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A Decade of Studying Guest Workers Through the Projects of the Serbian Ethnological and Anthropological Society

Abstract: This review paper provides an overview of the ten-year long anthropological research on the cultural identity of guest workers and their descendants as part of the projects implemented by the associates of the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade and the SASA Institute of Ethnography. The projects were supported by the Serbian Ethnological and Anthropological Society and the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. The phenomenon of “temporary workers abroad”, or the so-called guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*), which emerged in the early 1960s and continued in the decades to come, has long remained beyond the interest of Serbian anthropological and ethnological science. This is why, after having noticed a scientific research gap related to this phenomenon, in 2010 we initiated the anthropological research of the cultural identity of guest workers. Our intention was to take into account different factors of guest-worker identity construction and to look at the processes, discourses and concepts related to this socio-cultural group from different angles. Over time, as we delved deeper into the problem of migrant workers and migration in general, our interests, and consequently our research, expanded to other topics in addition to cultural identity. In that context, this review paper intends to inform the scientific and professional public about the findings of research on migrants working temporarily abroad and their descendants, and to highlight some of the most important topics that we focused on in this research, while being aware that the phenomenon of migrants and migration is so diverse that it is impossible to include or investigate all its elements that make it so complex.

Key words: migration, migrants, anthropology, guest workers, cultural identity, Serbia, Vienna

Introduction – About the Research of Guest Workers

Since the second half of the 20th century, the phenomenon of international migration has been one of the most important research topics in the field of social sciences and humanities, given that population migrations, which occur for various reasons, have become a global and dominant social phenomenon worldwide. Anthropology, for its part, focuses on the issues of cultural and ethnic identity of migrants, on ideological, socio-cultural and value systems that change due to migration, on the issues of diffusion of cultural characteristics, adaptation and acculturation (see Kovačević i Krstić 2011). Anthropology is interested in the questions of who, how and why emigrates; it aims to understand through the ethnography of experience what it means to “be a migrant”, the meanings ascribed to it by migrants, how they interpret and constitute their identity, how they make sense of the conditions of their existence, as well as social and cultural changes resulting from convergence of different migrant environments and cultural values (Antonijević 2013, 22). Moreover, by studying the stories of migrants’ lives, anthropology has shown the specificity of its research, among other things, “in *giving a voice* to those whose voices were inaudible, and most often those were the voices of migrants and different minorities” (Antonijević 2013, 28).

Since Serbia has been a country of emigration for decades, it is important to stress that migrants and, in general, the Serbian diaspora, which is very ramified and numerous, have been studied for a long time by economists, sociologists and demographers, but also by ethnologists/anthropologists, associates at the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade and associates of the SASA Institute of Ethnography. The phenomenon of going abroad to live and work, forever or for a certain time, has lasted for decades, in various phases and with various waves of emigration, by using legal and illegal means and ways, leaving significant consequences in the country in socio-economic, cultural and demographic aspects.

However, the phenomenon of “temporary workers abroad”, or the so-called guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*), which emerged in the early 1960s, has long remained beyond the interest of Serbian anthropological and ethnological science, *inter alia*. Silva Mežnarić stated that “Yugoslav sociology did not deal with migration issues until the 1970s, surprised and taken aback by the appearance of guest workers and the mass departure of semi-urbanised population to post-industrial societies”, which “brought guest workers into an ideological and value gap, stressing the problem of their identity.” (Mežnarić 1985, 77)¹. In the

¹ The Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies in Zagreb, founded in 1984 in the former Yugoslavia, was the the first one that started to deal with various forms of migration more systematically.

former Yugoslavia, guest workers were a group relatively scarcely discussed, most often in a pejorative sense (see Marković 2005, 2009; Antonijević 2011a). However, according to historian Predrag Marković, “Serbian ethnology and anthropology, as well as social and cultural history, have avoided this fascinating topic”, although the impact of guest workers on Serbian villages “should have been noticed long time ago” (Marković 2009, 10).

This is why, after having noticed a scientific research gap related to this phenomenon in Serbia, in 2010 we initiated the anthropological research of the cultural identity of guest workers. There were some sporadic research studies of guest workers, their lifestyle and influence on the transformed rural culture earlier in Serbian ethnology,² but their number was certainly insufficient and the phenomenon was not researched systematically, due to which Ivan Kovačević and Marija Krstić, associates on our projects, concluded in their paper “that a thorough anthropological study of guest workers is yet ahead of us” (see Kovačević i Krstić 2011, 976). Our intention was to take into account different factors of guest-worker identity construction and to analyse from different angles the processes, discourses and concepts related to this socio-cultural heterogeneous group, which has an awareness of itself and its status and which other people in the home country and the country of immigration perceive as specific (see Antonijević 2011b; Antonijević 2012).

Over time, as we delved deeper into the problem of migrant workers and migration in general, met different interlocutors, learned from them about, and then noticed, different aspects of life in immigration, our interests, and consequently our research, expanded to other topics in addition to cultural identity. In recent years, we have also started to research the identities and aspects of the integration of guest workers’ descendants – the third and fourth generations of emigrants, who are today administratively designated as persons “of migrant origin”.

In that context, this review paper intends to provide an overview of our ten-year research and inform the scientific and professional public about the findings of research on migrants working temporarily abroad and their descendants, to highlight some of the most important topics that we focused on in this research and will continue to study, while being aware that the phenomenon of migrants and migration is so diverse that it is impossible to include or investigate all its elements that make it so complex.

² Studying the Yugoslav guest workers in Serbia and Denmark in 1973, the Danish anthropologist Carl Ulrik Schierup was among the first to point out the modernising influence of guest workers on Serbian villages (see Schierup 1973). We also want to highlight the earlier study of the Serbian colleagues Dobrila Bratić and Miroslava Malešević on the luxurious and richly furnished houses of guest workers in Serbia (see Bratić i Malešević 1982).

Although Nenad Popović wrote in his essay entitled “The World in the Shadows” (Popović 2008) that “gastarbeiter is a man without a story”, studying the life stories of guest workers, we have realised that this is not the case.

Projects, Research Methodology and Findings

Over the past ten years, we have conducted research studies through seven projects. Only the first project lasted two years (2010–2012) and was implemented through the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, while the timeframe of other six projects was one year and they were implemented through the Serbian Ethnological and Anthropological Society.

The projects were financed by the Republic of Serbia’s Ministry of Culture and Information and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region.³

The list of implemented projects:

- 2010–2012: “*Neither there nor here* – cultural heritage and identity of the guest-worker population”, Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia
- 2014: “The culture of memory as intangible cultural heritage of migrants: Ambivalent nostalgia in the cultural heritage and identity of guest workers”, Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia
- 2016: “Presentation of the civic and traditional cultural heritage of the association of Serbs in Vienna and the issue of their integration”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region
- 2017: “Intangible cultural heritage in cultural-artistic societies and cultural-educational associations in Serbia and the diaspora – education and presentation”, Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia
- 2019: “Research of knowledge and preservation of intangible cultural heritage among youth in Serbia and the diaspora”, Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia
- 2019: “Attitude towards identity: research on the status of the third and fourth generations of Serbian migrants in Vienna”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region

³ The research findings were also an integral part of the project financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia: “Anthropological Study of Serbia – From Cultural Heritage to Modern Society” (no. 177035); “Identity Policies of the European Union: Adaptation and Application in the Republic of Serbia” (no. 177017), both projects from the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade and “Multiethnicity, Multiculturalism, Migration – Contemporary Processes” (no. 177027), a project of the SASA Institute of Ethnography.

- 2020: “Aspects of integration of the third and fourth generations of Serbian migrants in Austria”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region.

The manager of all projects was Prof. Dragana Antonijević, PhD, from the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, while associates in different project phases were: Prof. Ivan Kovačević, PhD, from the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade; Ana Banić-Grubišić, PhD; Marija Brujić (nee Krstić), PhD and Ljubica Milosavljević, PhD, from the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade; and Miloš Rašić, PhD, from the SASA Institute of Ethnography.

The ethnographic field research in Serbia was conducted mainly in the area of Eastern Serbia from where a large number of inhabitants have been leaving to work abroad. The research was conducted in the villages near Kučevo, Rabrovo, Veliko Gradište and Knjaževac. On the other hand, each project also included field research in Vienna, since it is the city with the largest number of labour migrants from Serbia.⁴ A part of the field research was conducted by the third-year ethnology and anthropology students as part of their mandatory summer practice in 2011 in Knjaževac and its surroundings. During all field research activities, we had the help and support of local residents, colleagues, friends and acquaintances, without special appointment, whom we thank on this occasion.

In theoretical terms, we used the microlevel approach to analyse personal choices, experiences, motives and migrant strategies, as well as the mesolevel approach to analyse socio-economic and cultural links and relationships, based on life stories and testimonies of guest workers, their descendants and other emigrants⁵. We relied on the opinion of Caroline Brettell and James Hollifield, who, considering the possibility of connecting multidisciplinary studies of migration and migrants, highlight the specifics of the anthropological microlevel

⁴ The 2020 Report on Migration shows that Austria has 17.1 percent of foreigners in the total population. The most numerous among them are Germans, followed by Romanians, Serbs and Turks. The number of people with Serbian citizenship living in Austria is 122,116 and they are the third largest group. Source: <https://www.rts.rs/page/rts/sr/Dijaspora/story/1518/vesti/4410622/srbi-treci-po-brojnosti-u-becu.html>. However, in 2019 the citizens originating from Serbia constituted the second largest group after Germans (see <https://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/11/region/3420368/nemci-i-srbi-najbrojniji-stranci-u-austriji.html>), while according to the 2011 Eurostat report “Migrants in Europe”, citizens originating from Serbia and Montenegro were the largest immigrant group in Austria (see <http://www.euractiv.rs/eu-i-zapadni-balkan/3252-najvise-srba-imigranata-u-austriji>, published on 8 December 2011).

⁵ A more detailed explanation of the applied theoretical-methodological approach in Antonijević 2013.

or bottom-up approach, focusing on individual and group experiences of migrants and their families (Brettell and Hollifield 2000, 2). The individual is a unit of analysis, and the life stories and statements of individuals have motivated us to learn about the general process of migration, going beyond the abstraction of migration theories and understanding the process from an insider perspective. Finally, studying personal stories, as Caroline Brettell writes, helps us understand to what extent migrants are free actors in shaping their destinies and to what extent they are just “pawns” who respond to the pressure and constraints placed upon them by society (Brettell 2003, 23–26). Other materials were also used in the analysis: print media, websites of cultural associations in the diaspora, websites of various institutions dealing with migration, individual blogs of migrants, online editions of diaspora magazines, literary fiction, essays, photographs, film and documentary material, etc.

The research methodology included in-depth semi-structured interviews and unstructured conversations with research subjects, as well as participatory observation. During the last two project years, 2019 and 2020, we applied the technique of non-probability sampling⁶ by using open-ended questionnaires. The reasons for such an approach were twofold.

First, in a project in which we researched the level of knowledge about intangible cultural heritage (ICH) among the youth from Serbia and the diaspora, taking into consideration the specific characteristics of the research problem, the open-ended questionnaire emerged as the best solution, allowing us to compare their answers and to conduct a quantitative and qualitative analysis (see Antonijević, Rašić i Banić Grubišić 2020). We decided to use the method of convenience sampling based on purposive or judgmental sampling (Taherdoost 2016, 22–23; see <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/types-of-sampling-for-social-research/>). This type of non-random sampling means that the researcher, based on his or her judgment and assessment, influences the selection of sample elements from the basic group of population, and that sample consisted of the members of selected cultural and artistic societies in Serbia and the diaspora.

The work on the projects in which we researched the identity and aspects of the integration of the third and fourth generations of migrants in Vienna (see Antonijević i Rašić *in press*), was conditioned by the COVID-19 pandemic that led to quarantine, which prevented us from going to the field. It was also conditioned by the type of questions asked. We created an online survey consisting of 70 questions with the help of Google Forms (available at: <https://forms.gle/kAswgMsd4Pdr7mfGA>). We interviewed young people living in Vienna, with a migrant origin in Serbia. We used the snowball sampling method, which is

⁶ It is important to stress that in research conducted using non-probability sampling, scientific hypotheses are presented after research (v.<https://www.questionpro.com/blog/types-of-sampling-for-social-research/>).

applied in qualitative research in situations where it is difficult to reach subjects, so the first few known contacts are engaged to give referrals, thus expanding the chain of informants (Naderifar, Goli and Ghaljaie 2017; see <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/snowball-sampling/>).

The research findings of project associates have been published in a series of articles in various scientific journals, to which we shall refer, as necessary, in the following thematic sections. Based on the project findings, the following was published: the book authored by Dragana Antonijević and entitled “Stranger Here, Stranger There. Anthropological Research of the Cultural Identity of Guest Workers” (Antonijević 2013), and the defended doctoral dissertation of Miloš Rašić “Institutional Construction and Presentation of Identity in Serbian Clubs in Vienna” (Rašić 2020). The project associates participated in domestic and international conferences with statements and papers on the project topics (Antonijević 2011b; Antonijević 2012; Banić Grubišić i Krstić 2011; Kovačević i Antonijević 2018; Rašić 2021c).

At this point, we want to highlight some journals in which we published our works related to migration issues. The journal *Etnoantropološki problemi / Issues in Ethnology and Anthropology* Vol. 6, Is. 4, 2011 focused on the topic “Guest Workers in an Anthropological Perspective” (Antonijević 2011a; Antonijević, Banić Grubišić i Krstić 2011; Banić Grubišić 2011; Kovačević i Krstić 2011). The topic of *Etnoantropološki problemi / Issues in Ethnology and Anthropology*, Vol. 15, Is. 1, 2020 was “Migrants and Literature”, and two papers on immigrant literature, referring to the project research findings, were published (Antonijević 2020; Banić Grubišić 2020). As part of the topic “Research of Migration” in the *Bulletin of the SASA Institute of Ethnography*, a paper on the old age of guest workers was published (Antonijević i Milosavljević 2016), along with a paper on the guest worker amateur theatrical troupe in Vienna and its plays (Antonijević i Rašić 2018).

One section of the book by Marija Brujić “Cultural Representations of the European Union and Serbian EU Integration among the Serbian Diaspora in Graz” (Brujić 2018) is based on her research conducted as part of our project in 2010–2012. Two workshops were held with the ethnology and anthropology students at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade: Ana Banić Grubišić and Marija Krstić in 2011 held the workshop “Guest workers – What do we know about them?” (Banić Grubišić i Krstić 2011), and in 2019 Ana Banić Grubišić and Miloš Rašić presented the research findings about the knowledge of intangible cultural heritage by the youth in Serbia and the diaspora at the event “A Weekend of Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Faculty of Philosophy”.

As part of our project, in 2017 the Austrian Cultural Forum at the Embassy of the Republic of Austria in Belgrade financed the arrival Gordana Ilić Marković, PhD, a lecturer at the Department of Slavic Studies of the University of Vienna,

who gave a presentation at the Anthropological Agora, an event organised by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, entitled “In the vortex of linguistics – facts and prejudices about the linguistic expression of migrants from Serbia in Austria.”

Research Topics

About the Term “Guest Worker” (Gastarbeiter)

Theoretical considerations, as well as our field research performed as part of the implemented projects, were focused on a significant problem of how to approach and define different categories of workers working abroad, i.e. in which cases to use the term “guest worker” in relation to different emigrant waves and migrant generations (Antonijević 2011; Kovačević i Krstić 2011; Krstić 2011; Antonijević 2012; Antonijević 2013; Brujić 2015).

In literature, the definition of the term “guest worker” (*Gastarbeiter*) is usually based on the temporality of residence as a key characteristic, which is also referred to in the etymological meaning of the German word *Gastarbeiter* – guest worker. The phenomenon emerged in the mid-1950s when, due to the post-war demand for cheap labour in Western Europe, and especially in Germany and Austria, a mass of poor people, predominantly from the rural areas of southern and south-eastern Europe, started to migrate for economic reasons to contribute not only to the well-being and building of their countries, but also to improve their own standard and life, by working temporarily in Western European countries. At that time, Yugoslavia was the only communist country that, in the mid-1960s, allowed its unskilled and low-skilled workers to go to “capitalist” countries to “get employed privately”. However, the receiving countries did not want or intend to permanently employ these workers. They were seen as a temporary phenomenon, which is why the term “guest worker” was coined, although many pointed to the meaninglessness of the coined word, i.e. of referring to a guest who works somewhere and for someone (see Teraoka 1987, 83).

When we started our projects, we had in mind exactly the first generation of “temporary workers abroad” referred to as “guest workers”. Dragana Antonijević thought that we should think about the conceptualization of the term “guest worker” and its determination in terms of category, and not only about its definition. In other words, the conceptualization of this term should start from its broader semantic content, which, on the one hand, is conditioned by the etymological origin of the word, and on the other hand, by the socio-economic, political-historical and ideological context (Antonijević 2011a, 1013).

However, in public discourse and colloquial speech, their descendants were often called guest workers, although the term could certainly not refer to them (see Ivanović 2012, 27). Today, the literature largely discusses the characteristics of the descendants of guest workers, and we are already referring to 1.5 and 2.5 generations of migrants, depending on whether the children of guest workers were born in the country of origin and later joined their parents abroad, or one parent is, for example, from the first and another from the second generation of guest workers (see King and Christou 2010). However, it is important to mention that the generations of descendants were socialised “within certain value systems and lifestyles of their parents or other ancestors – guest workers”, which had an overall impact on the construction of their cultural identity (Rašić 2020, 3).

On the other hand, low-skilled workforce, much needed for hard manual labour, arrived in Western European countries in various waves until the mid-1980s and even later, although in 1973 those countries publicly proclaimed that they ceased to import labour. As Stephen Castles rightly notes, the belief of European governments that Western European countries would not need low-skilled migrant workers for a long time has turned out to be wrong (see Castles 2006).⁷ Workers continued to arrive and bring their families as workforce, and we believe that in that context we can talk about the first and second, and perhaps even the third “generation” of guest workers or temporary migrant workers, taking into consideration the semantic determination of the term, and not the age dimension of generations.

Over time, the term “guest worker” became unpopular and obsolete. In the German-speaking areas, the word was used until the moment when the authorities in Germany and Austria realised that the temporary residence of guest workers had become permanent, as many of them had acquired citizenship and reunited with their family members who had lived in the country of origin. Therefore, in the German-speaking world, migrant workers from Southern, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe today in everyday speech are referred to as “Fremdarbeiter” (foreigner-worker) or just “Ausländer” (foreigner), which is also seen as humiliating. The term “people with a migrant background” (“die Leute mit dem Migrationshintergrund”) has been used since recently, and defines not only the first generation of the descendants of guest workers, but also all those with at

⁷ The consequence of the increased size of highly-skilled workforce, the falling birth rate and the declining work-capable population is a renewed need for low-skilled workers who would be employed in construction, agriculture, hospitality industry, cleaning and similar jobs. Therefore, the old guest worker “resurrected” but in a new form, especially through the concept of “circular migration” and the project “Temporary Migrant Worker Programs”, which again sought to import foreign workers without them settling permanently in Western Europe (see Castles 2006; Medica 2010).

least one parent who is not of Western European origin, regardless of whether these migrants acquired citizenship of the country of immigration (see Antonijević 2012, 26–27; Brujić 2015, 38; Ivanović 2012, 26).

Therefore, although the term “guest worker” has become obsolete and has been replaced by some other “politically correct” terms over time, we have insisted on its analytical suitability in our projects. We were fully aware of the frequent pejorative connotations of this term, but also of the fact that it is still used colloquially in everyday speech in Serbia (Antonijević 2012, 24). Dragana Antonijević considers that this term deeply ingrained in the Serbian language is “much more than Serbian irony and German discomfort: the expression itself is a paradox that has forever marked hundreds of thousands of people, acquiring, in the meantime, various connotations that have exceeded the historical significance of that notion from the period when the ‘guest worker’ phenomenon emerged” (Antonijević 2020, 64).

We have particularly considered the term “guest worker” in relation to the umbrella term “diaspora”. In this regard, there is no consensus in the literature on migration, or in colloquial speech and public political discourse, on an appropriate and sufficiently comprehensive term that would encompass diverse categories of temporary and permanent migrants. As stated by Kovačević and Krstić (2011), the term “diaspora” shows to be analytically useless since it includes various groups of people who changed their place of residence for various reasons and left their home country to work and live abroad:

All of them have become a diaspora with the basic characteristic of belonging to “us” and being located “somewhere there” – emigrants who have been citizens of other countries for a long time; political emigrants after the Second World War; national minorities in the neighbouring countries; “temporary workers abroad”; the second wave of political and economic emigration during the wars in the former Yugoslavia; the first or the second generation of temporary workers’ children; and refugees. (Kovačević i Krstić 2011, 974)

Socio-Cultural Identity of Guest Workers: Perception and Self-perception

In our research, we started from the following questions that needed to be answered:

- a) On what basis is the identity of “being a guest worker” conceptualized?
- b) From whose perspective is this conceptualization performed?
- c) Which parameters influence the formation of the identity of a “guest worker”?
- d) In what ways is that identity presented?

During the 1960s and 1970s, the basis for the cognitive conceptualization of the term “guest worker” was established on the following premises (see Antonijević 2011a):

- *economic*: poverty and unemployment; guest workers as an obvious indicator of unsuccessful economic reforms in the former SFRY; private employment abroad in contrast to employment in the social and state sector in the SFRY;
- *socio-educational*: unqualified, low education, semi-literacy;
- *ideological*: the capitalist system of the Western European receiving countries in contrast to the communist/socialist system of the former Yugoslavia; communist indoctrination of working emigrants on the one hand and suspicion of their susceptibility to the “hostile” influences of political emigration on the other hand;
- *temporal*: temporary work abroad;
- *territorial*: home country in contrast to host country; villages from which they originated in contrast to urban and industrialised environments in which they found employment abroad.

These factors determined, so to speak, the “personality type” of the guest worker from Serbia (and the former Yugoslavia), who, by going to work abroad, encountered great challenges and changes in life habits and attitudes.

However, due to the aforementioned ideological reasons, the phenomenon of guest workers has long been marginalised in the public of the former Yugoslavia and remained outside the sphere of scientific interest. The Czech historian Ondřej Daniel also observes that guest workers were forgotten in academic papers in the Yugoslav context, although the popular culture that dealt with them provided many facts and testimonies about their lives (Daniel 2007, 283). Over time, the term “guest worker”, under the influence of the media and popular culture, gained new cognitive and evaluative connotations in the public realm and in the perception of “the rest of us” about them, which were based on derisive and belittling, and often stereotypical, views according to which guest workers are portrayed as ignorant, simple, “lost souls” in the “big white” world or as “peasant urbanites” and spendthrifts who “like to show off” in the home country (see Antonijević 2011a; Marković 2005, 2009). Such a perception of guest workers influenced the formation of additional elements of conceptualization based on:

- *lifestyle*: mirroring foreign cultural models, kitsch style, petty bourgeoisie;
- *forms of consumption*: excessive in the home country, modest in the country of immigration;
- *material and symbolic manifestation of status and prestige*: investing in unproductive forms of economy and consumption as indicators of newly acquired prosperity, such as showing off with huge and luxurious houses – sometimes of eccentric architecture, desirable car brands (Mercedes as a symbol of success),

glamorous and expensive weddings and baptisms, squandering on popular musicians when they come home on vacation, etc. (see Antonijević 2000; Antonijević 2013, 171–177; cf. Banić Grubišić 2012).

Having this in mind, one part of our analysis focused on the influence of popular culture in documentaries and feature films on the formation of the image of guest workers as wasteful and boastful in front of their relatives and friends at home, but on the other hand, showing the truth about their difficult adjustment to life abroad and concealment of various troubles, torments and problems that they encountered and had to overcome (see Antonijević 2013; Krstić 2013; Brujić 2017). We also analysed the perception of guest workers by their fellow citizens, also emigrants, but also their self-perception, in novels, essays and poetry (Antonijević 2013; Antonijević 2020; Kovačević i Antonijević 2018; Banić Grubišić 2019; Banić Grubišić 2020).

On the other hand, in our research we have focused, in fact, on the *self-perception of guest workers*, on how they think about and present themselves, which in some respects and valorisations certainly differs from how they are viewed and presented by their fellow citizens, either here or abroad (see Antonijević 2011a; Antonijević 2013; Antonijević, Banić Grubišić and Krstić 2011; Banić Grubišić 2011). Based on their statements and life stories, we tried to get an idea of what it meant to “be a guest worker”.

The frequently repeated sentences “we are strangers here and strangers there”, “I am a guest worker there, I am a guest worker here” influenced our decision to determine their socio-cultural identity as essentially *liminal* – as a cultural and socio-territorial bipolarity characterised by an intimate feeling of not belonging entirely to any community, i.e. belonging neither to the country of origin nor to the country of immigration. Low socio-economic status and poor knowledge of the language of the host country, and consequently weak communicative competence, often kept them outside the social and cultural environment of the country in which they worked and where they constantly felt as foreigners, and on the other hand, many years and even decades of absence from their native country distanced them from their compatriots and events in their home country. If we add the frequent cases of family separation, especially from the children who stayed in the home country⁸, it is clear why they constantly felt incompleteness, marginality and liminality.

⁸ Grandparents or other close relatives usually took care of children. The years of separation have influenced the alienation of children from their parents and their inability to get better mutual understanding and relationship in later life. Many of our interlocutors, who were children of guest workers, today regret that their parents compensated for their absence with expensive gifts and money, thus replacing daily warmth and closeness.

We would like to point out another important aspect of the identity of guest workers: their perception of changes in some habits, way of thinking and types of behaviour under the influence of living and working abroad, such as better work habits, values, accuracy, discipline, tidiness, cleanliness, respect for one's own and other people's time, frugality, etc. The positive valorisation of these changes is doubtlessly an important part of their self-consciousness, which makes these persons more objective, and even more critical in assessing the conditions of living both in the home country and in the receiving country.

The third important aspect is cherishing and maintaining ethnic awareness. The need for closeness with compatriots and preservation of ethnic and cultural identity, which they brought from the country of origin, was maintained through socialising and performing activities in the clubs they founded abroad; settling, if possible, in the same cities and even in the same neighbourhoods where they could talk and exchange information with one another almost daily; creating "social capital that migrants, in a foreign environment, desperately need" (see Kohlbacher et al. 2015, 459), and later through going to churches, participating in religious rites and traditional customs, nurturing the language in the family environment, visiting frequently their homeland, etc.

Therefore, we could say that the term "cross-cultural adaptation" (Nishida 1999, 762) can be used for the formation of the identity of our guest workers, which implies a complex process of transforming one's primary socio-cognitive scheme into the cultural scheme of the host country. Due to cross-cultural adaptation through the influence and mixing, accepting and conflicting of different cultural influences to which guest workers were exposed, many authors believe that over time migrants form the so-called *hybrid* or *intercultural identity* (see Pajić 2014).

Aspects of Integration of Migrants from Serbia in Austria

All migrants go through a complex process of socio-cultural adaptation in the countries of immigration, and this process consists of a series of transformations that lead to a gradual but increasing adoption of socio-cultural attitudes, habits and values of the host country, increasing the level of communication skills proportionally to the level of acquired knowledge about the language of the country of immigration (see Nishida 1999). These processes of transformation usually do not have much influence on the awareness of ethnic identity that persists in the third and fourth generations, but almost certainly have influence on socio-cultural identity – changes in behaviour, habits and values of migrants (Antonijević 2013, 96).

According to the definition of social psychologist John Berry, integration is an option that leads to a certain degree of preservation of one's own cultur-

al characteristics, primarily language, religion and other ethnic markers, while making efforts, on a daily basis, to become an integral part of the society and culture of the country of immigration. The success of this option also depends on the willingness and readiness of migrants to adapt to their new environment, and above all, to master the language of the new environment, and on the other hand, it depends on the country's immigration policy and the behaviour of its dominant group (see Berry 2001).

The process of adaptation is the most difficult and slowest in case of the first-generation migrants who have emigrated as adults and already formed individuals, maintaining close ties with their country of origin in terms of its habits, customs and value system. Adaptation was particularly difficult for the first generation of guest workers – people with poor education, unskilled, focused on hard physical work, without language skills, with little contact with the population of the host country and with a false hope that their work abroad was temporary (Kovačević i Antonijević 2018, 44).

During the interview, our interlocutors stated that integration for them was adaptation to the society in which they lived, a process of accepting its standards and cultural norms. Our research findings indicate that the first generations of guest workers were only better or worse adapted, and most of them never even wanted to integrate into Austrian society (see Antonijević 2013; Rašić 2020). Members of the first generation "... are not members of that people, they are only residents and users of certain privileges, but they remain on the margins with the feeling and awareness of otherness" (Antonijević 2011a, 1019). The next, second generation is presented in literature as "lost generation", slowly integrated and left to itself, which was subsequently confirmed by our research (see Davidović 1999, 19; Antonijević 2013, 71; Antonijević and Kovačević 2018, 45; Rašić 2020, 25–28). The third and subsequent generations of the descendants of migrants can actually be considered integrated because their socialisation, i.e. inclusion in the socio-cultural system, begins from their early childhood – they were born in Austria, attend different levels of education there, get employment there, make friends with Austrians, etc. (see Rašić 2020, 210–212).

Therefore, integration is a *process*, and not simply an achievable goal. Earlier researchers of this issue have mainly focused on the country of immigration and its policies developed to facilitate the integration of migrants. However, contemporary research is increasingly focusing not only on the country of immigration, but also on the country of emigration, and also on the migrants who are seen as subjects of internal and foreign policies – immigration and emigration (Uterreiner and Wiener 2017, 1–2). Our research and published works provide the analyses of three mentioned aspects – Austrian immigration policy and Serbian emigration policy (Rašić 2020), as well as personal experiences of migrants in the processes of integration (Antonijević 2011a; Antonijević, Banić Grubišić i Krstić 2011; Antonijević 2013; Rašić 2020).

In Austria, the issue of foreign workers was opened later than in Germany and other countries to which our citizens went to work temporarily, and until 1976 foreign workers were in a disadvantaged position, since there were no laws on the employment of foreigners (Latcheva and Herzog-Punzenberger 2011, 121; Ivanović 2012, 97; Castles 1986, 762). The Austrian integration policy has strong roots in the processes of “naturalisation” from the Austro-Hungarian era, when foreigners were mostly assimilated. The 1998 Law on Naturalisation prescribes a ten-year naturalisation process and clear criteria for acquiring citizenship – proof of integration, favourable economic situation, knowledge of the German language and absence of any offences (Wets 2006, 89). The Austrian Parliament passed the Law on Foreigners and the Law on Asylum in 2003, changing some details regarding migrants (Wets 2006, 91). Since 2011, integration policies have been developed, public documents have been published and the processes of the integration of foreigners have been statistically monitored (see Integration Report 2011, 10). These public documents and statistical reports were very useful for us during the research of the aspects of integration (see Rašić 2020, 204–209).

As regards the emigration policies of the Republic of Serbia, we cannot say that they are particularly elaborated. In fact, the Directorate for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed the *Strategy of Preserving and Strengthening Connections Between the Homeland and the Diaspora and the Homeland and Serbs in the Region*. However, the Strategy does not regulate or encourage emigrants to integrate into the country of immigration. On the contrary, it prescribes various ways that Serbian emigrants should use to keep awareness of their origin – learning their mother tongue, strengthening relations with the Serbian Orthodox Church, cooperation with experts from Serbia, etc. (see Rašić 2020, 190–193).

Identity of the Descendants of Guest Workers in Vienna

The third and fourth generations of migrants are (great-)grandchildren of the first and children or grandchildren of the second generation. They were born, fully socialised and practically integrated in the socio-cultural system of the country of immigration of their parents, also becoming nationals of those countries with a tag: “persons of migrant origin”. They are fully aware of their ethnic origin, and therefore despite their Austrian citizenship, do not consider themselves Austrians. However, unlike previous generations, they are more willing to feel “at home” in both Austria and Serbia. They prefer Austria because of a better standard, well-organised system, security, work and, of course, because of the closest family members and the fact that most of them were born and educated there, and consequently have peer friendships. On the other hand, they

love Serbia because of ethnic origin, wider circle of relatives, language and having a good time since they come here for vacation and holidays when they feel relaxed.

Studying the third generation of our migrants in Germany, Lazar Jovanović points out that their characteristic position is the feeling of “dual belonging”, which leads to the formation of a *fluid, hybrid identity* (Jovanović 2017, 150), which is also the situation of our young interlocutors in Vienna. As individuals with a dual position of Otherness, members of the third generation are able to manipulate their identity depending on the nature of relationships with others, building a hybrid identity as a contextual state, depending on their needs, situation and interests (Jovanović 2017, 158). Members of the third generation, unlike the first and second ones, do not necessarily experience this in a negative or immobilising way, but precisely as an opportunity for social mobility in different contexts (Jovanović 2017, 171).

In terms of language, the third and fourth generations are in a specific situation: some of them do not know or speak the language of their ethnic homeland, but the vast majority of our respondents in Vienna are bilingual and therefore able to benefit from the values and advantages of both cultural and linguistic environments. They use both languages in conversation, without major problems, easily switch from one language to another, but also use code-switching, which is usually referred to as “diaspora language” (see Vuletić 2016) or “guest worker speech” (see Ilić-Marković 2011). Their bilingual language competence largely depends on environmental factors: how much their parents insist on knowing their mother tongue and whether they use it in the family environment; whether they live in a foreign country with a large community of their compatriots with whom they are able to communicate on a daily basis in the language of their ethnic origin, as is the case in Vienna, participate in the activities of ethnically based cultural and artistic clubs, go often to the country of their ancestors for holidays and vacations, or they live in smaller, far away from the homeland and isolated emigrant communities, which have mainly forgotten and abandoned the language of their ethnic origin. In any case, it is important to point out that it is not always the language that connects members of the emigrant community of the third and fourth generations, but their ethnic origin, which is an aspect of their identity – according to Julijana Vuletić (Vuletić 2016, 602).

The authors who researched this generation pointed out that characteristic for many of them was the so-called “third generation interest” – the search for origins and interest in ancestral culture, which Marcus Hansen established as a principle in the behaviour of immigrant children as early as in 1938: “What the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember” (quoted from Bender and Kagiwada 1968, 360). In modern times, through communication technologies and social media, immigrant children come into contact with the culture of

their ancestors almost on a daily basis, creating a “community of feelings” with the country of origin (Antonijević 2013, 69; Jovanović 2017, 156). This is why many of them are members of Serbian cultural and artistic societies founded abroad, primarily folklore sections. However, they have little or no concrete and detailed knowledge of the history, politics, literature and arts of Serbia. Since they cannot learn this in their schooling in Austria, they gain possible knowledge either in the family environment or from the Serbian media and/or in the clubs in which they are active. In addition, most of them cannot write or read Cyrillic, and therefore it is not surprising that some cultural associations and churches in Vienna hold workshops for minor children of our emigrants where they learn the Serbian language and the Cyrillic script. That is why we conducted two research studies in which we tried to get some answers to concrete questions about how much, except declaratively, they were really familiar with and felt close to the ethnic and cultural identity of the country of ethnic origin – Serbia.

Following the recommendations of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which stresses the importance of young people in the process of preserving the ICH as a “living phenomenon”, but also hearing from our young interlocutors that “preserving tradition” was extremely important to them, our intention was to see how much they actually knew about the protected ICH elements included in the List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Elements of the Republic of Serbia.⁹ We conducted this preliminary and informative research using non-probability sampling, where the sample was composed of members of selected cultural and artistic societies in Serbia and the diaspora with whom we had already established contact.¹⁰ We selected the members of cultural and artistic societies based on the assumption that they potentially had more knowledge than the wider youth population, since they were in direct contact with various elements of cultural heritage – dance, music, traditional costumes, etc. Therefore, we considered it important to document and analyse the ways in which the descendants of our migrants used and perceived the ICH elements. It turned out that their knowledge about these elements was insufficient and incomplete, and that they were only familiar with the elements of intangible cultural heritage that they had the opportunity to be in direct, live contact with (Antonijević, Rašić i Banić Grubišić 2020, 1046–1055).

Through the activities performed as part of the project *Aspects of integration of the third and fourth generations of Serbian migrants in Austria*, we surveyed young Serbian migrants living in Vienna, and covered several different thematic units through which the degree of their integration could be seen – family, language, education, housing, socialising, relationship with the homeland, free

⁹ See more about the list at: <http://www.nkns.rs/cyr/elementi-nkns>.

¹⁰ The respondents were born mainly between 1996 and 2004.

time, etc. (see Antonijević i Rašić *in press*). The preliminary findings show that young members of the third and fourth generations in Vienna consider important to have a contact with the country of their ethnic origin through various types of activities they practice (listening to music from Serbia, following the media and watching TV programmes from Serbia, interacting with friends and relatives from Serbia through social media, watching guest performances of Serbian theatres, etc.). However, the fact that they were born and live in Austria, which they consider their home, is high on their scale of values, and therefore the vast majority of them would never even consider the possibility of living in Serbia.

The Role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Vienna

There are three Orthodox churches that gather our migrants in Vienna: the Cathedral of Saint Sava in the 3rd municipality, built in 1893; the Church of the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God in the 16th municipality – located in the premises of the former Evangelical Church; and the Church of the Resurrection of Christ in the 2nd municipality, built in 2002 (see Haider-Labudović 2007, 90). During the research, our interlocutors often mentioned the Serbian Orthodox Church in Vienna, which is why in 2017 we organised an interview with Peter Pantić, a priest in Vienna, serving in the Church of the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God. We were interested in the relationship between the Serbian Orthodox Church in Vienna and other Serbian institutions and individuals, and whether the Serbian Orthodox Church in that city served as one more place for gathering and identification of Serbian migrants.

As our research has shown, initially, the primary place of the gathering of migrants was not the church, but clubs. Due to the former Yugoslavia's ideological suspicion that migrants would be susceptible to the "negative" influences of political emigration, and because of their communist upbringing, during the 20th century migrants rarely went to church, and when they did, it was usually on Sundays in order to see each other and exchange the information of significance for their life abroad. The first decade of the 21st century saw a mass return to the church, which gathered more and more of its parishioners in Vienna, and began to organise various events, schools and training courses. The Serbian Orthodox Church also cooperates with cultural and educational associations, such as "Prosvjeta", and they jointly organise the school of the Serbian language and the Cyrillic script for children and youth. The church also began to perform certain religious rituals outside the church buildings, as the priest Pantić testified, describing the procession in Vienna: "The procession went for the first time this year, from the Temple of St. Sava in the 3rd municipality, and all the way to here... it went for 4 kilometres... there were, in fact, 400–500 people."

Most of the respondents in our research declared themselves to be religious, although they stated that they went to church very rarely, most often at the time of major religious holidays, such as Christmas and Easter. Although so far we have not published extensive papers concerning the Serbian Orthodox Church and migrants in Vienna, a small part of this topic was addressed in the doctoral dissertation of Miloš Rašić (see Rašić 2020, 108–111).

Examining the work of the church in Vienna, it becomes clear that it has always had a cohesive role for migrants – initially it was a gathering place for the exchange of important information, but later it fulfilled its basic function in terms of gathering migrants for the purpose of performing religious rituals and prayers. The Orthodox Church has never played a significant role in encouraging the integration of Serbian migrants into Austrian society, but through its activities, cooperation and programmes, has sought to present and strengthen among migrants the elements of the cultural and ethnic identity that has bound them to their homeland – the Serbian language, the Cyrillic script, religious rituals, elements of history and tradition, etc.

Amateur Art of Emigrants

Amateur art is not rare among our emigrants. Since we encountered this type of public engagement during our research, some of our analyses and papers focus on that specific area of emigrant life and artistic experience. It should be noted that the work of Serbian clubs in Vienna is also a form of amateur art, which has its roots in the Yugoslav policies of cultural and artistic amateurism (see Rašić 2017). However, due to the specific artistic style, characteristic work policies and long tradition of activities, we have dealt with clubs in a separate thematic section. At this point, we will present contemporary amateur practices, mainly in the field of theatre, acting and literature.

From the very beginning of our research in Vienna, we met and then continued to socialise with Darko Markov – a taxi driver, writer, poet, blogger, amateur actor and director, founder of the amateur acting troupe “Non-Aligned Amateurs” (*Nesvrstani diletanti*). We had the opportunity to watch one of the plays that Markov directed and acted in, to interview some of his actors/guest workers and find out what had attracted them to acting and how much it meant to them in everyday life when, after work and other duties, they went to rehearsals in the evening. Markov’s troupe performs their plays on various improvised stages in Vienna, but they also succeeded to perform repeatedly on the real stage of the Sargfabrik Theatre. The importance of amateur theatrical groups is usually reflected in alternative social and cultural engagement or political resistance, which is also the function of Markov’s humorous plays whose main theme is a parody of the “public” and “cultural” life of Serbs in the Austrian capital (see Antonijević i Rašić 2018).

Unlike in cases of engaging in amateur acting, directing, painting or music, “the non-existence of a ‘school for writers’ does not mean that writers who have experienced the situations they write about do not have a certain ‘epistemological privilege’” (Kovačević i Antonijević 2018, 51). Precisely the emigrants whose works we have analysed (Markov, Popović, Mrkić and Trumbetaš) are such writers whose novels deal with the life of guest workers that they observed directly and participated in it.

Markov is the author of two novels about the life of guest workers in Vienna, which could be classified as *faction* – a combination of fiction and factography with extensive ethnographic data (see Narayan 1999, 134). His first book entitled “Twilight in a Vienna Hallway”, which he performs as a monodrama, was the subject of Dragana Antonijević’s analysis, and also a literary-ethnographic source for studying the lives of our guest workers, since the author built the story and characters based on real people and their experiences, thus constructing their cultural identity through the narrative (see Antonijević 2013; Kovačević i Antonijević 2018). Dragana Antonijević analysed also his second novel “Twilight in a Vienna Hallway 2 – Grandmother Boska” within the topic of emigrant literature in the journal *Issues in Ethnology and Anthropology* (Antonijević 2020). We analysed also Nenad Popović’s essay entitled “The World in the Shadows” (Kovačević i Antonijević 2018), because it provides a certain anthropological view of the phenomenon of guest workers, not only by describing their lives but occasionally delving into the causes and consequences of their exodus. Another guest worker, Romano Mrkić, and his novel “Taxi Driver from Munich” were analysed by Ana Banić Grubišić within the same topic on emigrant literature (Banić Grubišić 2020). In some of her works, Ana Banić Grubišić analysed the amateur activity of the Croatian guest worker Drago Trumbetaš in the field of literature, poetry and painting (see Banić Grubišić 2018; Banić Grubišić 2019).

Serbian Clubs in Vienna

Serbian clubs in Vienna are cultural and artistic associations established by Yugoslav guest workers through self-organisation processes, in order to serve as places for gathering, communication in their mother tongue, mutual assistance and organisation of various sports and cultural-artistic sections (see Dragišić 2010; Ivanović 2012; Rašić 2017; Rašić 2020). The first club was established in Vienna in 1970 – the “International Club of Young Yugoslavs”, and after a few months, a very active club “Unity” (*Jedinstvo*) was formed. Their policies were in line with the socio-political situation in the home country – until the end of the 1980s they functioned as Yugoslav clubs, and were later divided based on

nationality/ethnicity, and ever since have increasingly expressed their national/ethnic identities through their work (see Rašić 2017, 697–700).

Until recently, the research of Serbian clubs in the diaspora was neglected. There are sporadic papers in which the authors deal with these clubs or in which they provide certain information about their importance for the life of Serbian emigrants in the diaspora (see Dragišić 2010; Ivanović 2012; Stefanović Banović i Pantović 2014). That is why we intended to focus, in several projects, papers and a doctoral dissertation, on the research of clubs that continue to be the places of gathering for a large number of Serbian migrants in Vienna. Some of the basic topics related to clubs and addressed in our projects are: events (Rašić 2016), the emergence and development of clubs (Rašić 2017), education in clubs (Antonijević, Rašić i Banić Grubišić 2020), as well as the institutional identity constructions (Rašić 2020) and their presentations through artistic practices (Rašić 2021a; Rašić 2021b).

We conducted research in the three largest Serbian clubs in Vienna: Cultural and Sports Association “Jedinstvo” (Unity), founded in 1970; Cultural and Sports Association “Bambi”, founded in 1973; Cultural and Artistic Association “Stevan Mokranjac”, founded in 1998. In addition to these, three other smaller associations operate occasionally: Cultural and Artistic Association “Branko Radičević”, founded in 1983; Serbian Cultural and Artistic Association “Karađorđe”, founded in 2008; Cultural and Artistic Association “Kolo” (Circle Dance), founded in 2009. We conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with presidents, artistic directors, external associates, as well as club members. In addition, we conducted several interviews with the managers of the so-called umbrella organisations, which include all clubs and represent their unions – the Union of Serbs in Vienna and the Union of Serbs in Austria.

Since 2016, we have had several projects entirely dedicated to clubs, starting with the project “Presentation of the civic and traditional cultural heritage of the Association of Serbs in Vienna and the issue of their integration.” Since we had noticed in the previous research that the Serbs in Vienna expressed their national identity in two different ways – civic and traditional, our intention was to establish the differences in the ways of expressing identity. We conducted the research in Vienna by interviewing the representatives of Serbian clubs and educational and cultural associations. The next two projects, “Intangible cultural heritage in cultural-artistic societies and cultural-educational associations in Serbia and the diaspora – education and presentation” and “Research of knowledge and preservation of intangible cultural heritage among youth in Serbia and the diaspora”, aimed to establish the level of knowledge of the ICH elements of Serbia among the youth in Vienna, but also to find out which elements of this heritage continued to be a living tradition among them (Antonijević, Rašić, Banić Grubišić 2020).

Our personal impression is that the clubs have elements associated with the homeland, including some that still have a completely Yugoslav/socialist aesthetic. In order to enter one of the oldest clubs in Vienna, you need to go down the stairs to the basement, where there is a large hall with the tables set along its entire length and an improvised space for rehearsals of the folklore section at the end. Right next door, there is the main part of the club – a kitchen with a tavern. While going down the mentioned entrance stairs, you will be welcomed with Serbian traditional or newly-composed folk music, the smell of cigarette smoke, alcohol and barbecue. All people in these premises communicate in Serbian and have heated discussions about the political situation in Serbia, consume food and drink or participate in a folklore dance rehearsal – all these activities often take place in parallel and simultaneously. New generations of Serbian guest workers' descendants are growing up in such an atmosphere. They perceive the club as their “second home”, a place where they socialise with their compatriots, “preserving the tradition of their homeland”, although that homeland is not necessarily theirs, but of their ancestors who, in most cases, left it decades ago.

*About the Old Age of Guest Workers:
Strategies for Life in Retirement*

“As long as it concerns the economy of a developed industrial country, migrant workers are immortal... they do not get old; they do not tire; they do not die.” (Hunter 2011, 179)

When in 2014 we developed a project on the culture of memory and the nostalgia of guest workers, after having noticed in the previous research not only nostalgia for the homeland, but also nostalgia for the time of the former Yugoslavia, as well as an ambivalent desire to return to Serbia, we did not assume that our interviews and observed problems of the elderly population of guest workers would lead our research to another direction. Following the link between the *anthropology of migration* and the *anthropology of old age*, we focused on the life strategies of retired guest workers.

As regards retirement, migrant workers who went abroad to work “temporarily” face a problematic issue of further social status in the receiving countries. This topic has been neglected in Serbian science, and has recently attracted the attention of the global scientific community (see Warnes and Williams 2006). The previous literature on retired migrants usually dealt with the topic of guest workers returning to their homeland and sending foreign remittances to their families in the country of origin, but it turned out that a large number of re-

tired migrant workers remained in the receiving countries until very old age, due to which a more comprehensive consideration of their status, pension and social benefits began in Europe, along with various forms of support for this population still marginalised in terms of their nationality, and their social and economic status. We wanted to check the situation related to guest workers from Serbia – whether they returned to their homeland after retirement or not, how they valued their old age and what life choice strategies they made in retirement (Antonijević i Milosavljević 2016a; 2016b).

The return to the homeland is inherent to the very phenomenon of “guest worker”. Both home and host country assumed that guest workers would stay temporarily, several years, until they earned money, and then return to their homeland, which was one of the constant elements of their thoughts and plans. However, it happened that they actually stayed! As the reasons for their extended stay abroad to work accumulated over time, their life was turning into a “permanent temporality” (Antonijević 2013, 247–251), and they eventually received a pension in the country of “temporary” residence. “Both they and the local population considered that the work they performed was the justification of their presence. When they retire, however, they cease to be ‘guest workers’ and the question of their status arises, together with the reason for staying or leaving the host country” (Bolzman et al. 2006, 1360–1361). Since they were a transitory phenomenon for the countries in which they stayed for the purpose of work, for a long time no one cared about elderly guest workers who became a new phenomenon in the host countries – “guest pensioners” (*Gastrentner*), while in Serbia they were “new” old men or “foreign currency pensioners”¹¹ (Antonijević i Milosavljević 2016a, 115).

When we asked our respondents about their plans after retirement, we mainly received two types of contradictory answers. Some have already returned or are firmly determined to return to their homeland, “to be among their own kind” – as they say, expecting a more comfortable life with foreign pensions in the new houses they have built in the meantime. Others stressed that they did not intend to return, that they were alienated from their homeland to some degree and that they were better off abroad because of quality health services, but also because of children and grandchildren living in Austria, and therefore saw no reason to return to their homeland.

However, a new and increasingly frequent pattern of behaviour of retired migrants of different nationalities, including Serbian guest workers, has been noticed, which in the literature is already referred to as a “halfway choice”

¹¹ Persons who receive a pension in euros and not in Serbian dinars, and whose foreign pension largely exceeds the amount of the average pension in Serbia, which makes their life in the homeland, once they return, much easier from the financial aspect.

(Bolzman et al. 2006, 1373) or as an “oscillating movement” of retired workers (Ganga 2006, 1406). In other words, an increasing number of retired migrants turn their desire to return to their homeland into a decision on dual residency, which means that they are present, reside and exercise their privileges throughout the year in both countries – home and host. Many of our respondents confirmed to us this new, “third option” of life strategy in old age as their decision about the way of life in retirement (see Antonijević i Milosavljević 2016b).

A special part of our research focuses on the strategies implemented by relatives who work abroad with respect to their elderly parents or relatives who stayed in the homeland, but also with respect to guest worker returnees who were forced to retire early because of disability resulting from various diseases. Their choices, although made reluctantly, were mostly related to placement in nursing homes, which is the strategy that also the Gerontology Society of Serbia tried to promote in order to attract elderly guest workers to domestic nursing homes, but also to stimulate the so-called diaspora to invest in this type of service for the elderly. In this regard, we visited two nursing homes in Kučevo and talked to their residents who had been guest workers or their relatives who had placed them in the nursing home due to inability to care for them in other way (see Milosavljević i Antonijević 2015).

The age of guest workers and their life strategies open up a series of questions for both the home country and the host country in economic, social, health and demographic terms. For example, there is a question of the real quality of their life in old age, regardless of whether they returned to their home country or stayed in the host country, since each of these options leads to different circumstances and consequences for them. There is also a question of the possible cessation of the inflow of foreign remittances to the home country in cases where the whole family moved away forever and no one will return, and these remittances have been a significant source of budget revenue for Serbia for decades since the guest workers’ relatives used to spend the received amounts in the home country. Finally, this situation is evidenced by the closed and locked luxurious houses of guest workers in which no one lives and no one will live, as well as the abandoned villages in Serbia, as a result of both external and internal migrations.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

As we said in the Introduction, the field of research of guest workers and their descendants, and emigrants in general, is extremely broad and complex. Therefore, there is no conclusion, just like there is no fully completed research.

Dealing with various topics in the aforementioned research projects, we have clearly understood that migrations are complex processes, depending on various

socio-political, cultural, economic, but also individual factors. In discussing the aforementioned topics, it is necessary to refer to a specific group of migrants, since being a migrant does not always imply the same experience, i.e. the experiences of guest workers differ from the experiences of other emigrant groups – for example, intellectual emigrants, political emigrants, asylum seekers, war refugees, etc. On the other hand, it is important to refer to and focus on a specific territory, because the life of migrants is conditioned by local policies that can differ not only in different countries, but also in different places of the same country. Hence, emigrants in Vienna have been and will certainly remain the focus of our research in the future.

Migration is a “life project” – to use the phrase of some authors (Latcheva and Herzog-Punzenberger 2011, 12), and therefore, in each research project, we insisted on the personal experiences of individuals who helped us shed light on the various aspects of life and culture of Serbian guest workers and their descendants.

In this paper we just wanted to present our ten-year work and some of the topics we opened, researched, analysed and wrote about, hoping to arouse scientific curiosity and usefully inform future researchers of these and similar topics. Many of the topics we touched upon are still pending an analysis and in-depth research. For example, in our papers we dealt with an important topic of first-generation return migration, but the issue of return migration and, in general, transnationality and mobility of the second and third generations continues to be an important field for our future research studies, in particular due to the fact that the mobility of Serbian migrants in Austria towards Serbia, because of its proximity, is extremely high and frequent and plays an important role in their lives. Another important and interesting topic refers to cultural policies of Serbian civil cultural and educational associations in Vienna. There are several of such associations and they are very active. We have repeatedly discussed this with various interlocutors. The work on discursive analysis of their websites is also important.

The anthropology of migration provides a number of challenging topics and tasks, not only to us but also to future researchers. By combining different approaches, exchanging experiences and applying a broad comparative perspective, it is possible to get the necessary holistic insight into the researched phenomenon.¹²

¹² We believe that interdisciplinary and inter-institutional cooperation is not only desirable, but also necessary. We advocate for establishing, through joint projects, a stronger and deeper regional and international connection of all researchers who deal with the complex phenomenon of migrant workers, both in the home country and in the host country.

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*Decenija proučavanja gastarbajtera kroz projekte
Etnološko-antropološkog društva Srbije*

Ovaj pregledni rad nudi presek desetogodišnjih antropoloških istraživanja kulturnog identiteta gastarbajtera i njihovih potomaka kroz projekte koji su realizovali saradnici Odeljenja za etnologiju i antropologiju Filozofskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Beogradu i Etnografskog instituta SANU. Projekte su podržali Etnološko-antropološko društvo Srbije i Filozofski fakultet u Beogradu. Fenomen „radnika na privremenom radu u inostranstvu“, odnosno tzv. gastarbajtera, koji datira od početka 60ih godina 20. veka i nastavio se u narednim decenijama, dugo je ostao po strani interesovanja srpske antropološke i etnološke nauke. To je i bio razlog zbog čega smo 2010. godine započeli antropološko istraživanje kulturnog identiteta gastarbajtera, uočivši „prazan prostor“ u naučnom bavljenju ovim fenomenom. Namera je bila da se u obzir uzmu različiti faktori konstrukcije identiteta gastarbajtera i iz različitih uglova sagledaju procesi, diskursi i predstave vezane za ovu socio-kulturnu grupu. Vremenom, kako smo dublje zalazili u problem radnih migranata i migracija uopšte, naša interesovanja, a samim tim i istraživanja, proširila su se i na druge teme osim kulturnog identiteta. U tom

smislu, ovaj pregledni rad ima nameru da informiše naučnu i stručnu javnost o rezultatima istraživanja migranata na privremenom radu u inostranstvu i njihovih potomaka, da istakne neke najvažnije istraživačke teme kojima smo se bavili, uz svest o tome da je fenomen migranata i migracija toliko raznovrstan da je nemoćuće obuhvatiti niti istražiti sve što taj fenomen čini tako kompleksnim.

Ključne reči: migracije, migranti, antropologija, gastarbajteri, kulturni identitet, Srbija, Beč

Une décennie de recherches sur les gasterbeiteurs dans les projets de l'Association ethno-anthropologique de Serbie

Cet article de synthèse offre une revue des recherches anthropologiques sur l'identité culturelle des gasterbeiteurs et de leurs descendants à travers les projets réalisés par les chercheurs du Département d'ethnologie et d'anthropologie de la Faculté de Philosophie de l'Université de Belgrade et de l'Institut ethnographique de l'Académie serbe des sciences et des arts (acronyme serbe: SANU). Les projets ont été soutenus par l'Association ethno-anthropologique de Serbie et la Faculté de Philosophie de Belgrade. Le phénomène des « travailleurs temporaires à l'étranger », appelés gasterbeiteurs, qui date du début des années 60 du 20e siècle et s'est poursuivi dans les décennies suivantes, est longtemps resté en dehors de l'intérêt de la science anthropologique et ethnologique serbe. C'est pourquoi, après avoir identifié « un espace vide » dans les recherches scientifiques sur ce phénomène, nous avons entrepris en 2010 une recherche anthropologique sur l'identité culturelle des gasterbeiteurs. L'intention a été de prendre en compte différents facteurs de construction de l'identité des gasterbeiteurs et d'examiner sous différents angles les processus, les discours et les représentations liés à ce groupe socioculturel. Avec le temps, comme nous avançons dans nos recherches sur le problème des travailleurs migrants et des migrations en général, nos intérêts, et par conséquent nos recherches, se sont élargis à des sujets en dehors l'identité culturelle. En ce sens, cet article de synthèse a l'intention d'informer le public scientifique et expert sur les résultats des recherches sur les migrants travailleurs temporaires à l'étranger et leurs descendants, de signaler certains des sujets de recherche les plus importants que nous avons abordés, conscients cependant que le phénomène des migrants et des migrations est si varié qu'il est impossible d'englober ou d'explorer tout ce qui le rend complexe.

Mots clés: migrations, migrants, anthropologie, gasterbeiteurs, identité culturelle, Serbie, Vienne

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