sve je tako obično i sve u redu,
što nema zanosna onog da vrati!

prvi dan ljubavi, to ponovo stvaranje svijeta,
to urastanje srca u jablun iznad vode!
No neka samu palnja ora prestane da cvjeta
I neka već jednom ode

svako, kad koji hoće:
u valnu, u vodu, u zrak! A mi? U čiji dmi?
Mi čemo svjetle, gdje Majka u goga rže i voće,
i nas, sirote, na dlanu svom.

Sinic transl in Map of Hope and Heart of D: A War Letter

(About the letter from before the war)

The Universe sent darkness to our humble home,
Which is gone now. The letter, and every single
and dear things: they all burned like Rome,
book,
But it is just an image! Have a look:

We aren't gone! And manuscripts never burn,
they say. It means that I'll read anew
that precious letter: whenever you turn,
whenever only those few syllables

change our agony into an endlessly dull
winter afternoon. In those hours everything's
so simple that I suffer (same old song),
I don't love anyone, and the fear devours

me that passion, which brings back the first day
of love: the re-creation, is finally gone
like the heart grown in a poplar tree! And may
only this flourishing pain stop! May everyone
alone

leave for good, to wherever they want: to
water, air, or fire. And us? What fire-side
awake us in the time to come? Here is our home,
where mother can never tire of planting
roses and fruit, and us, her poor ones, on her palm.

Literal Translation War Letter

About the letter from before the war

The darkness returned from the universe to our home:
our home is no more. Books and the letter
the one, and sentimental objects, all in the humming
irradiated fire are image. But we did not

disappear, us! Neither do manuscripts burn, they say,
which means that I will read again
that dear letter: whenever you, who ever want
the syllables this drawn out suffering

in the long boring winter afternoon to witness,
when I don't love anybody, and I suffer
because everything is so normal and in order,
because there is no fever to bring back

that first day of love, that recreating of the world,
that growth in the heart in the poplar by the water!
But let just this suffering cease to blossom
And let already each go

everyone, anywhere anyone wants to:
to the fire, to the water, to the air! To whose house?
We will be here, where Mother grows roses and fruit,
and us, poor ones, in her palm.

Plisac sagledava domovinu
dok učeriti postmoderist uzazi u
njegov grad
Šurovo i dugo pomnija se sve
i sve se dešava po prvi put:
lice mladića čiji je život čitavu noć
oticao kroz tvoje ruke, kroz rupu
na njegovim ledinama. Lice vojnika
kraj autobuskve štamice, otvorenih očiju,
gdje se zaustavilo pitanje majsko nebo – *izmišljati*
kažem – nije to mirno i daleko lice Istoriје.
I jezice krvi: usred jezera krah
nakošen krvlju kao u jutarnjem *mlaku z drugov* –
izmišljaš, potavljam, prvi put:
olovnu sarajevsku glinu što pada na džekskova
velika stopala u Reebok patikama
na predratnom tabutu od ormanaskih vrata. Ne, tebi
ne treba vjerovati, ti sižeš iz srca
tame što je pukla i pokuljala u dan.
Nepouzdan si svjedok, prisrstan pri tom. Došao
zato je Professor, partiški sasvim : *Mes eryfants*,
počeo je, i prati njegovi potavljali su : *Mes
eryfants, mes eryfants, mes eryfants*, usred
Akademije nauka sijede su glave mislile
samo o njegovoj košulji do vriska bijeloj,
Mes eryfants, ovaj umre Evropu. Potom sve je
u film poređao, u slike, u riječi velike, kao
histoire, Europe, kao *responsabilite* i, naravno,
les Bosniaks. Tako, eto, gleda se u lice Istoriје,
ne kao ti : u srvinim neodgovornim uloncima,
u snajperskom tiču što se zabija u lobanju,
u grobove koje je već pokrila neumorna trava,
u troje dlanove položene preko
Edvarda Muncha, koji je i sam, jednom,
izmislio sve, uzalud
[no dedication]

Transl. in *Heart of Darkness* by Šimić and Matić:
A Writer Perceives His Homeland
While a Learned Postmodernist Enters his Town
Cruelly and for a long time everything
has been repeating and yet everything
happens for the first time: the face of
a young man whose life was flowing away
all night through your fingers, through the hole
in his back. The face of a soldier,
near the bus station, with his eyes wide open:
the mild May sky has settled down there—
you're imagining, I say—it's not
the calm and distant face of history.
And a pool of blood: in the middle, a bread loaf
soaked with blood as if with morning milk.
I repeat, you are imagining for the first time:
heavy Sarajevan clay which falls on a boy's
big feet; in Reebok sneakers, learning on
the too short *tabut* made of a cabinet door.
No, you should not be trusted.
You have arrived from the heart of darkness
Which burst and gushed into the daylight.
You are an unreliable witness,
a biased one besides. So that is
why the Professor came, Parisian
from head to toe: *Mes eryfants*, he started,
and his fingers kept repeating: *Mes
eryfants, mes eryfants, mes eryfants*...
In the Academy of Sciences
wise grey heads could think only about
his screamingly white shirt. *Mes eryfants*,
Europe is dying here. Then he arranged
everything into a movie, images,
Great words like *histoire, Europe*,
responsabilite, and naturally,
les Bosniaks. So this is the way
to look into the face of history,
not like you: in crude irresponsible
fragments, in a sniper shot which stabs the skull,
in graves already covered with tireless grass...
In your palms, lain upon
Edvard Munch, who once
Invented everything, in vain.
Sarajevu, 1993 To B.H. Levy

Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill transl. in *Scar on the Stone*
The Writer Contemplates His Homeland While
a Famous Postmodernist Enters the City
For a long time everything has repeated itself most cruelly
and yet everything is happening for the first time:
the face of a young man whose life all night
has been draining out through your hands, from the hole
in his back. The face of the soldier
by the bus station, with the pleasant May sky
frozen permanently in his open eyes – *you are making it up*.
I declare – this is not the calm and distant face of history
And a little pool of blood; in its middle a hunk of bread
soaked in blood like that now fabled morning *Drugov milk* –
you're making it up, I repeat, for the very first time:
the Sarajevan clay that falls on the big feet of the boy
in his Reebok trainers as they dangle
from a makeshift bier made from a cupboard door. No, you
are not to be trusted, you have entered the heart
of darkness that erupted and gushed forth into daylight.
You are an unreliable witness, and biased at that. That's why
the Professor has arrived, entirely Parisian in mien,
Mes eryfants he started, and his fingers repeat it for him: *Mes
eryfants, mes eryfants, mes eryfants*, in the middle
of the Academy of Science the old greybeards could think
only of his shirt, glaringly and conspicuously white.
Mes eryfants, this is the death of Europe. Then he changes
it all into a film, into frames, into mouthfuls like
histoire, Europe, like *responsabilite* and, of course
les Bosniaks. Look here, that's the right way to look History
in the face, not like you: in the crude irresponsible fragments,
the sniper shot that penetrates deep into the skull,
the graves already covered over by irreflexible grass,
your hands placed across the image of
Edvard Munch, who himself, once upon a time,
also made everything up, with no hope.
[no dedication]

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