

International Conference

“BORDERS IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE: GEOGRAPHY OR IMAGINATION?”

16–18 MAY 2025

PODGORICA

MONTENEGRO

Hotel Podgorica, Svetlane Kane Radević 1



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AGENDA

FRIDAY, 16 May

16:30 – 17:00 Registration

17:00 – 17:30 Opening remarks

Host: **Zvezdana Kovač,**

Team leader - Joint History Project

Predrag Zenović, Chief Negotiator of Montenegro with the European Union

Peter Felten, Ambassador of Federal Republic of Germany to Montenegro

Ditmir Bushati, former Foreign Minister of Albania, Chair of the Friends of JHP

2.0

Aleksandra Tomanić, Executive Director of European Fund for the Balkans

Christina Koulouri, Rector, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences,

Athens, Chair of the Scientific Committee of JHP 2.0

17:30-18:00 Q&A

18:00-19:30

PANEL 1 -Theoretical approach to borders

Chair: Neven Budak, Zagreb



Kornelija Ajlec, Ljubljana: “Occupation Borders as Historical and Theoretical Problem: Legacies from Southeast Europe”

Nenad Stefanov, Berlin: “Authoritarianism and the Societal Production of Borders”

Florian Bieber, Graz: “Bordering Southeastern Europe. European Integration and Border Making in the Balkans”

19:30 – Reception

SATURDAY, 17 May

9.30-11:00

PANEL 2- Borders in SEE: nation-building and border disputes

Chair: Dubravka Stojanović, Belgrade

Hubert Faustmann, Larnaca: “The Multiple Borders of Cyprus: Exploring Identity, History, and Migration in a Divided Landscape”

Hannes Grandits, Berlin: “The Disputed Austro-Hungarian Border: Western Hungary/Burgenland after World War I”

Adnan Prekić, Podgorica: “Politics and the Past: Nationalist Narratives in Political Discourse – The Case of Montenegro and Serbia”

Dragutin Papović, Podgorica: “The Territorial Expansion of Montenegro Since the 18th Century and the Main Challenges in Building Montenegrin Identity”

11.00-12.30

PANEL 3- Internal / transnational borders and multiple identities

Chair: Ditmir Bushati, Tirana

Kriton Kuci, Tirana: “Banal Nationalism and the (In)visibility of Borders: The Case of Albania and Greece”

Kenan Çayir, Istanbul: “Reconfiguring Knowledge and Nationhood: Ideology and Historical Narratives in the ‘Turkish Century Educational Model’”



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Edin Omerčić, Sarajevo: “Metamorphoses of the (Non)existent Border: Bosnia and Herzegovina – Case Study Sarajevo 1995-1996”

12.30-14.00 LUNCH

14:00-15:30

PANEL 4 – History teaching and borders

Chair: Günter Seufert, Berlin

Snježana Koren, Zagreb: “Teaching History in Southeast Europe: Bridging Gaps or Creating Divides?”

Vassiliki Sakka, Athens: “History Education in Greece: How do Borders and Neighbours Fit in Conservative Curricula? Cracking the Canon with Bottom-up Initiatives”

Loizos Loukaidis-Kyriakos Pachoulides, Nicosia: “History Education in Divided Societies: Building Bridges for Reconciliation”

Angelos Palikidis, Thessaloniki: “Teaching History in Contemporary Balkans: A Comparative Analysis Based on the Survey of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe”

15:30-16:00 COFFEE BREAK

16.00-17:30

PANEL 5- Cultural memory and imaginary borders

Chair: Božo Repe, Ljubljana

Ayhan Aktar, Istanbul: “Turkish National Borders: Imaginary and Real”

Srđan Radović, Belgrade: “Digital Amateur Mapmaking in Former Yugoslavia – Make-believe Spaces and Borders”

Branimir Janković, Zagreb: “Drawing National Borders Through Transnational Lives: Memory Wars and the Limits of Historiography”

Alexei Kalionski, Sofia: “Mixobarbaroi as a persistent stereotype in the Balkans”

20:00 DINNER



PARTICIPANTS



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KORNELIJA AJLEC

Kornelija Ajlec is a historian specializing in contemporary history, focusing on refugees, post-war reconstruction, and Yugoslav relations with the US and International Organizations. She currently serves as Chair of the Department of History and leads two projects, the first on Motherhood and Reproductive Politics and the second on Yugoslavia as both the recipient and a donor of strategic and humanitarian aid. Alongside many papers, she has co-published three monographs, including *Dimembered Slovenia*, and is a Fulbright Scholar. She teaches courses in contemporary global history, European integration, and social history.



AYHAN AKTAR

Ayhan Aktar is a Professor of Sociology at Istanbul Bilgi University. He is among the first social scientists to study discrimination, assimilation, and forced migration of minorities during the late Ottoman and early Republican periods in Turkey. His research on the 1942–43 Wealth Tax is based on fieldwork and analysis of British and U.S. diplomatic correspondence. He has published extensively on state–minority relations in modern Turkey. His research interests include Turkish nationalism, ethnic cleansing, discrimination, genocide, and the diplomacy surrounding the compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey.



FLORIAN BIEBER

Florian Bieber is a Professor of Southeast European History and Politics and Director of the Centre for Southeast European Studies at the University of Graz, Austria. He coordinates the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG). He studied Political Science and History in Austria, Hungary and the USA. Between 2019 and 2022, he held the Jean Monnet Chair in the Europeanisation of Southeastern Europe. He is also a Visiting Professor at the College of Europe in Tirana. Recent publications include *Pulverfass Balkan* (Ch. Links 2023), *Debating Nationalism* (Bloomsbury 2020) and *The Rise of Authoritarianism in the Western Balkans* (Palgrave 2020).



NEVEN BUDAK

Neven Budak, member of the Scientific Committee of JHP 2.0, is a retired professor of medieval history from the Universities of Zagreb and Rijeka. He was a recurrent visiting professor at the Central European University and a guest lecturer at a number of universities throughout Europe and in Japan and Canada. He taught mostly Croatian mediaeval history, European urban history and the history of mediaeval identities. He is a member of the advisory board of several European journals and an honorary member of the International Commission for the History of Towns (2014). He is author and editor of fourteen books and over 200 articles, book chapters and reviews.



DITMIR BUSHATI

Ditmir Bushati, chair of the Friends of JHP 2.0 and member of the Scientific Committee, has served as Albania's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs (2013–2019). He was a Member of Parliament (2009–2021), chair of the Parliamentary Committee for European Integration (2011–2013), and led Albania's OSCE delegation (2019–2021). He served as Special Representative for the South Caucasus (2020–2021) and as OSCE Chairperson's Special Envoy (2020). Bushati headed OSCE/ODIHR missions in Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Latvia, Moldova, and Belarus. He also advised Jordan's authorities on political reform as part of a U.S. NDI group (2021–2022) and was a member of the EU–Albania Joint Parliamentary Committee.



IANNIS CARRAS

Iannis Carras is Associate Professor of Balkan and European History at the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki. He previously served as Senior Lecturer at the IES EU Center and taught at Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg and the International Hellenic University in Thessaloniki. He earned his doctorate in 2011 from the Faculty of Political Sciences at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, with a dissertation titled *Trade and Brotherhood: Balkan Merchants in Russia, 1700–1774*. His research focuses on Balkan communities in Ukraine and the Black Sea region, trade networks, and the intersection of religion and the Enlightenment.

KENAN ÇAYIR



Kenan Çayır holds the position of Professor of Sociology at Istanbul Bilgi University, where he also directs the University's Centre for Sociology and Education Studies. Subsequent to earning his doctorate, he pursued research at the Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights Education at Leeds University in the United Kingdom, and at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Germany. His primary scholarly interests encompass human rights and citizenship education, inclusive education, the sociology of discrimination, and intergroup relations.

HANNES GRANDITS



Hannes Grandits is Professor of Southeast European History at Humboldt University in Berlin where he teaches the history of Southeast and Central Europe with special interest in European comparative and global perspectives. He is also in charge of the international study program "Joint Master European History." Among other things, he is the author of the recently published monography *The End of Ottoman Rule in Bosnia* (Routledge 2021) and co-editor of the books *Phantomgrenzen im östlichen Europa* (Wallstein 2015), *Staatlichkeit und Politik in Südosteuropa nach 1800* (De Gruyter / Oldenbourg 2024), and of *The Disputed Austro-Hungarian Border after WWI* (Berghahn 2024).

HUBERT FAUSTMANN



Hubert Faustmann is Professor of History and Political Science at the University of Nicosia, where he has worked since 1999. Additionally, he is the director of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Cyprus office since 2011. He was the editor in chief of the refereed journal *The Cyprus Review* from 2006 until 2016. He specializes on British colonial Cyprus and post-independence Cypriot history and politics including contemporary Cyprus. His research also focuses on Politics in the Eastern Mediterranean with a special emphasis on Hydrocarbon politics as well as the relationship between state and society where he focuses on Clientelism and Political Patronage.

BRANIMIR JANKOVIĆ



Branimir Janković is an associate professor at the Department of History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University in Zagreb, where he obtained a PhD in 2014 with a dissertation about the theoretical and methodological transformations of Croatian historiography in late Yugoslav socialism. His research and teaching interests focus on the history of historiography, historiography and nationalism, comparative history of revolutions, intellectual history, and public history. In 2025, he edited (with Nikola Tomašegović) the volume *Nadilaženje nacionalne paradigme: Od historiografskog nacionalizma do transnacionalnih pristupa* [Transcending the National Paradigm: From Historiographical Nationalism to Transnational Approaches].

ALEXEI KALIONSKI



Alexei Kalionski is an Associate Professor at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Faculty of History. He teaches Ottoman history, and the pre-modern and early modern history of Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia, with a focus on minorities, migrations, and nomadic societies. He received the Gipson Award in 2013 for his research on the Ottoman Balkans. He has authored around 40 publications, including three books, among them *Yürüks in the Ottoman Balkans* (2020) and *Communities, Identities and Migrations in Southeast Europe* (2014). He has been a member of the Joint History Project (JHP) since 1999.

KRITON KUCI



Kriton Kuci holds a PhD in Balkan Studies from the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, with a dissertation on banal nationalism in Albanian news portals. He earned an MA in International and European Studies from the University of Piraeus and a BA in Political Science from the University of Athens. Since 2009, he has lectured in Political Science at the Mediterranean University of Albania. A RECAS fellow and visiting researcher at IFDT Belgrade, he has presented at numerous conferences across Europe. His research focuses on nationalism, political theory, and discourse analysis. He speaks Albanian, Greek, Italian, and English.

CHRISTINA KOULOURI



Christina Koulouri, Chair of the Scientific Committee of JHP 2.0 and member of the Friends of JHP 2.0, is Professor in Modern and Contemporary History and Rector of Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences (Athens, Greece). Chair of the History Education Committee of the CDRSEE and coordinator of the Joint History Project (1999–2016). She studied at the University of Athens (Department of History and Archaeology), the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and Paris I-Panthéon-Sorbonne where she also received her PhD. Senior Research Fellow at Université de Paris I-Panthéon-Sorbonne (2010), Visiting Research Fellow at Princeton University (2017) and at the University of Regensburg (2019). Author of several books and articles on the teaching of history, national identity, historical memory, public history and the history of sports.

ZVEZDANA KOVAČ



Zvezdana Kovač – Team leader and member of Friends of JHP 2.0, has over two decades of experience in leadership roles across the non-profit sector and media in the Western Balkans. She currently serves as Director of Strategy and Outreach at the Centre for Civic Education. From 2020 to 2024, she was Secretary General of the European Movement in Serbia and a member of the Executive Board of the International European Movement. Previously, she was Executive Director of the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in SEE. Before joining CDRSEE in 2010, she held leading positions in regional television journalism.

SNJEŽANA KOREN



Snježana Koren is Head of Chair for History Didactics at the History Department of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia. She holds a PhD in modern and contemporary history. She worked as a history teacher and teacher trainer and was an examiner at the state exams for history teachers. At the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, she teaches courses in history didactics and the 20th century history. Her research interests include the politics of history and history education in socialist Yugoslavia and its successor states, history of historiography and history education, comparative analysis of history textbooks and curricula, etc.

LOIZOS LOUKAIDIS



Loizos Loukaidis holds a BA in Primary Education from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and an MA in Peace Education from the University for Peace. He has extensive experience in the education sector both as a Primary School Teacher and a Peace Education activist, project coordinator and researcher. He is interested in examining the role of History Teaching in divided societies. He is a member of the Bi-communal Technical Committee on Education in the context of the peace negotiations and the Coordinator of the 'Imagine' Project that brings together students and teachers from across the divide in Cyprus. Loizos is the current Director of the AHDR.

KYRIAKOS PACHOULIDES



Dr. Kyriakos Pachoulides is a founding member of the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR), and its current co-president. He is a primary school head teacher, and holds a PhD in Social Psychology. A passionate peace and human rights supporter, he has dedicated his life to the promotion of sustainable peace in Cyprus and the establishment of a culture of cooperation and trust among the two main communities on the island, mainly through his work with the AHDR and the Home for Cooperation. He has also served, for many years, at the Office of the Commissioner for Children's Rights in Cyprus.

DRAGUTIN PAPOVIĆ



Dragutin Papović graduated in 2003 from the Faculty of Philosophy (History and Geography), University of Montenegro. He earned his MA in 2007 from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade and his PhD in 2013 from the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić. Since 2020, he has been an assistant professor in the History Program at the University of Montenegro. He is a member of the History Committee of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts. From 2015 to 2016, he was Director General for Relations with Religious Communities, and from 2016 to 2023, a member of the Montenegrin Parliament.

ANGELOS PALIKIDIS



Angelos Palikidis is Professor of History Didactics at the Democritus University of Thrace, Greece. He is board member of the International Society for History Didactics, managing editor of the International Journal of History Education & Culture, convenor of The Lausanne Project and expert in history education at the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe. Currently he is drafting the "Report on History Teaching at Regional Level" on behalf of the Congress of Local & Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, and he is principal investigator of the research project "From Historiography to Education: Shared Perspectives in Modern Greek and Ottoman History" (HistorEdu).

ADNAN PREKIĆ



Adnan Prekić is a Montenegrin historian and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Montenegro. He specializes in 20th-century history and the general history of Europe from the 15th to 19th centuries. His research focuses on state-religious community relations, cultural heritage, and the historical geography of Montenegro. He has served on the National Commission for UNESCO of Montenegro and is a member of both the History and Education Committees of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts. He is a co-founder of the Center for Geopolitics and editor-in-chief of the Montenegrin Journal for Social Sciences.

EDIN OMERČIĆ



Edin Omerčić, historian, University of Sarajevo, Institute for History. Member of the Association for Modern History Sarajevo (UMHIS). Secretary of the journal "Historia Moderna Bosna&Herzegovina". Wrote two books that discuss the role of intellectuals and the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the nineties of the 20th century (Bosna i Hercegovina u političkoj projekciji intelektualnih krugova 1991–1996., Udruženje za modernu historiju, Sarajevo, 2022.; Brzina mraka, UNSA, Sarajevo, 2024.). He reads, writes and swims at a moderate speed.

SANJA RADOVIĆ



Sanja Radović, JHP 2.0 Content Creator and Project Assistant, is a historian who earned her PhD from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. Her scholarly work centers on the Cold War, diplomatic history, the history of Yugoslavia, and global social phenomena of the 20th century. She has extensive teaching experience across all educational levels, including higher education. She participated in an earlier phase of the Joint History Project (JHP), as well as in numerous other international initiatives. Her current work is particularly concerned with the epistemological and methodological challenges of teaching history in the digital era, with a focus on the integration of technology and innovative pedagogical practices into historical instruction.

SRĐAN RADOVIĆ



Srđan Radović, senior research associate of the Institute of Ethnography of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade. PhD in ethnology and anthropology (Belgrade University 2012), affiliated with the Institute of Ethnography SASA since 2005. Other academic positions: visiting professor at the Riga Stradins University (2015), Belgrade University (2017), and Jagiellonian University Krakow (2025), visiting researcher at the WZB Berlin Social Science Center (2014), and Humboldt University Berlin (2018), associate of the Ethnological Committee of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts, Podgorica (since 2024). Author of three books and over fifty papers.

DUŠAN RELJIĆ



Dušan Reljić (PhD), member of the Scientific Committee of JHP 2.0 and member of Friends of JHP 2.0, is European affairs consultant in Brussels and Berlin. Between 2013 and 2023, Dušan was Head of the Brussels office of Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin. Between 2003 and 2013 Dušan was research associate in the SWP division EU External Relations. Before, he was head of the Media and Democracy Programme at the Dusseldorf-based European Institute for the Media (EIM). Earlier, he was senior editor at Radio Free Europe in Munich, the foreign editor of the Belgrade weekly Vreme and co-founder of Beta Press Agency in Belgrade.



BOŽO REPE

Božo Repe, a member of the Scientific Committee of JHP 2.0, is Professor of Contemporary History at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. His research focuses on contemporary Slovenian, South Slavic, and Central European history, as well as history education in schools. He chaired the Department of History in 1999–2000 and led the research program on Slovenian history and humanities from 2009 to 2022. He currently directs the project The Rapallo Border: A Quarter of a Century of Existence and a Century of Heritage and Memory, exploring its historical and cultural legacy.



VASSILIKI SAKKA

Vassiliki Sakka studied History and Archaeology, M.A. in History Didactics (University of Athens). PhD in History and Adult Education (University of Peloponnese). Worked as a history and language teacher in Secondary Education, as a school consultant and teacher trainer and as a lecturer in Hellenic Open University (Public History). Expert in History Curricula, history textbooks / educational material. Fields of interest: educational research (History Didactics, Public and Oral History, Civic Education, Holocaust Education, History Curricula, teachers' attitudes etc.). Ex-EUROCLIO Association president (2010–2012), co-founder and president of the Association for History Education in Greece (AHEG).



GÜNTER SEUFERT

Günter Seufert, member of the Scientific Committee of JHP 2.0, is a freelance author and publicist based in Berlin. For many years he has dealt with Turkey and its region as well as with its relations with Europe as journalist, academic and research coordinator in Bremen, Lausanne, Istanbul, and Nicosia. In 2010 he joined the German Institute for International Affairs and Security (SWP) in Berlin as a policy analyst and later as the founding director of the Center for Applied Turkey Studies (CATS). Most recent publications with the weekly Der Freitag, Deutsche Welle, and Internationale Politik, Journal of the German Council for Foreign Relations.



NENAD STEFANOV

Nenad Stefanov is a research associate in the DFG project "Belgrade and Zemun as a historical mobility space between two empires, 1739–1878" since January 2024. Previously research coordinator at the Interdisciplinary Center for Transnational Border Studies "Crossing Borders" at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Substitute and visiting professorships at the University of Leipzig and the University of Vienna. Main research interests: Interrelation between mobilities and borders in Southeast Europe. Transfers of ideas, history of entanglement between East and West. Societal history of Serbia and Bulgaria in the 19th and 20th centuries.



DUBRAVKA STOJANOVIĆ

Dubravka Stojanović, member of the Scientific Committee of JHP 2.0, is a historian and professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. Her work focuses on democracy in Serbia and the Balkans during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, interpretations of history in contemporary Serbian textbooks, social history, modernization processes, and the history of women in Serbia. She is the author of several distinguished works, including Serbia and Democracy 1903–1914 and Cobblestone and Asphalt. She has received the French National Order of Merit and the Belgrade Award for Social Sciences. Stojanović has also served as editor of JHP publications.



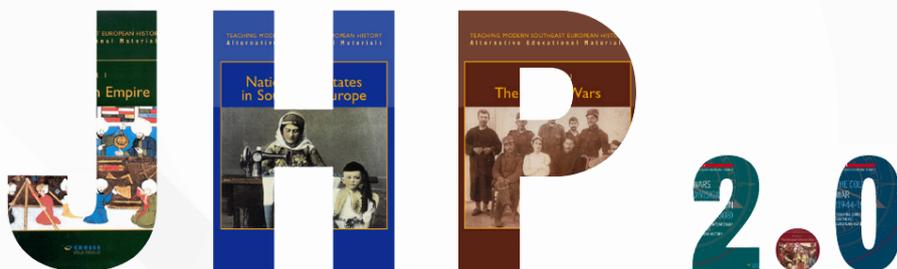
ALEKSANDRA TOMANIĆ

Aleksandra Tomanić, member of Friends of JHP 2.0, has been Executive Director of the European Fund for the Balkans since 2019 and joined the board of the German Southeast Europe Association in 2024. She previously worked with GIZ on the German–Serbian Initiative for Sustainable Growth and Employment. Earlier, she coordinated EU policies and regional initiatives with Serbia's Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit. Her formal professional career began at the European Commission's DG Enlargement in Brussels, focusing on various horizontal policies, civil society and media issues in particular. She relocated to Belgrade in 2013 to support Serbia's EU integration efforts.

NENAD ŠEBEK



Nenad Šebek, member of Friends of JHP 2.0, is international consultant for media and civil society. Previously, Director of the Belgrade office of the Heinrich Böll Foundation and before that, Spokesperson for the Regional Cooperation Council. Served as Executive Director of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe 2002–2014. Prior to that, a journalist for 26 years, 16 of them for the BBC World Service including the posts of Balkans and Moscow Correspondent. Taught journalism, and media & human rights at the postgraduate course in Human rights at Vienna University's Faculty of Law and at the ACT in Thessaloniki.



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