

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Annals of Tourism Research

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/annals

Reclaiming heritage from anti-communist discourse

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Othering
Nationalism
Antifascism
Nostalgia
Former Yugoslavia
Capitalism

ABSTRACT

This article explores how challenging socio-political contexts have influenced the revival of antifascist heritage sites in post-Yugoslavian states. Despite the official politics of promoting national hegemony through adhering to neoliberal norms, these sites promote the values of shared humanity and antifascism. Drawing on long-term ethnographic fieldwork, this article argues that socialism and antifascism have returned via the rediscovery of utopian spatial possibilities that survive in these spaces. Nostalgia thrives through this process, yet not as a nostalgia for the past; rather, it is a nostalgia for a future that haunts through being unfulfilled due to nationalism and turbo-capitalism. Rediscovery of shared humanity and antifascism through tourism activity provides solace from socioeconomic injustices and empowers those hoping for better futures.

Introduction

The representation of the past in the present is burdened by current values and ideologies (Chronis, 2005). Goulding and Domic (2009) argue that there has been very little interest in researching the heritage commodification process occurring within societies that have made cultural, socio-political and economic transitions, such as in the former Yugoslavia after the turmoil of the early nineties. Although the collapse of Yugoslavia has been widely debated, the main difficulty in discussing the post-Yugoslav space (Radeljić, 2013, p.1) is the complexity of the highly contested issues that occupy its current socio-political settings. However, a lack of ability to discuss this context may result in further erosion of the understanding of the region (ibid).

Through the agency of tourism, this research explores the transformation of the legacy of antifascist heritage sites after the break-up of the former Yugoslavia. In the current climate of historical revisionism and right-wing populism, both globally and in the former Yugoslav region (Thorleifsson, 2017) this research aims to reveal the legacy, meaning and (in)significance of antifascist memorial sites in former Yugoslav countries. These sites act as symbols of the Yugoslav legacy and identity presenting an important marker to tourists from the former Yugoslavia and the rest of the world (Horvatinčić, 2018).

Askegaard and Linnet (2011) note that social science research is burdened by the compelling theoretical, methodological and managerial tenets that constrain the conduct of cultural analysis, arguing that the analysis of a culture must be attained by 'the context of the context' (p. 396); i.e. the meaning of the context. Thus, sociocultural conditions must be brought to the research settings and included in the development of new theories. This research is embedded in the context of current socio-political and economic settings, both globally and in the former Yugoslavia. It aims to reflect on these contexts to understand their influence on the promotion and interpretation of the heritage sites that carry with them the legacy of a Yugoslavian antifascist heritage and celebrate building connections across divides, creating a sense of what Jacques Derrida (2000) refers to as shared humanity.

The empirical part of this research reveals the importance of understanding the commodification of nostalgic sentiments for the

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2019.03.013>

Received 27 December 2017; Received in revised form 21 March 2019; Accepted 31 March 2019

Available online 09 May 2019

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Yugoslav past, and their transformation into sentimental tourist action. The phenomenon of nostalgia is theorised through Bakhtin's (1981) concepts of heteroglossia (polyphonic voices and multiple realities), chronotope (time-space unit), and dialogism. Bakhtin refused to view conceptual issues in isolation, arguing that phenomena exist not by themselves, but in their relations, emphasising multiple realities, where actual meaning of words depends on context and relations. Bakhtin intentionally defined chronotope very broadly - but in essence, time and space are treated as inseparable from one another as a unity, where time unfolds into space, and vice versa. Bakhtin argues for dialogism instead of Hegelian dialectics, denying the possibility of transcending differences, and this is the main difference between dialectics and dialogism. In the spirit of Bakhtin's work, this research does not compete with existing theories, but rather - through the data analysis - frames them as being in a dialogue, an approach which guides the interpretation of the empirical part of the research. In the context of my research, past, present and future are conceptualised as being in a continuous dialogue with one another, and time and space are blended together as inseparable.

In this paper I do not perform a Bakhtinian textual analysis common to critical literary studies. However, Bakhtin's concepts are drawn upon as a philosophical grounding for the arguments, following the precedent of other social science and humanities scholars (for instance HadziMuhamedovic, 2018; Thompson, Arnold, & Giesler, 2013). This paper further draws upon Fisher (2014), who elaborates the phenomenon of nostalgia in the context of neoliberalist ideology and consumerism, conceptualising it through Derrida's (1994) hauntology. Giving the example of the Berlin Wall, Derrida (1994) argued that it remains as a spectre, i.e. a visible incorporeal spirit that fell into the space, but it is transcendent, and that transcendence haunts capitalist societies. The spectre of communism fills in the time and territory, and there is consequently an ever-present fear of its ambivalence.

The theoretical concepts mentioned above, although sparingly used in tourism research, are effective in addressing the topic. The empirical research was undertaken during the summers of 2015, 2016 and 2017 at sites located in the former Yugoslav socialist republics, now sovereign states, namely Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H), Croatia and Serbia. The sites include the Museum of the Antifascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) in Jajce (B&H); the Memorial Museum, which commemorates the Raid on Drvar (B&H); and the Brijuni Islands Museum, the former residence of Yugoslav President Tito (Croatia). The fieldwork also featured guided tours through Sarajevo (B&H) and Belgrade (Serbia), accentuating the legacy of the former Yugoslavia (Fig. 1). The observed sites played important historical roles in establishing the ideology of antifascism and its main components of socialism, equality and shared humanity (Carmichael, 2010).

Since the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the mid-1990s, the heritage sites that have celebrated antifascism and shared humanity have essentially been subverted in the official ideological discourse by the dominant political parties (Rivera, 2008). This symbolic act provided space for the consolidation of new national identities, which was accomplished through othering (Ignatieff, 1994). In the post-Yugoslav space (Radeljić, 2013), 'the other' is usually the national minority, i.e. a person who moved from one of the less developed republics in the Yugoslav federation to a more developed republic (for instance, a Bosnian or Serb in Slovenia), or a person of a mixed background (Pistotnik & Brown, 2018). Despite the policies of purifying history, othering and social exclusion as mechanisms for creating national hegemony (Ignatieff, 1994) and consolidating global capitalism (Castellò & Mihelj, 2017), these antifascist heritage sites still promote a legacy of shared humanity by ratifying the attributes of antifascism and equality, once



Fig. 1. Map of Former Yugoslavia.

considered as symbols of the Yugoslav legacy (1945–1990).

Thus, this study adopted a retrospective approach that used ethnographic intent, i.e. conformity to ethnographic principles (Wolcott, 1985). However, during the fieldwork, I was operating under significant emotional baggage (Hermann, 2001), which was addressed through exploring issues of personal and social catharsis (Čaušević & Lynch, 2011). In this process, self-reflection upon the analysis and the interpretation of the fieldwork in the context of the emotional repercussions of growing up in the former Yugoslavia, the researcher becomes a study participant, enabling unique knowledge production and insights to be reflected upon further along as an irreplaceable analytical resource (Ingold, 2017). Therefore, ontologically, this research was positioned using subjectivist reasoning and epistemologically providing a constructivist view of the world.

To address the research aim and ground the research, the paper provides the theoretical foundations of nostalgia and its discourse, followed by brief discourse on cultural heritage. The paper then presents in detail the research settings, methodological approach and fieldwork.

Nostalgia and experience

Boym (2001, p. 13) describes nostalgia as a ‘longing for home that no longer exists or has never existed. Nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also sentiment with one’s own fantasy. Nostalgic love can only survive in a long-distance relationship.’ Through the experience of nostalgic sentiments, our past selves are brought forward to the present, providing a sense of continuity and stability even during unstable times (Belk, 1988). Scholars observe the linkages between nostalgia and experiential consumption (Hamilton & Wagner, 2014), whereby consumers compare the current context with that of the past and find the present is lacking. Nostalgia is promoted as being existentially motivated, which drives the individual to seek some form of refuge from the present and any anxiety they may have about the future by re-imagining past experiences (Leong, Yeh, Hsiao, et al., 2015). This ‘refuge’ can be accessed through purchasing items or visiting places, or both. Belk (1988) notes that these actions of consumption justify our existence, construct our identity and function as our extended self-identities. Chen, Yeh, and Huan (2014) argue that commercialisation of nostalgia for tourism purposes effectively influences tourist intentions, as understanding nostalgia helps explain certain tourism choices. As such, nostalgia motivates the individual to search for a cure for the need to re-visit past experiences, triggering the memories, thoughts and feelings of enjoyment and sorrow (Hsu, Cai, & Wong, 2007). Thus, past does not automatically induce a feeling of nostalgia, but that personal emotions and cultural inheritance do (Lee, 2017).

Literature describes various forms of nostalgia (see Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Boym, 2001; Goulding, 2002). Boym (2001) differentiates ‘restorative nostalgia’, which co-constructs the customs of a homeland that no longer exists, from ‘reflective nostalgia’, which evokes either positive or negative fragments of the past, but rarely both. Nostalgic sentiments can be personal or learned, i.e., linked to collective memory (Motley, Geraldine, & Menzel, 2003) and evoked by both tangible and intangible objects and memories. Learned nostalgia (Baker & Kennedy, 1994) or, as Goulding (2002) calls it, vicarious nostalgia, refers to the collective memory representing a nation or a generation, where the past does not need to be experienced in person but learned. Thus, the substance of nostalgia is not restricted to what an individual has experienced in his or her past, but to the context for which the nostalgia exists.

Learned nostalgia may arise because a person sees a destination as connecting her or him to a different era. Bandyopadhyay, Morais, and Chick (2008) argue that colonial nostalgia may act as a motive for British tourists to visit certain sites in India. Bandyopadhyay (2012) claims that the official tourism campaign of India deliberately features colonialist discourse when targeting British tourists as a manufactured “Raj Revival”. Through learned nostalgia, tourists seek to situate themselves in a familiar version of the past, in which they are subjectively independent based on a preference for what they consider to be “the familiar” over the possibly narratively disruptive and unfamiliar reality of the contemporary culture of the destination (Kerrigan, Shivanandan, & Hede, 2012). Thus, in the case of India, its tourism marketing targets British tourists, by featuring familiar colonial images provoking colonial nostalgia. This is by no means a one-way imperial gesture in the conventional sense, because destinations recognise the commercial power of such tropes and exploit them accordingly (Bryce, 2012).

In contrast, sentiments that individuals experienced themselves are known as personal nostalgia. Baker and Kennedy (1994) describe personal nostalgia, which is motivated by a desire to revisit a past environment that one has experienced personally, fuelled by a wish to fulfil one’s ancestral identity through the consumption of cultural experiences that evoke such an identity. Hence, nostalgia is recognised as a stimulus that urges the consumption of a cultural tourism experience by visiting sites in which nostalgic sentiment is embedded through both external stimuli, such as promotional materials of the tourism site or destination, and internal stimuli, such as the cultural settings of the particular tourism site or destination. However, Volcic (2007) notes that neoliberal ideology, manifested here in consumerism, commodifies the past to be able to sell it as a bitter-sweet nostalgia. In that context, Fisher (2014) notes that by locating nostalgia in the past through the commercialisation and simplification of nostalgic sentiments, the attention is taken away from the deeper meanings of nostalgia, i.e. nostalgia for the future, explored more thoroughly in the section below.

Nostalgia for the future

Camus (1997) defines nostalgia as longing for the ‘wholeness of the future’. Individuals long for identity, meaning, and the roots of existence to understand the purpose of their own human experience and to seek protection from anxieties. Andonovski (2013) particularises Camus’ (1997) take on nostalgia, arguing that nostalgia is situated in the contexts where traditional values embedded in the past have died and yet there is a fear of the future. Berardi (2011) and Fisher (2014) argue that the hope for a better future that was a significant part of popular thinking and culture until the 1970s, has been officially abandoned and permanently lost due to the

effect of turbo-capitalist relations embodied in contemporary society. Fisher specifically uses Derrida's (1994) concept of hauntology to describe a sense in which contemporary culture is preoccupied by the lost hopes of modernity cancelled out by neoliberalism and post-modernity. Fisher (2014) juxtaposes nostalgia for the past, foregrounded in post-modernity, with hauntological culture epitomised by a critical foregrounding of the subliminal disjunctions of social democracy and neoliberal capitalist ideology. In this concept, popular culture is haunted by a future that never existed. However, through art and popular culture, such as tourism, hauntological culture maintains the hope for fulfilment. Thus, there emerges a nostalgia for an unfulfilled wholeness in time and space, where the past is gone and the future is not yet determined (Andonovski, 2013).

Comay (2006) argues that the truth of the past is observed fleetingly as it changes and slips away. This can be illustrated by Walter Benjamin's (1968) concepts of homogeneous empty time and messianic historic time. Homogeneous empty time is specifically associated with capitalist effects on the experiences of time, whereby each moment of time is equivalent and 'empty', calculated by clocks and calendars, days and hours, and as such, 'homogeneous' and equivalent to any other (Gibbs, 2005). In this sense, (homogeneous) time is empty because it lacks special moments that imbue it with meaning. However, Benjamin argues that 'othered', subjugated and excluded groups can access alternative ways of experiencing time, even in capitalist societies. Benjamin frames this 'alternative' approach to accessing time in terms of a messianic moment (in Hamacher, 2005). Albeit illustrating it through failed revolutions and what happens the day after the revolution, Benjamin warns that messianic time always ruptures too late to make any significant changes to homogeneous time and capitalistic societies.

To define the connectedness of space with its temporal trajectories, Bakhtin (1981) uses the concept of the chronotope, derived from time ("chronos" in classic Greek) and space ("topos" in classic Greek). Time and space unfold into one another to form one entity. Thus, time has both chronological and spatial components where these experiences unfold. In this sense, Bakhtin develops Benjamin's trajectory of empty and messianic time, with messianic time positioned as Bakhtin's chronotope. In turn, nostalgia provides rupturing of the 'truths' (Comay, 2006) in these chronotopes and may only be understood in its complexity if time is understood this way.

Bakhtin (1981), argues that the context under which the novel is written and read has primacy over the text within a novel, conceptualising it with the notion of heteroglossia, i.e. *разноречие* (raznorechje) in Russian, literally translated as 'many voices'. According to Haigh (2013), the meaning of what is said in the discourse depends on the relationships among different socio-ideological groups, the context, and the chronotopes in which a message is received, thus making it difficult to predict the implied meaning co-created through this interaction. For Bakhtin, meaning itself can only be contained in the form of dialogue among the context, the site and the actors in the process of constructing the meaning. Thus, the dialogue is the conceptual space where the notion of nostalgia resides. The following section briefly discusses heritage sites as a space where a marketable version of the past is presented to the visitors.

Heritage commodification

Peñaloza (2001) argues that heritage commodification is a result of the negotiation between visitors, narrative and place. The interpretation of heritage sites, although dictated from the top (Goulding & Domic, 2009), is co-created with the help of confirmatory responses (Chronis, 2005) and, in some instances, a lack of critical insight from site visitors. Although there has certainly been a spate of research (for instance, Chronis, 2005; Goulding & Domic, 2009; Rakić & Chambers, 2012; Zhang, L'Espoir Decosta, & McKercher, 2015; Noy, 2008, 2015, 2016) related to the role of the ideological and hegemonic discourse of capitalism and nationalism in the process of heritage commodification, tourism studies particularly discuss the role played by heritage site visitors (for instance, Chronis, 2005, 2012; Rakić & Chambers, 2012) in this process. Noy (2016) focuses on the process of mediation, arguing that heritage museums are 'mediational laboratories' (p. 287), making history accessible and tangible. This is in line with Benjamin's dialectical historicism – the approach of understanding the relationship between the past and the present – where fragments, images and absurdities (Large & Bradshaw, 2016) tell more about the past than the grand history itself. As one of the 'fragments' mediating between past and present, Noy (2015, 2017a, b) explores the visitor book as a symbolic means of participating in the dialectics between visitors, narrative and place. A visitor book operates in a museum's physical space and directly transforms visitors into co-creators of value within the museum discourse in real time. Thus, the visitor book, by itself and through its reflection on the present, actualises what is happening now, and in doing so, museums are the mediators of this process (Noy, 2015). Museums and heritage sites play their role in consolidating the public domain, both thematically (topically) and materially, through technologies of mediation and display (Noy, 2016).

Critical tourism scholars (Bianchi, 2018; Duffy, 2014; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2012) noted that capitalist growth exacerbated by uncontrolled consumption manifests itself in socio-economic injustices towards certain members of society who become othered and excluded through the agency of tourism. Bianchi and Stephenson (2014) argue that the purportedly inclusive values of human rights, equality, freedom and cosmopolitanism are unevenly reproduced globally, where only certain structures are destined to enjoy these at the expense of others that are altered through the agency of tourism. Thus, othering through the agency of tourism can be seen in many instances, from local population water access (Cole, 2012) to the process of the cultural heritage sites' interpretation (Rakić & Chambers, 2012; Zhang et al., 2015). Noy (2017a, b) argues that museums and heritage sites, through visitors' experiences as a participatory element, may arouse the feeling of belonging to a larger group – for instance, a nation. As such, visitor sites 'may contain a discourse of nationalism, allowing hegemonic cultural producers to project their values of national identity and national inclusivity' (Pretes, 2003:139). In this way, heritage sites indeed help to alter the other, and construct Anderson's (1991:6) 'imagined community'.

Research settings

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) ceased to exist on 15 January 1992, when the Member States of what was then the European Community (EC), now the European Union (EU), agreed to grant independence to the former Yugoslavian Republics that, in their view, satisfied certain conditions. These conditions were in regards to democracy, the rule of law and the rights of ethnic and national groups, as well as the inviolability of borders, security and regional stability (Radeljić, 2013). According to the *Yugoslav Constitution (1974)*, the Yugoslav Socialist Republics, i.e., Slovenia, Croatia, B&H, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia were able to hold referenda and proclaim sovereignty as the result of a vote. In the Yugoslav Federation, Kosovo had the status of an autonomous region of the Socialist Republic of Serbia; thus, Kosovo's independence was not as straightforward as that of the Yugoslav Socialist Republics. The Kosovo Declaration of Independence came later, on 17 February 2008. However, the legality of the declaration has been disputed by Serbia. At the moment, 115 countries recognise an independent Kosovo. After the break-up of former Yugoslavia, these new countries engaged in developing a new hegemonic and ideological discourse of nationalism and neoliberal capitalism briefly presented in the following section.

Tourism, capitalism and nationalism in the post-Yugoslav space

In the former Yugoslavia, companies were organised by a form of workers' self-management unique to Yugoslavia, which mixed together market price-setting, the self-management of economic activity by collectives and managers and planning by central and federal authorities (Allcock, 2000). Thus, the economy had elements of both capitalism and planned socialism. In the former Yugoslavia, tourism played an important role in economic development, but also, in the refinement of feelings of national unity, identity and pride, and the reclamation of a symbolically important place in Europe and its tourist market. Further, the picture of workers' and peasants' solidarity and the sense of belonging to the Yugoslav working-class community is exercised through the agency of tourism, in a form of collective holidaying (Patterson, 2010).

Žižek (1989) argues that neoliberal capitalism exists only as an ideology. Governments control the market and capitalism takes different shapes depending on the socioeconomic context under which it operates. In the post-Yugoslav space, the economy is shaped by the practice of 'crony capitalism', in which businesses grow as a return on money accumulated through a nexus between the business class and the political class (Hughes, 1999). Franičević and Bičanić (2007) argue that the economy in the post-Yugoslav space is indeed based on populism, clientilism and cronyism. As such, it negatively affects relationships within society, where the political and business elites hold the power. Crony capitalism is exacerbated by sectarian politics giving rise to social exclusion of the other. Castellò and Mihelj (2017) link this line of thought to global capitalism, arguing that the revival of nationalist hegemony, based on the exclusion of the other, exceeds its political habitus, attaching itself to the logic of global capitalism through the practices of promotion and consumption. As such, there is a nexus between nationalism, cronyism and neoliberal capitalism.

There are only a few studies that link politics, tourism and the commodification of cultural heritage in former Yugoslav republics, which seems surprising given the complexity of the regional settings and the important role tourism plays in that context. Studies on tourism and nationalism in former Yugoslavia primarily focus on the war in the early nineties. To many tourism academics, the countries seemed not to have existed prior to the 1990s conflict (see for instance Naef, 2017); thus, these studies are lacking a consideration of the historical context. Alternatively, Goulding and Domic (2009) provide a more holistic picture of the settings in their analysis of the role of Croatian authorities in 'cleansing' the Yugoslav heritage from tourism promotion, representing the country as mono-cultural. Their study reveals the meaning of 'being the other' in Croatia, reinforcing the relationship between 'us' and 'them' through the commodification of cultural heritage. Similarly, Rivera (2008) explores how the Croatian government has used tourism to silence certain aspects of the Yugoslav heritage, reinforcing the representation of Croatia as identical to its Mediterranean and Western neighbours, but obfuscating its Yugoslav history. Hall (2002) analyses the relationship between national branding and tourism promotion, arguing that these constituent states put the legacy of Yugoslavia behind them, first to promote their national identities internally and, second, to attract tourists and foreign direct investments.

These examples show how the promotion of certain tourism sites and the abandonment of others play an important role in the process of constructing national identity both during the time of the Yugoslav Federation and in the post-Yugoslav space.

The concept of Yugo-nostalgia

Yugo-nostalgia is a psychological and cultural phenomenon occurring among citizens from the former Socialist Yugoslavia who still share experiences and memories of their common past (Lindstrom, 2005). Since their independence, the post-Yugoslav countries have experienced a lack of growth, borrowed large International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans and encountered economic challenges caused by crony capitalism (Franičević & Bičanić, 2007) (Table 1). This has resulted in sociocultural, economic and environmental injustices (Grdešić, 2015), causing longing for the Yugoslav past, so-called 'Yugo-nostalgia'. The results of a Yugo-nostalgia poll show that 68.8% of those surveyed in Serbia think that life was better 20 years ago, compared to 59.1% in B&H, 43.6% in Croatia and 38.6% in Slovenia (Gallup Survey Report, 2017). Ethnic minorities and citizens of a mixed background are most likely to see harm in the breakup of Yugoslavia, regardless of where in the post-Yugoslav space they reside.

Although there have been many studies exploring the concept of Yugo-nostalgia (for instance Patterson, 2011; Lindstrom, 2005; Mikula, 2003), most have been embedded in a wider cultural studies' perspective with hardly any attention devoted to a tourism.

Patterson (2011) provides the example of the Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana (Slovenia), where there is an exhibition dedicated to socialist Yugoslavia. Rather than being presented with a standard historical interpretation grounded in

Table 1

Economic indicators, 2016.

Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Economic Outlook 2016, <http://statisticstimes.com> and Trading Economics, 2016 <https://tradingeconomics.com>.

Country	Unemployment rate	GDP nominal per capita (EUR)	GDP PPP per capita (EUR)
Slovenia	11.2%	20,370	30,311
Croatia	15.4%	11,222	21,214
Bosnia and Herzegovina	40.6%	4054	10,443
Serbia	13.0%	5010	13,463
Montenegro	22.1%	6444	16,122
Macedonia	23.1%	4789	13,751
EU average	8%	30,009	31,835

international relations and high politics, visitors are presented with the story of what it meant to live ‘a good life’ in the former Yugoslavia, showing domestic, everyday images of supermarkets, TV advertisements and holidays. Essentially, this exhibition focuses on tourism and consumerism as a symbol of the good life, treating high politics as secondary (Patterson, 2010, 2011) which is the essence of Yugo-nostalgia. Internationally the Museum of Modern Art in New York from July 15, 2018 until January 13, 2019, housed an exhibition ‘Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948–1980,’ featuring sites that commemorate antifascism, many now decaying damaged by vandalism, abandonment and the civil war in the early nineties (Horvatinčić, 2018). In subversive political settings, Yugo-nostalgia is viewed more positively, while in the right-wing political context and sectarianism, it is an alternative expression for the betrayal of nationalist interests of the new states (Carmichael, 2010; Mikula, 2003). Overall, Yugo-nostalgia is a very contested phenomenon in the post-Yugoslav space.

In a wider context, Buchowski (2006) argues the presence of different shades of Europeaness understood in a hierarchical sense, encourages a perception of the ‘otherness’ of former socialist countries. Yugo-nostalgia, for example, is used to justify the perception of people from former Yugoslavia as irrational due to their supposed longing for the communist past. This ‘irrationality’ places them outside European norms of modernity, allowing exotification. Thus, there is a need to add complexity into understanding of the phenomenon of Yugo-nostalgia.

Research approach

The research approach for this study is constructivist, mainly using ethnographic research methods. It involves twenty-two lengthy semi-structured interviews conducted with tour guides and individuals involved in the presentation of heritage sites. A few research participants were interviewed more than once. Interviews with the tour guides and those preparing the sites’ interpretation were typically recorded in most cases, and tour guides were also contacted several times during the process of data analysis in order to clarify or ask further comments. Semi-structured interviews were accompanied by short conversational interviews with visitors, site receptionists and ticket officers at the heritage sites.

At the same time, participant observations of guided tours, museums and heritage site visits were made. I was interested in the narratives that practitioners used when interpreting nostalgia, antifascism and the Yugoslav legacy, as well as the sense of the reception of this particular narrative by the visitors/tourists. Observations were recorded via jotted notes and photographs as an *aide memoire*, used in writing a more detailed research diary. Further, I observed the tours of Brijuni National Park ten times, the AVNOJ Museum seven times, and the Drvar Raid Cave four times. Additionally, I also observed numerous guided tours of Sarajevo (around thirty) and Belgrade (around ten).

As Noy (2015, p. 206) explains, the field of study holds ‘dialectic relations with research practices and is co-constructed through the organisation of daily, mundane and unnoticeable activities’, thus I followed this as the guidelines in reporting and presenting research. Noy (2015) recommends that concluding an ethnographic project calls for reflection on how the researcher moves into, through and out of the space, place, relationships and practices, which construct the research settings, i.e. the field of study.

In this research, I was fully immersed in the situation as an insider (Crang & Cook, 2007), ratified by growing up in the former Yugoslavia, visiting the sites during my childhood as part of the school curricula, being othered during the times of transition, and also as a genuine tourist and through my previous fieldwork there. My first ethnographic visits took place during 2006 as part of a larger, multi-site study related to PhD research, which explored the process of heritagisation of the 1990s conflict and the breakup of Yugoslavia, particularly focusing on B&H. During the war in the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia, antifascist heritage sites were also damaged, and the rehabilitation of their legacy was analysed. The AVNOJ Museum in Jajce was still in a stage of refurbishment, but possible to visit. I interviewed an AVNOJ Museum ticket officer, and a tour guide who came with the group of visitors, and spoke to them. Since then, I have continued researching these sites which, despite the official trend of constructing the narrative of national identity and neoliberal capitalist discourse through the interpretation of cultural heritage, continued to promote antifascism and shared humanity. One of these sites includes the museum commemorating the Raid on Drvar, where German airborne forces executed a raid on the Yugoslav partisan high command, which almost succeeded in eliminating Josip Broz Tito, the leader of the Yugoslav antifascist struggle in 1944 (Melson, 2012). The third site linked directly to the Yugoslav legacy is the Brijuni Islands, Croatia, Tito’s summer residence during the Yugoslav epoch (1947–1980), thus the location for numerous political meetings, like the founding of the non-aligned movement during the Cold War. The non-aligned movement actions were an important factor in the decolonisation

process, leading to the attainment of freedom of new sovereign states (Vieira, 2016).

The research approach utilised here allowed me to be aware of my own voice when interpreting the fieldwork (Ingold, 2017). Bourdieu (2003, p. 281) calls this approach '*participant objectivation*', through which idiosyncratic personal experiences methodologically subjected to sociological control constitute reflection on overlapping worlds. Thus, '*participant objectivation*' produces real cognitive effects because it enables the researcher to grasp and master the pre-reflexive social and academic experiences of the social world she tends to project unconsciously on to ordinary social agents. Self-reflection, both as a researcher and an emotional local, helped produce distance and separated the conflict between the etic and emic positions I played. Following Noy (2015), I performed these roles by dislocating myself from the field at least in its physical sense, through the recreation of the public space while in the process of academic writing and allowing enough time for self-reflection while in the process of analysing and writing.

This study is underpinned by the idea of Geertz's (1973) '*thick description*', which posits that theory building does not happen simply through the codification of conceptual regularities, but is reached through descriptions of insights provided by language, philosophy and sociocultural settings that construct and create public meaning. I consider the process of creating the meaning of heritage sites through interactions among visitors, front-stage tour guides or museum custodians, myself and back-stage participants.

When referring to the meaning attached to cultural heritage sites, it is important to refer to the context and relationships between the different sociocultural groups that meet at such sites in the process of co-creating their meaning. In the case of the current research, people who originate from the former Yugoslavia now live in different countries; however, they tend to come together at sites that 'celebrate' the legacy of their former country. I reflected on the congruence between the tourists from post-Yugoslav space that I observed throughout the fieldwork.

Research findings

The study findings are incorporated into two sections. First, the legacy of antifascism and second, revival of antifascism, brotherhood and unity. Both sections refer to two narratives, one of capitalism and nationalist hegemony, and another, largely subversive in current context is the narrative of shared humanity and antifascism. Research participants' insights are incorporated into the interpretation; only a few statements are quoted in the paper to illustrate the main arguments of the analysis.

The legacy of antifascism

During the transition from communism to capitalism, from war to peace and from being a part of the Yugoslav Federation to becoming part of independent countries, sites that commemorate antifascist struggles became an unwanted heritage left to decay (Horvatinčić, 2018). Similar to contextual settings, tourists have also been discouraged from discussing the former Yugoslav legacy, as noted by the participants:

Visiting antifascist heritage sites was part of every school programme to teach the students about the legacy of antifascism [before Yugoslav break-up]. After the independence, there was not a lot of talk about Yugoslavia in the media, not even the Yugoslav movies were featured. Yuga [colloquial name for Yugoslavia] was out of the fashion. We were programmed to forget it.

(Tour-Operator 3, Belgrade)

It was a time of consolidating new national identities. Destination marketers, after the breakup of Yugoslavia, interpreted antifascist heritage sites simply as symbols of the Yugoslavian legacy of shared humanity and communism, thus contradicting the discourse of transition towards a neoliberal capitalist economy based on the Washington Consensus and the construction of national hegemony. Antifascism, together with the notion of shared humanity, symbolized the Yugoslav legacy that needed to be abandoned to make room for new narratives (Author's research diary).

As a result, heritage sites signifying the legacy of antifascism and shared humanity have rarely been featured in local tourism promotional material during this transitional time (Fig. 2, excerpt from the Croatian Cultural Heritage Promotion Catalogue). The Yugoslav (antifascist) legacy was hidden away to create space for new narratives, mainly nationalist hegemony and neoliberal capitalist ideology.

For instance,

There was not a lot of talk about Yugoslavia and antifascism just after the war [war in the early nineties]. Yugoslavia was still very fresh in the minds of the people.

(Tour-Operator 1, Belgrade)

In the case of the museum commemorating the Raid on Drvar in West Bosnia, the historical antifascist heritage site was intended to be transformed into a tourism site by local government and small business entrepreneurs with the help of an international donor agency. However, the research participants commented that *the process was not straightforward* (Participant 32, B&H), although the historical legacy of the site was purely antifascist, not communist. The international donor agency did not want to participate in revitalising the site, saying that it glorified communism. Thus, it was not only the local populace, but also international partners who equated Yugoslav antifascism with communism in their narratives.

But we had some problems with the government authorities and with the embassy of the donor country. We had to explain that we are doing it purely for commercial tourism purposes, not to propagate communism. It took us ages to go ahead. This locality has 20,000 visitors a year. You cannot imagine what it means for such a poor rural area.

THE CROATIAN MAGICAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

Croatian cultural heritage is not as well known as the cultural heritage of some large and powerful countries. It has no magnificent monuments, such as for example the Egyptian pyramids, the Pompeii in Italy or the castle Neuschwanstein in the German Alps. Croatia was not the centre of the great empires of the past and will surprise many visitors in that, in proportion to its surface, there are more sites of cultural heritage under UNESCO protection in Croatia than for example in France or Germany. Croatia has many other valuable cultural monuments which would also be able to find a place on UNESCO's list.

Proportional to its size, what is particularly significant about Croatia is its wealth of intangible heritage; with as many as nine cultural phenomena inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, Croatia is among the countries with the most protected intangible assets in the world. Inscribed on the UNESCO list



Croatian Cultural Heritage

Fig. 2. Croatian Cultural Heritage, 2011.

(Participant 32, B&H)

In addition to destination marketers and international donor agencies, it appears that neoliberal-orientated politicians seemed reluctant to promote antifascist sites. The sites were simply perceived as being in conjunction with Yugoslav communist ideology and shared humanity, and individuals who glorified them were seen as traitors to global capitalism and national hegemony, as summarised by the participants in B&H:

In 1999, I suggested that we should re-open the AVNOJ Museum. They told me that I am Yugo-nostalgic and that I am a communist. But it is incredible how many people from former Yugoslav countries and abroad are searching for that.

(Participant 37, B&H)

Context is central in the process of constructing the meaning (Bakhtin, 1981) of these heritage sites. In this case, the defamation of antifascist heritage after the Yugoslav breakup was primarily a symbolic act meant to feed into the ideology of capitalism. As observed, antifascism has been symbolically linked to socialism, communism and the Yugoslav federation. Newly independent nations needed to defame antifascism as a symbolic act to show compliance with their nation's hegemony and capitalist ideology. This was a consistent theme in the interview excerpts, participant observations, analysis of the promotional materials and the author's personal reflection and introspection.

The AVNOJ Museum building was devastated in the 1992–1995 war; museum exhibits looted or destroyed. We found Tito's armchair, a portrait of Tito, Marx, Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt ... before the war, the museum had a collection of around 10,000 books, more than 100 video clips; this vanished in the war in the early nineties

(Museum, Jajce)

On 29 November 1943, a second AVNOJ session was held, where a federal Yugoslavia was created based on antifascism, equality and the right of self-determination of nations, and this site was converted into the AVNOJ Museum in 1959. This building was destroyed during the war in the early 1990s in B&H. It was not a legitimate military target, but its existence symbolized Yugoslavia and its legacy. The looting and later decay of the AVNOJ Museum represented a form of defaming the Yugoslav socialist legacy as a symbolic act of commitment to neoliberal capitalist ideology and nationalism. Antifascism was embedded in Yugoslav legacy, together with socialism, shared humanity, and equality, in both its simplicity and complexity.

Revival of antifascism, brotherhood and unity

Alternative tour organizers have activated the Yugoslav legacy and antifascism in tourism promotion to consumers from the former Yugoslavia (see Fig. 3), reviving a sense of nostalgia for the past. As one of the tour guides said in an empathic and confirmatory way:



Tito and Queen Elisabeth, 1972



Tito and Che Quevara, 1959



Tito, Nehru and Nasser on Brijuni Island, 1954



Tito and Sophia Loren, Italian actress

Brijuni Museum Photo exhibition Tito on Brijuni, 2016

Fig. 3. Brijuni Museum Photo Exhibition 'Tito on Brijuni', 2016.

In the beginning, they [tourists from former Yugoslavia] are very shy. But as soon as one of them breaks the ice and starts talking, the others continue. You sometimes cannot stop them discussing.

(Tour-Guide 1, Brijuni)

Visitors from former Yugoslav countries, together with the tour guides, co-create the nostalgic experience of the good times they spent together as Yugoslav citizens. As the research participants observed, the visitors started coming to express positive memories and to commemorate the Yugoslav antifascist legacy.

Lots of nostalgia; the first tourists we had were tourists from Slovenia coming in organised groups to hear the stories of Yugoslavia and its antifascism.

(Tour Guide 2, Sarajevo)

As one of the Slovenian tourists said about the Museum visit:

Generally, it's a very nostalgic place. We probably enjoyed it even more [than foreign tourists] because of the history we built together [former Yugoslav nations].

(Slovenian Tourist-Museum, Jajce)

Yugo-nostalgia is indeed recognised as a lucrative business opportunity, but mostly for the numerous alternative tour organizers. It is definitely interesting, ... people turn Yugo-nostalgia into business.

(Tour Operator 2, Belgrade)

In September 2002, the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of B&H declared the building where AVNOJ took place to be a national monument and museum. The AVNOJ Museum has slowly been refurbished and redeveloped to serve its current function and has been visited by many.

There are around 20,000 visitors coming in groups to the museum of AVNOJ, plus many individual visits not counted in the official statistics. People remember good times in Yugoslavia, but we also have the visits from the researchers from all around the world, as this is the place where a very strong antifascist movement in Europe emerged.

(Participant-Museum, Jajce)

Indeed, more of these sites are being refurbished and are attracting visitors.

Yugo-nostalgic tourism seems to be a growing trend, and Tito's old bunker... in Konjic [B&H] has also become a tourist attraction.

(Tour Operator 2, Sarajevo)

Although the political situation in B&H is very complex (see Čaušević & Lynch, 2011), antifascism and the Yugoslav legacy have been regularly featured by both tourism boards and alternative tour operators. The Bosnian Tourism Board focuses on its antifascist legacy in the online tourism promotion of the city of Jajce, despite Jajce also being home to many medieval historic monuments and natural sites.

It seemed fitting after so many civilisations had settled and fought over this place that in 1943, the AVNOJ was signed and sealed here in one of the most historical moments of Bosnia's and Yugoslavia's history. These resolutions outlined the future organisation of the region [Yugoslavia].

(BH Tourism Board, www.bhtourism.ba/eng//jajce.wbsp)

Briefly reviewing the promotional material of tourism destinations in a post-Yugoslav space, it appears that B&H features certain aspects of the Yugoslav legacy, particularly their antifascist heritage. This situation is primarily due to the rich antifascist heritage and legacy of shared humanity in the country, as well as interest of the tourists from post-Yugoslav countries visiting these sites, as was confirmed by the research participants in B&H. Other countries in the post-Yugoslav space have one constitutional nation; therefore, the legacy of shared humanity was left behind while constructing a national identity and it is not necessary to feature shared humanity and antifascism in their tourism promotion. However, there are three constituent nations in B&H, mainly Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs. Thus, the legacy of shared humanity is also featured internally to promote the country to its own citizens.

In other parts of the post-Yugoslav space, mostly fringe tour operators feature antifascism and shared humanity in their tours. The legacy of antifascism has thus again merged with the legacy of Yugoslav socialism and is presented as such to the visitors through the story of the ordinary Yugoslav people, which evokes nostalgic sentiments. For example, one of the fringe, i.e. alternative tour operators from Belgrade said:

We speak about antifascism – not as the main topic of the tour, but as embedded within the historical legacy of Yugoslavia. The main story is about the lives of the people during Yugoslav communism.

(Tour-Guide 1, Belgrade)

Similarly, while explaining the legacy of the former Yugoslavia, a tour guide related to Australian tourists:

Antifascism in Yugoslavia merged with socialism. This was a uniquely Yugoslav identity; it was non-aligned during the Cold War....

(Tour-Guide 1, Sarajevo)

Moreover, the rise of anti-immigrant, anti-ethnic minority, homophobic, nationalist, racist and sectarian rhetoric, and indeed right-wing political populism internationally (Thorleifsson, 2017), has similarly affected the post-Yugoslav space (Grdešić, 2015). Indeed, global economic downturns, low levels of economic development, non-transparent privatisation of public services and fear for the future (Žižek, 2010) leave both visitors and tour guides with existentialist thoughts, provoking nostalgia in a fight against losing hope for better tomorrow (Berardi, 2011). Thus, antifascism is presented to the tourists as a uniquely Yugoslav identity, and is commodified as such for tourism purposes. Visiting material heritage sites that promote the legacy of antifascism breeds (Yugo-) nostalgia. The performed narrative of the tour guide is that life was indeed better before, creating existentialist thoughts and revealing the current hopelessness of many citizens:

Look at the statistics; the majority of people in Sarajevo and Bosnia lived better before the war than they live now. These are the facts which are the theme of this tour. I think that the tour which I am doing, and some of my colleagues as well, is a kind of educational tour, 100%.

(Tour-Guide 4, Sarajevo)

Thus, visitors come, embracing memories and celebrating antifascism, reminding themselves about the days under Yugoslavia when they had hope and the perception of a general improvement of circumstances. Visiting these heritage sites today acts as a refusal to abandon hope and a desire for the future.

The guided electric train tour on Brijuni Island in Croatia lasts a minimum of 4 h and includes a tour of the archaeological sites of Roman Villas, a safari park, a small gothic church (15th century), the Brijuni Garden and a museum exhibition titled 'Tito on the Brijuni Islands', dedicated to the life of the late President Tito (1892–1980) and the non-aligned movement. The tour includes many other sites on the island linked to cultural, natural and historical heritage. For instance, official tour focuses on the legacy of the physician Robert Koch, who helped eradicate malaria on the island (from the official tour transcript). However, participants reported that 'our tourists' and foreign tourists have different interests in visiting the island:

I also work with German tourists, and of course the transcript changes with 'our tourists'. We have our commonalities. Of course, we are all nostalgic about that time. This is why Brijuni Island is very popular with our tourists....

(Tour-Guide 1, Brijuni)

It is also clear from my own observations while following the tours in the local language (understandable in most of the post-Yugoslav space) the fact that Brijuni Island was President Tito's summer residence and the related museum exhibition is the main motivation for visiting the island. Tour guides note;

Some call me Yugo-nostalgic. Oh, maybe I am. I am working mostly with 'our tourists' and you can really sense the sparkle in their eyes when we discuss the times when we were together.

(Tour-Guide, Brijuni)

The quote above summarises tour guides' impression of the attitude of tourists from the former Yugoslavia while visiting the museum. The tourists were very impressed with the museum exhibition (author's observation), which included photos of the state leaders and celebrities who visited the island between 1950 and 1980 (Fig. 3).

It gives an impression that we meant something in the world.

(Croatian Tourist, Brijuni)

In addition to being reflective about their former country, 'our tourists' reflect on the 1960s and 1970s, as suggested in the comments of one of the tourists:

I think that this island should really focus on being retro, give the theme of the good old 60s and 70s and ... that feeling that it is getting better.

(Serbian Tourist, Brijuni)

Others in the group simply nodded, showing agreement with this sentiment. Older tourists shared with the group their personal stories from the former Yugoslavia. 'Oh, I did my military service on the island,' said one of the Slovenian tourists, evoking his own memories. Some remember their lives before the breakup of Yugoslavia and illustrate the story provided by the tour guide by telling their own stories to the group. It is a very emotional journey for many, comparing new independent countries with the Yugoslavia retained in their memories, haunted by the ghosts of the past and by the spectres of the future which never happened.

Discussion and conclusion

As previously argued by Goulding and Domic (2009), there has been very little research addressing the process of remaking history in the areas that have gone through major transitions. In the former Yugoslavia, there has been a transition from war to peace, from the attempted ideology of socialism/communism to the ideology of neoliberal capitalism and from being members of the Yugoslav federation to becoming independent states. This research has conceptualised how heritage sites' narratives follow that process through contextualising the narrative of nationalist hegemony and (crony) capitalism, and the narrative of antifascism and shared humanity. This paper's aim was to understand how the context of this particular post-Yugoslav regional setting, accompanied by international socio-political contexts, influences the interpretation and subsequent commodification of heritage sites that promote a legacy of shared humanity, antifascism and the depiction of Yugoslavia itself, despite the narrative of nationalist hegemony through

othering.

This research followed Bakhtinian dialogism, thus not competing (with) existing theories, but engaging them in the discourse. Bakhtin's (1981) concept of heteroglossia, i.e., many voices, used in this research to illuminate the liminal and occasionally contested discourses in which the complexity of Yugo-nostalgia, as one of the voices of the interpretation of antifascist heritage sites, resides. The 'language' of communication represents many socio-ideological voices co-existing among the present and the different epochs of the past, primarily WWII, socialist Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav conflict in the early nineties and times after the conflict.

In the current context of the socioeconomic injustices towards the other, both globally and in the post-Yugoslav space, and added to this still-painful memories of the wars related to the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, a narrative of antifascism is voiced through visitors' experiences via commercialisation of antifascist heritage sites. These sites form a dialogue between the past and the present, where the present informs the interpretation of the past, and past events through the dialogue influence the interpretation of the present. As Walter Benjamin argues, it is only through the present that we understand the past, and, as such, the past interrelates with the present, or, as Kant notes (in Comay, 2006), history moves with time, and thus, time has the spatial component embedded within itself. Time indeed becomes a territory. Benjaminian messianic time, in the post-Yugoslav context, may be seen as time weighted with a hope for a better future (Fisher, 2014).

As Askegaard and Linnet (2011) argue, acquiring greater theoretical depth and meaning is achievable only if the context-dependent findings can be conceptualised with recourse to the surrounding sociological milieu. Yugo-nostalgia is often referred to as longing for the things which have gone by, such as Yugoslav socialism, thus overwhelmingly simplifying the phenomenon to achieve a marketable version of the past (Volcic, 2007). This paper, on the contrary, sees Yugo-nostalgia as longing for the future. In contemporary contexts, visitors actively try to find solace from the socioeconomic injustices exacerbated through crony capitalism by seeking out experiences that induce nostalgia towards the times of the former Yugoslavia; thus, the present moment informs the past, but is also haunted by the future. Thus, this is not nostalgia for the past or political ideologies such as communism, but rather hauntings from the future which never happened, manifested as nostalgia for the hope that tomorrow will be better than today.

Further, there is a particular contention between essential and existential nostalgia for the past and nostalgia for hope and lost futures, which defines the identity of the post-Yugoslav space more than any national claims. These contestations between different forms of nostalgia allow for anticipation of the messianic future. Here, the promise of Benjamin's messianic time comes to the forefront as a desire for emancipation from empty historic time. Visiting sites that promote a legacy of shared humanity through antifascism allows nostalgia to irrupt into Walter Benjamin's (1968) concept of homogeneous empty time. This action frees Bakhtin's notion of time and space (chronotope) from a future prescribed through homogeneous empty time, which evokes a reaction of fear of the lost future in the minds of visitors. As noted by Fisher (2014, p. 25), 'What should haunt us is not the *no longer* of actually existing social democracy, but the *not yet* of the futures that popular modernism trained us to expect, but which never materialised.' Indeed, nostalgia in the context of visiting cultural heritage sites that embody the legacy of the former country is nostalgia for the future, which entire generations in the former Yugoslavia lost. Finally, being haunted by the futures that failed to take shape is fertile ground for othering, populist rhetoric and historical revisionism to enter the mainstream, both globally and in the post-Yugoslav space.

Under these circumstances, visiting antifascist heritage sites works as a protest against these injustices of othering, populist rhetoric and historical revisionism. Thus, commodifying and consuming antifascist heritage intersects political activism with consumerism (Chatzidakis, Larsen, & Bishop, 2014). Visiting these 'fringe' heritage sites provides temporary solace. However, this process does not alleviate the sadness which stems for the future that never materialise with the ideologies of neoliberalism epitomised in the crony capitalism that holds sway in the context of the former Yugoslavia. This tentative rupture of nostalgia has the ability to convert homogeneous time into messianic time through the visitor experience of Yugo-nostalgia and antifascism manifested in the commodification of a subversive tourism culture. Yugo-nostalgia in that sense becomes thus recognised as a lucrative business corollary.

Voicing an antifascist narrative through museum exhibits and tour guiding is subversive in the current socio-political and economic settings of social exclusion, othering and crony capitalism, and it is precisely this process of subversion that enables the feeling of empowerment and solace in the visitor experience. Thus, this paper argues that it is not the actors who co-create and subvert the narrative, but rather the social settings, the context and indeed the context of the context that feed into the subversion. Hence, socialism returns via the rediscovery and retransmission of utopian spatial possibilities that still survive in these spaces. As Walter Benjamin states (in Proctor, 2015, p. 16), we must read the spaces as containing the 'still burning embers of hope from the past that might yet burn anew'. This paper suggests that the ambivalence of these sites' embers is the source of their real potency.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to the associated editor Professor Chaim Noy, and the reviewers for their time, rigour and patience, and their valuable comments that have improved the quality of the paper.

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