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# National Report on WP4 (National Identity and the Media")

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FYROM

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Grant Agreement no. 216065

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## 1. Corpus Description

### 1.1. Film. Corpus structure and selection criteria

Two major categories of film production produced after 1989 have been analyzed, namely documentary and feature films.

Firstly, in depth analyses were made to feature films which explicitly consider migration, identity, gender, and imagotypical representations as their main theme, such *Before the Rain* directed by Milcho Manchevski, 1994 and *Across the Lake* directed by Antonio Mitrikeski, 1997.

Furthermore, two documentaries were analyzed *Cash and Marry* directed by Atanas Georgiev Macedonian-Austrian-Croatian production, 2009, a documentary which poses the question of migration in contemporary EU context and implicitly targets the reflections it has on perception of marriage as one of the main gender matrix. Another documentary analyzed *The Shutka Book of Records. The Champions of Shutka* directed by Aleksandar Manic, Serbia-Macedonian production, 2005, a film particularly interesting because of its hesitation on the limit between being a documentary and feature film, although officially defined as documentary.

Several criteria were taken into account while making the selection of films to be analyzed. The first important note making is that the selection of films was restricted by the very quantity of films available and produced in Macedonia, in general, and particularly the small number of films which tackle the issues and problems of interest for our research. The movie production as a basic part of the institutionally organized cinematography in Macedonia was born in 1947 with the establishment of "Vardar Film". Macedonia gained its own national cinematography by founding this production company. Namely, Macedonian cinematography since its official beginnings in the 1947 (in 1952 was recorded the first Macedonian long-length feature film 'Frosina') has produced around 60 long-length feature films up to date, and around 500 short- and long-length documentaries in the period till 1990 Macedonia production was releasing approximately one film per year, although there are even salient leaps of complete absence of film production in some years. The total of films produced in Macedonia in the period of about 40 years corresponds to the one-year film production in Yugoslavia in this same period. In the period relevant for our research these above mentioned are the only films which, more or less, directly target the theme of migration.

Important criteria for the selection was the relevance of the film in regards to the research goal of mapping and analyzing the patterns and models of constructing hetero- and auto-images, that is, representation and stereotypization of the national/ethnic/gender others/self in the context of current debates on migration and identity related issues in Macedonian cinematography, in a synchronically determined frame from 1989 to 2009, as well as exploring the possible intertwining of the axes of gender and identity in the context of migration and imagotypical representations of the other. Furthermore, the selection criteria was driven by the relevance the films have in reflecting the contemporary cultural, political, social and economic constellation worldwide and the specific position of Macedonia in this constellation, as well as by their specificity in relation to the film tradition in

Macedonia, in particular the films that before 1989 were visualizing and problematizing the topic of migration. By these means, the films selected show a salient level of divergence from their predecessors and hold a critical stance towards the contemporary problems in the context of migration, and the cultural and geo-political position of Macedonia in the context of EU.

Another criterion taken into consideration was the degree of international distribution and participation on international film festivals, as well as the imprint the films have left in the Macedonian artistic, cinematic and cultural/public context. In these terms, all of the films selected have either won several awards on international festivals or have just participated and provoked a lot of discussions. This criterion was important since it was important to trace the imagotypical representations in their disseminational context, the local and the international, as the ones respectively represented.

Although only indirectly focusing on migration issue *The Shutka Book of Records* *The Champions of Shutka* was selected because it is essentially provocative when taking into account imagotypical representations of Roma people and the models of problematization of gender issues these sort of representations imply.

Finally, a notice worded mentioning is that it was very hard making a strict distinction in the selection process among films produced from the receiving and films produced in the sending society, since all of the films selected are directed by Macedonian directors who have themselves spent a remarkable period of their lives in migration, mostly during their higher education in film studies, or while working in their professional field in foreign countries. This notice can be further supplemented by the fact that all these films are the outcome of co-productions which is a frequent practice since Macedonian cinematography, as already mentioned, does not have long tradition, but also because there are not sufficient financial and well developed technical conditions that could provide the possibility for single, Macedonian, production.

## **1.2 Film summaries**

### **1.2.1 Feature films**

#### **- Before the Rain (1994) –BR**

The film's plot is structured in three parts, in the form of triptych. "Words," the first segment, is shot against the background of a remote, mountainous landscape in northern Macedonia.. In an Orthodox monastery, Kiril (Gregoire Colin), a young monk who has taken a vow of silence, shelters Zamira (Labena Mitevska), a sixteen-year-old Albanian Muslim girl in flight from a warmongering band of Macedonian nationalist peasants. When Kiril and Zamira become lovers and are expelled from the monastery, they encounter a group of men from her family who call her "whore" and "slut" and accuse her of killing a peaceful shepherd. Zamira tries to follow Kiril but is shot down by her own brother, leaving Kiril adrift in a treacherous world. The second segment, "Faces," is set in metropolitan London. Anne (Katrin Cartlidge), an art director at a photo agency (her desk strewn with Balkan atrocity pictures), discovers she is pregnant and must decide whether to return to her estranged husband, Nick (Jay Villiers), or leave him for her lover, Aleksandr (Rade Serbedzija). A glamorous but

disillusioned Pulitzer Prize-winning war photographer, Aleksandr left his native Macedonia long ago. He decides to return to his homeland, and to return alone when Anne cannot make up her mind to join him. She goes to meet her husband at a sedate restaurant to tell him of her pregnancy and ask for a divorce. An unexplained argument between a Macedonian stranger and a waiter ends with the stranger being thrown out; moments later, he returns to gun down staff and guests. Anne survives but finds her husband dead. The foreboding atmosphere turns even more threatening in the final segment, "Pictures." Aleksandr leaves London and returns home. He is crossing into the Albanian Muslim quarter in search of Hana, his boyhood love. For his crossing of the increasingly rigid boundaries between ethnic communities, he is greeted with hostile mistrust by armed Muslims at a checkpoint and taunted by Christian villagers. When one of Aleksandr's cousins is found murdered, his relatives kidnap Hana's daughter Zamira (who, we remember, is the pursued girl of the first segment). Hana visits Aleksandr after dark and begs him to protect Zamira. He intervenes in the dispute but, fleeing with Zamira, is killed by one of his own cousins. Zamira escapes toward the local monastery, and in cyclical manner the last part gets connected to the very beginning of the film.

- **Across the Lake(1997) –AC**

In the period of Albanian nationalist communism and the dictatorship of ~~Ho~~ Hoxha, a young Macedonian decides to cross the border, the lake in order to meet his bride from Albania. Inspired by a true story this film was preceded by a documentary titled as the "The Love of Kocho Topencharov" directed by the same director. In the filmed version, Kostantin Bocharov in Ohrid meets Elena Zlatareva, a Macedonian girl leaving in Korcha, Albania. After she leaves, the Albanian borders are closed. Konstantin in yearning to see Elena and decides to undertake a great adventurous step, that is to go across the lake. He departs for a trip from which he'll not come back home for the next 40 years. When arriving in Albania, he is found in the lake by an old Albanian man who helps him. Unfortunately, Konstantin is caught by the State police and they refuse believing his story, interpellating him as State enemy and imprisoning him. Treated as a spy, he is tortured, closed in a prison camp and put under severe surveillance, discipline and violence. Released of the camp as a gift for his hard work, Konstantin finds finally Elena and together they start their joint life. He finds job in Tirana, where they have a daughter, but the life under such hard conditions of permanent stress and poverty starts reflecting in their relation as well. Konstantin longs for his home. He will get once again imprisoned in a camp. After years, he gets out of the camp, goes to his wife and daughter and together the three of them cross the Albanian-Macedonian border.

### **1.2.2 Documentaries**

- **Cash and Marry(2009) –CM**

A documentary telling the story of young immigrants – 'Yugos' – doing anything they can to pursue their dream in the European Union. The film presents the emigrants, shows their background, asking the questions about their own motivation and ideas while at the same time presenting the procedure and life-changes they go through. The author, Atanas Georgiev, is one of the main characters in the

movie, who reflects the Balkan man closed behind the visa regime, looking for a way to break down the wall between the Balkans and the world/EU. The only possibility is getting a EU passport and the passport comes with a European wife. With the help of his friend Marko, born in Sarajevo who knows very well Vienna and all the places where a wife can be found they go through the entire labyrinth of the administrative halls in the Austrian state. They find a young communist student girl who is willing to help him, but unfortunately the registry officer finds out about the film he is doing and the set marriage does not succeed. Atanas has to come back home.

- **The Shutka Book of Records: The Champions of Shutka (2005) – CH**

Director Aleksandar Manic's *The Shutka Book of Records* was filmed in the biggest predominantly Roma settlement in the Balkans. Shutka, or Suto Orizari, near Skopje, was originally set up by homeless families following the earthquake that devastated the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia in 1963. The film introduces a number of lively local characters, all of whom claim to be champions of some bizarre discipline, be it exorcising evil genies, spending the biggest amount of money on a circumcision party, training ganders to fight, or collecting old Turkish music on audio tapes. Although the Romani may not have an official national identity, this self-assured and playful documentary demonstrates that they nevertheless have a rich cultural one. Whimsically narrated by one of Shutka's local heroes, the film introduces us to the local color, like Uncle Sulgo, an avuncular, champion vampire hunter who paces around town in a black Adidas tracksuit and is quick to dismiss popular vampire stereotypes. As he explains, vampires, which are highly feared in the town, are not of human flesh; rather, they are spirits whose great weakness is fire.

We also meet Uncle Veso, champion love maker and clothing merchant, who has just fathered a child at the age of 75. The boisterous Veso has renamed the mother of his child after the South American television soap opera *Kassandra*, which the entire town of Shutka watches every week. Although the Roma are not impervious to the influence of Western entertainment, it certainly doesn't dominate their culture. As the director himself would say *The Shutka Book of Records* portrays a Roma/Gypsy enclave in the southern Balkans and reveals the extraordinary vivacity of a small but unique town, known to every Roma in the world as SHUTKA.

Located near Skopje, the capital of FYROM, Shutka is the alleged world capital of the Roma/Gypsies. I like to call this film an anthropological documentary comedy about people who crave to be best at what they do - whether this is exterminating evil Genies, hunting down vampires or collecting obsolete Turkish music on audio tapes.

Various press articles have stated that this film is the first of its kind which does not portray Roma as a marginalized ethnic, but rather shows them as "champions of life," not as losers.

Shutka, for me, also represents the mentality of the entire Balkans, its folly and craziness.

In this film I have, in a way, tried to re-erect the lost world of the former Yugoslavia as we new it before the great wars - as a space filled with genuine joy of life, with laughter and passion

### **1.3 Written Press. Corpus Structure and Selection Criteria**

The selection corpus for the analysis derives from two different newspapers, notably 'Dnevnik' and 'Nova Makedonija', both published in Macedonian language. In 2003 the ownership structure of the most circulated daily newspaper in „Dnevnik,, changed along with the two other large daily newspapers (Utrinski Vesnik and Vest) when it was undertaken by OST Holding Vienna (WAZ), which owns over 90 % of the capital (Trpevska, 298: 2006) .

International monitoring has shown that "Dnevnik" has the highest degree of objective and neutral informing among all printed media. At present their political orientation, as they claim is neutral. However, the analysts agree that it is pro-liberal oriented, meaning on the left side, favouring the opposition political parties (especially the Social-Democratic position), their current activities and policy.

The last state-owned daily newspaper "Nova Makedonija" was sold to a private owner in 2002. Nowadays is perceived as one of the newspapers that favour the ruling party and the Government in general. However, even though the media claim independency from the political pressure and transparency, the European Commission 2009 Progress Report has stressed that the ownership of the printed media is still concentrated, and therefore lacks transparency.

The period of analysis of the newspaper articles is from 2007 to 2009. While making the preliminary selection it was noted that numerous relevant articles exist in the period 2005-2007, which is a period for analysis prior to what has been agreed by all partners. However, upon consultation it was decided that this research should focus on the agreed period to portray the recent discourses even though the 2005/2007 period is perhaps more comprehensive and provides more substantive first-hand findings.

During the initial phase of drafting the research, there was an intention for examining an Albanian newspaper, respectively in order to get full insight of the representations of migration i.e. trafficking, gender and national identity. However, after the conducted preliminary inquiry, it has been concluded that it is not possible to analyse even those Albanian newspapers that are considered as more advanced (for ex. Lajm and Koha) due to the lack of both, physical and electronic archive, particularly related to the analysed period of 2007-2009.

The selection corpus is comprised of 14 articles from Dnevnik, and seven articles from Nova Makedonija. From the latter newspaper, only one relevant article has been found for 2009. There is a discrepancy between both newspapers in terms of number of articles published in the period under examination, which are relevant for the research, Dnevnik has double more articles comparing to Nova-Makedonija. Also there is a variation in regard to the format of narratives, in case of Dnevnik, there were 12 standard articles, one commentary by a journalist and one confession and interview with a victim of trafficking whereas the corpus from Nova Makedonija contains only standard articles.



In general, serious concerns arose about the overall number of the corpus available from both sources and its relevance for the research, particularly whether it would objectively and comprehensively represent the subject under the research. Such situation is substantiated by referring to the 'Report on the monitoring of the media coverage of human trafficking issues in Macedonia' carried out by the Macedonian Institute for Media (hereinafter: MIM).

Even though this monitoring is not directly related to the subject of the current research (gender, migration and national identity) it is however linked with the case study under consideration since it examines the media representation of human trafficking. The abovementioned monitoring was conducted in two subsequent periods, notably from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and the second phase from 15<sup>th</sup> of February until 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 and was aimed to monitor the quantity and quality of reporting on trafficking issues of both, national electronic media and national newspapers.

In first monitoring period, the printed media published nine articles related to the trafficking. In the second monitoring period, an increase of published articles on trafficking was noted, namely 41 articles from the printed media. Nevertheless, this is still small number, since those articles came out from nine various newspapers even though the monitoring referred to a period of one month. This means that the monitored newspapers published between four to nine articles in average per month. When this conclusion is placed into relation of the research, the available average number of articles lowers down since not all articles refer closely to what is the particular interest of the research and thus pre-selection should be made.

The main corpus for analysis was selected by taking into account the subject and goal of the research. It is necessary to stress out that was difficult to select among relevant corpus, because the stories related to trafficking in the print media and especially in newspapers that were chosen for analysis referred mainly to actions and raids by police, criminal proceedings undertaken by the authorities to suppress trafficking, etc. Therefore, additional efforts and preliminary selection were employed in order to choose among the most relevant articles from the corpus of stories related to trafficking. Thus, the selection criteria in particular focused on the subject and the content of the article, its title and accompanied photo.

Attention was placed on articles that deal with victims of trafficking, their portraits, those that emphasize the national identity of the victims (i.e. Srbinka, Bugarka and etc) but as well as those that underline the inter-ethnic identity and mostly those that talk about the trafficking from the perspective of sexual exploitation/prostitution. The consideration was also made on the rubric, in which the selected articles were published. All of the selected articles on trafficking were published in the 'Crna Hronika' i.e. criminal section, whereas none of them was found on the front page.

## 2. Context Description

Poor economic conditions enhanced and initiated by hard and oppressive political conditions forced a great number of Macedonian males in the period of Ottoman Empire to leave the country and migrate in other parts of the Ottoman Empire or Europe. Recognized in the highest percentage as labor migration, named as pechalbarstvo, the migrants called pechalbari were exclusively male. Although the pechalbarstvo was known for generations, the specific political and economic context under the Ottoman rule intensified labor migration. This was caused by the increased tax burdens of the late Ottoman period, the rising social violence and banditry, and the reduction of agricultural output for each family brought on by the dividing of land over successive generations. Different sources suggest that from 70 000 up to 100 000 men have migrated in different countries.

After the World War II most of the male migrants were having Australia as their main country of destination, while after the earthquake in 1963 as one of the main causes of migration flows USA and Canada have also become more frequent as hosting countries. A great number of literature has followed in the post-war period the migration dramas, and the social, personal and psychological intensities of Macedonian families and male migrants.

Emigration from Macedonia to European countries such as Germany, Sweden and Switzerland increased after demand for cheap labor in the Western economies grew in the 1970's and 1980's. Many young Macedonians and, to a greater extent, Albanians from Macedonia emigrated to Western Europe in that period. A particular name for all the Balkan emigrants in that period to Germany is a guest worker, or "gastarbeiter" in German. Many of the Macedonian gastarbeiter are dominantly from Albanian descent that could not find available jobs in the socialist industrial capacities and depended on labor migration as a survival strategy.

The ethnic division in the transitional period was parallel with the high rate of unemployment caused by the process of privatization, which to a high degree was illegally accomplished and influenced the not very satisfying level of economic development. There is the enormous number of unemployed: Macedonia became the European "leader" with an average of almost 40% unemployed out of the labor force and with impermissibly low levels of investment. This context has further initiated emigration flows. These poor economic performances, together with the Kosovo crisis and the conflict in Macedonia in 2001 increased the number of asylum seekers and emigrants from Macedonia. The reasons most frequently mentioned as reason for migration are general insecurity, poor living standards and economic hardship. Quite a significant percentage of these immigrants work on the black market, however, as just 25% of research respondents working in Germany have had working permit, whereas others in other countries had none (overall 38% of all worked and only 3% had working permit). This implies that upon return these people can not claim pension rights in Macedonia, neither can assume the same from Germany.

In a research from 2004 delegated from the European Commission (Klekowski von Koppenfels; 2004), the profile of the Macedonian migrant showcases that most of the migrants are not satisfied with their economic and housing conditions and were mainly unemployed prior to departure. Higher percents perceive Macedonia as insecure country and do not plan voluntarily to return to their home.

Interesting enough, most of them do not pay attention to ethnic differences, 50.15% of Macedonian migrants are males, still Macedonia has the highest percentage of women (40.5%) migrants in the Balkans. 56.3% of Macedonian migrants have been staying in their host countries for two to five years. More women than men stay for one to two years, while fewer women stay for two to five years than had men. When it comes to longer stays, men and women are approximately equal. Furthermore, a negligible percentage (approx. 3%) of Macedonian migrants pursue studies in the host country. Most of the emigrants find secure employment, acceptable level of security and good living conditions the most important factors in a decision about permanent return.

In this constellation of e/migration flows another aspect becomes highly significant. Namely, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) underlines that: "The Republic of Macedonia is located in a geographic region where trafficking in human beings is a problem. (IOM Practicum: 2005) According to the 2009 US Government Trafficking in persons report Republic Macedonia is a source, transit and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation (US State Department Report: 2009). Trafficking in women in Macedonia is often perceived as a problem of illegal migration, smuggling and prostitution. Republic of Macedonia through its Criminal Code prohibits sex and labour trafficking

The 'victims' of human trafficking, mainly coming from Moldova, Romania, Ukraine, Bulgaria are trafficked through Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo and Albania into western European countries. The Report on Human Rights of the State Department suggests that certain number of women are staying in Macedonia (mainly in the Western towns of Velesta, Tetovo and Gostivar) either waiting to be trafficked into Western European countries or continue to be exploited in various ways, most commonly sexually, in the local bars and brothels.

According to the IOM the case load of foreign nationals trafficked in Macedonia saw a significant decrease over the past years. This is mostly due to the fact that countries such as Romania and Bulgaria entered European Union and the flow from political instability and corruption as a push factor for trafficking became lower (Bales, 2005: 140) However, the 2009 US Government report notes that in 2008 there were 118 presumed foreign victims of trafficking. Recently the rise of so-called internal trafficking from the eastern part of the country to the western has been noted, which comes as a result of the decrease of trafficking of foreign nationals (MVR/MOI Analysis: 2009). The latest tendency and numbers show that victims of trafficking are both women and children alike (UNODC Global Report on Trafficking: 2009)

### **3. Film. Corpus Analysis**

#### **3.1. Migration,**

##### **3.1.1 Society, Culture and Identity**

Although it is very hard to find a unifying thread that would connect under single poetic and signifying code the heterogeneous elements, codes and visual chains of the different films in the selected corpus, we can still trace and emphasize recurring elements with similar, yet different structural, aesthetic, cultural and political functions in the films.

All of the selected films represent the migrant as male individual, thus subordinating the in-group migration experience to the experience of the migrating gendered male individual. Firstly, this characteristic is found as being an important differential of this generation of directors from the predecessors in the tradition of the Macedonia cinematography. Namely, the problem of migration in the feature and documentary film production was marked by the collective destiny of the Macedonia people and the collective passions inscribed by the very movement conceived through the prism of forced (economically or politically) migration. The historical dimension of the Nation was deeply marked by the collective dimension of the narrative enfolded in the film plots, while the individual destiny was meant to reflect and condense a national destiny. In these films, the particular function which is given to the main characters in BR, AL and CM can be reflected in their role of being the transgressor who contests the dominant social orders and molar cultural aggregates, almost intruding and mobilizing a quake which demystifies either the fragility or the violence of inter- and intra-national borders. It is Alexandar Kirkov in BR who refuses the Western voyeuristic gaze and the hypocritical decency of the 'Western' liberal democracy, and later becomes victim of the paranoiac ethnic and religious group fantasies and imagined communal identities when acting by "taking side" in order to prevent the uprising of bigger conflict. Kostadin Bochvarov in AL transgresses the national border in his pursuit for happiness at the other side of the border while going through an Ulysses-like journey when living his country in order to meet his beloved, and faces the imagined, but still violently reified and cruel reality of communist and nationalistic dictatorship where only the obeyed and silenced are considered as being the faithful co-patriots while everyone else is labeled as being the enemy and put in a permanent "state of exception" with one's own corporeal bare life. And finally, it is Atanas in CM who tests and unveils the deeply ingrained nationalism in the core of the EU and xenophobia in the center of civilized and modern world, where the concept of citizenship is still heavily overshadowed by the logic of nationality that is origin, blood and territoriality.

In all of these films the individual molecular desire is arrested in the molar paranoiac group territorialities, or love connection and desiring flows are violently disabled by the ethnic, religious or political realities and codes. Although different in their ending points, the detours, or the transgressive travels of all of the characters come out with failure, or the impossibility of success. Alexandar Kirkov is murdered by his cousin; Kostadin Bochvarov ends up 40 years of his life in prison camps or slave and enforced torturing work, while Atanas does not succeed in receiving his Austrian citizenship since the policing administrative state apparatus finds out about his experimental artistic documentary project.

While all these films hold a strong critical stance towards the inter-national borders regime and the violence of collective identities and the mythological foundations or ideological exclusionary coercion of the ethnic, national or religious communities, BR in a most paradigmatic manner exemplifies the violence within the cultural and social space demarcated with geographical or symbolic borders, that is the intra-national/ethnic/group violence exercised over the other among "us

the same". It is either the other of the different ethnic group within the nation state, the gendered other or the different individual within the same ethnic/cultural group as the necessary condition for preserving and conserving the imagined unity and pureness. In this context what can be traced as exemplary is Alexandar's murder by his cousin. Since his very entrance in his native village it becomes clear that he is treated as a stranger and as different, not "one of our owns". In several occasions he is told by his friends and relatives that he should not intermingle in their problems, to "watch his own business", till finally, when he decides to help, to save the young Albanian girl, Zamira (probably his daughter, the indicators are very ambivalent), he is presumed to be taking the 'enemy's side', to be betraying his genus and for this overstep he has to be punished, also murdered.

These cases disclose the fragility and permeability of every attempt of de-contamination, self-containment, autarchic, monadic and enclosed identity and community. The self-presentation, the self-actualization of the self necessitates its self-compromising that is auto-compromising. The performative of identity implies the repetition of violence and coercion for its imagined purity and borders to be preserved. The violence is a matter of double bind. It is simultaneously exercised towards the other which comes from the constitutive outside necessary for the identity of the community to be determined as a positive natural reality or a process of exclusion and eradication in the worse case, or, at the same time, as a twist, turning towards one self, towards the very inside of the community's life, towards all those intensities, desires, bodies, gestures, identity formations which 'deviate' the 'normal' and universal self-presence of the community. This paradox of the allegedly self-contained immunized community is best described by Derrida himself *for what I call autoimmune consists not only in harming or ruining oneself, indeed in destroying one's own protections, and in doing so oneself, community suicide or threatening to do so, but, more seriously still, and through this, in threatening the I (moi) of the self, the ego, and the autos, ipseity itself, compromising the immunity of the autos itself; it consists not only in committing suicide but compromising sui- or self-referentiality, the self or sui of suicide itself. Autoimmunity is more or less suicidal, but, more seriously still, it threatens always to rob suicide of its meaning and supposed integrit* (Derrida: 2005)

The illusion of the imagined, politically and culturally imposed boundaries of the community in this entire dramaturgy which revolve around the character of Alexandar, his migration and his coming back home, is signified with a wide and heterogeneous arsenal of signifying chains. The frailty of the dichotomies and binary opposition between the East and the West are also detailed in the landscapes, people (UN officers and cars), advertising billboards (Coca Cola, Hard Rock) etc. The self-enclosed bordered national community is already penetrated by the globalized capital flows best exemplified in the signs of presence of the multinational corporative companies, military forces and the music. One of the boys of the Macedonian para-militaristic group while spending the night as guard in the monastery is listening to American (black) rap music. The guns and all of the weapons they are having are also put under suspicion, since "it costs a lot to get it" as Mitre says. The question raised here is also about the source of this weapons, where does it come from, aren't there already international channels involved in the supply with this destroying technology, probably coming from the outside for the inside to be kept safe by the very acts of imposing death?

The deconstruction Manchevski deploys in the structuring of the story is also ingeniously injected in the very form of the narrative which brings it into congruence with the signified, the content and the leading idea/problem of the film. The three parts which compose the story are structured and discursively narrated into a plot with allegedly circular structure. At first glance, this mode of narrative organization seems to already deviate from the conventional mode of Hollywood filmmaking. But even more significantly, the narration is not even completely circular since the narrative circle appears to be fissured and ruptured in several occasions, up till the very end of the plot which in the horizon of expectations is supposed to overlap the very beginning of the film. Namely, the narrative structure corresponds neither to the conventional linear narrative model, nor to the circular narration. Anachronisms, a-chronisms and alleged errors emerge in unexpected narrative points. Pictures from Zemira's murder are being seen by Anne on her work desk although diachronically those events follow the previous. The end of the film appears to overlap with the beginning, but still, the monk's statements and their ordering is not the same as the one in the beginning. His statement that "The circle is not round" is installed as a "mise en abyme" in the entire diegesis. This narrative strategy Manchevski deploys is tightly connected to his relation to history and its conjunction with the modern concept of nation.

The political and rhetorical strategies of the authoritarian, unifying and holistic concept of the nation work not only by the linear accumulation of events and people which are condensed in the present fullness of the time of the imagined community, but also by synchronizing in spatial and visual manner the historical time. What the nationalist rhetorical strategies produce is a homogenized visual time in which the heterogeneous signs are totalized under the rubric of eternal self-generating of the nation, while all of these signs function by the model of pars pro toto and each of them is a reflection and emanation of this eternal essence of the nation. The incorporation of the very traces of the future and the past which are taken out of their linear historical order, in the visual shots of the reality of the film presented as the here and now for the viewer, deconstructs the fullness of the presence framed in the image and disrupts, divides, fissures the intended fullness of the representation. The holism of the discursive performative of the nation's time undoes the pedagogical dimension of the traditional historian which signifies the people as an a priori historical experience, as a pedagogical object, and makes the nation's sign a pulsing, intensified, repeatable and reproducible matter handed out to the unanticipated subject of the narrative enunciation. This perspective goes against the totalizing effects of the nationalistic discourse and contests the very foundations and the possibility and justifiability of the nationalist motivated violence. In one of his interviews, Manchevski says he is more concerned with how differing versions of the same past are constructed (and what they tell us about the individuals caught in such moments of conflict) than with any particular historical or political overview. He questions the nature of cinematic evidence: "Once I set the film where I set it, I felt it was my responsibility to portray the times and the human elements-behavior, language, costume, relationships, attitudes, body language-with as much accuracy as possible, since, for better or worse, film is way too often taken as a record of the times. Sort of the way paintings and frescos were treated hundreds of years ago-people thought, if we see it painted here, it must've happened. So, the paintings were used to tell a lot of lies (.F.)m is ideal to play with time-on the most physical level you can convert time into space. One second of time becomes 24 frames-which is

a length of space. Whenever you edit, you shuffle it in order to create the illusion of continuous time." (Roderick and Manchevski; 2004/2005)

The master historical narrative of the pedagogic is thus faced with its own liminality, the repressed, the excluded one, but the one that harbors on its borderlines, its limit and haunts its wholeness, as the specter which is the repressed other, be it the cultural or any other subject which inscribes his/her performative writing of the nation. The newly interpellated subject of the narration thus does not gather the same signs in the same order under the same transcendental signified. It intervenes with a difference and displaces the visual space of the temporal self-presence of the nation, and narrates a different story, with different chronology, with different endings and different faces. This is why the circle is not round, since it can never be finally closed, never totalize its inside, but always gets differed, spiralized, fractured by the Nietzschean eternal recurrence of the same with the difference which mobilizes and perpetuates the very movement of the same as the never equal to itself. "The boundary that marks the nation's selfhood interrupts the self-generating time of national production and disrupts the signification of the people as homogenous. The problem is not simply the selfhood of the nation as opposed to the otherness of other nations. We are confronted with the nation split within itself, articulating the heterogeneity of its population. The barred Nation It/Self, alienated from its eternal self-generation, becomes a liminal signifying space that is internally marked by the discourses of minorities, the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense locations of cultural difference (Bhabha; 1994) The leaving open of the circle opens the possibility of the same story being told again anew. It hails for this re-telling as the possibility of a new beginning and as the necessary condition for the Other, for the ethics and politics deprived of violence.

Furthermore, the main characters in BR and CM are represented as hybrid types of identities. They have managed to incorporate the influence of both of the cultures as the points of migration. Even better, their characters seem to be installed on a borderline, an in-between position which makes them foreigners in both cultures. They demonstrate a strong self-reflexive attitude which reevaluates the values and the system codes of each of the national communities they come from or emigrate in.

Alexandar Kirkov ends up as a fatal foreigner who is not recognized any more as a member of his native community. His symbolical expel from the community is materialized and reified in the tragic murder by his cousin. When he arrives in his home he is not recognized by an old woman he meets on his way to the house and by another is treated as complete stranger when she runs away in her house when seeing him. The reaction of the people he is faced with connotes their general anxiety towards the others, an anxiety, fear and hatred concretized in the ethnic conflict. He is perceived as being one of them, of the Westerners, and that is where he belongs. In trying to confront his co-patriots and argue against his cousin's quest for revenge he is faced with the answer "You watch the show. You are not from here." Later in the film his opinion and judgment will be invalidated once more by his cousin: "Cousin, you left from here a long time ago, you don't know how things are here. Mind your own life". Although local, Alex is deprived of the access to meaning as an outsider. Paradoxically enough, the attributes ascribed to him by his fellow men are the main reason

he leaves London. His anger towards the Westerners because they treat violence as a spectacle for the pleasure of the voyeuristic gaze forces him to leave his career of a photographer, feeling that he is also contributing in this situation, and hits the road back home. The idealized home from London turns out to be space of paranoiac identitarian conflicts which refuse any possibility for reasonable dialogue and communication. He comes to the realization that this native village and country are as sickeningly banal and perversely crazy as the malaise London he just left. Sleazy slobs of Macedonian men cheat on their wives, who are cloistered in the claustrophobic world of domestic, emotional and sexual servitude. The speech of these men is filled with paranoid fantasies about final solutions to the problems of 'dirt' and 'thievery' that the men of the other ethnic group pose, while at the same time they could hardly stop salivating while imagining forbidden pleasures they can have with the women from the other ethnic group (Lambevski: 2003) on whom they can also metonymize their political frustrations and desires for domination by the very act of sexual penetration.

Living on the borders with no definite belonging seems to be fatal in a world of ethnic and nationalistic warriors.

In the interview made for the purposes of the research Atanas Georgiev said that his main idea he wanted to present with his documentary is the relief and throwing of the burden on one's own as the necessary condition for pursuing and reaching and accomplishing one's personal goal. The burden one has to get released from is the dragging tie to the imagined collective unity, past and grand historical narrative, one's leashing to the group ethnic or national identity. This according to Georgiev's words is best and most paradigmatically embodied in the character of Marko, who assists him in his trip through the halls of the state bureaucracy. In the dramaturgically organized documentary Marko's role functions in a very structured level which can be found in the formalists' and structuralists' analyses of the models of syntactic and thematic interrelations of the characters in drama or fiction in general. His function of a helper (adjuvant in the Greimas actantial model) acquires a supplementary dramaturgical function and specific motor force in the unity of the set narrative. A refugee from Bosnia after the Yugoslav wars, he finishes his high school in France, and spends his life in several countries. Speaks well several languages and is freed from the nationalistic burden. The character of Marco resembles the hybrid Bhabha and other postcolonial critics speak about, and which is best illustrated by Salmon Rushdie when reflecting on his *Satanic Verses*: "hybridity, impurity, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs. It rejoices in mongrelization and fears the absolutism of the pure. Melange, hotch-potch, a bit of this and that, is how newness enters the world (...) it is a love-song to our mongrel selves." (Rushdie: 1992) Marko demonstrates the transnational workings on identity formation and exemplifies the diasporic existential aesthetics, as the working which opens identity to cultural influences and mobilizes it as an on-going process of (self)making instead of holding it as a thing or invariable essence. The concept 'promoted' in the film which connects the identity formation process with the emigrational patterns valorizes something more than just a social mourning over the ruptures of exile, loss or forced separation. The alienation and displacement from their place of birth and their cultural estrangement is grasped as a potential for agency and pleasure, as well as "precipitating anxiety about the coherence of the nation and the stability of its imaginary ethnic or cultural core." (Gilroy: 1997)



### 3.1.2 Institutions

In CM the filmmaker resembles the French author's documentary filmmakers of postwar documentary period, in particular those of the French line which inaugurated the cinema-verite, or the observational/direct cinema<sup>xii</sup>. The role of the filmmaker, Atanas Georgiev is a role of a participant observer who intrudes into the pro-filmic space and provokes the subjects in order to find out an extremely important political aspect in society and de-mystify the social image that people hold about their everyday environment, cultural, social and political life.

The documentary character of the film is interweaved with narrative structure which can easily evoke the fictional character, especially taken into consideration the following of dramaturgical order the film embodies. However, although the structure of the film discloses the interference of cinematic technologies, including editing, selection of recorded material and montage (reduction of 200h recorder material), and the narrative structure which is provoked and mobilized simultaneously with the author's intrusion and quest for real subject, the documentary presents a reality check and unfolds the still highly prevalent nationalistic and xenophobic politics of citizenship in the fortress Europe. In the interview we've made with Atanas he elaborated that his main motivation for doing the film was primarily coming from his personal experience as a student in Austria, but also this experience has been shared by a lots of other people coming from the Balkans or third world countries in general. This experience comprises frustrations from visa regimes and Kafkian bureaucratic and administrative labyrinths and infinitesimal legal procedures one has to go through for acquiring residence permit, unequal treatment of foreigners as second or third-rate citizens etc. And in the course of this constellation, the construction and maintenance, as collateral strategic effect of the institutional and legal system, of the status of foreigner (people coming from ex-Yugoslavia are called "yugovci" in Austria and their number is speculated to be around 300 000). This situation unveils the paradoxical status of the foreigner in relation to the law that regulates his/her social, political, economic and citizen's status. It is precisely through this entire administrative, legal and bureaucratic apparatus that regulate, control, surveill and supervise the foreigner's place, movement, work, contacts, durability of stay, interference and assemblages he creates with the natives and those from "his/her group" , precisely through these mechanisms that the foreigner comes to existence. As Kristeva used to put it, the foreigner is the scar between men and citizen, as being neither a citizen not fully a man since the universal human rights are not equally applied to him/her.

What this film also demonstrates is the gap in the inter-cultural communication. From his conversation with Marko, a student in Vienne with Bosnian origin and extremely hybridized cultural existential experience, Atanas finds out that the only Austrian Marko communicates with is his boss. Interestingly enough, and quite differently from the traditional ethnic pathos of representation of the problem of migration, the individuals from the 'other side' (Marko and Atanas in particular) do not wear with them the burden of their past, their ethnicity, nationality or collective history. The characters we are introduced with are individuals searching for their happiness and conditions that can provide them with space where they can get more since they believe they deserve<sup>xiii</sup>. In this

context the foreigner becomes a 'symptom' (Daniele Lochak) signifying the difficulty nation citizens have in living and communication with the others. Politically, as a character transgressor, he (Atanas, the foreigner) underscores the limits of nation-state and of the national political conscience that characterizes them and that we have deeply interiorized to the point of considering it normal that there are foreigners, that is, people who do not have the same rights as we do. (Kristeva: 1991)

The foreigner, the strangers poses the Question which shatters, by de-mystifying them, the limits of identity, of the national sovereignty practice over a territory where interactions and contacts are policed in order for the purity of nation in time to be preserved and the imagined emanation of the principle of national membership to be safeguarded. (Benhabib: 2004)

The motif of an individual's transgression of the national border's regime and the institution organization of a national territory is most explicitly and literally represented in AL. The violence of the self-contained national community, under the totalitarian communist dictatorship of Enver Hodja is exercised directly on the body of everyone who is provisionally labeled as enemy. Based on a true story, the film's opening scene quotes an anonymous statement: "At one time Albania used to be an enormous bunker. A prison in which nobody could enter and from which nobody could escape. Age of madness...everyone was an enemy." The transgression of the border showcases the monstrosity of the totalitarian and homogenizing tendencies of a political regime and its technologies for conserving the imagined principle and the purity of the unity. The transgression in this case is not acting on the borders of a collective ethnic body as much as it is experienced on the borders of a political regime coercively imposed. Common people of the same national territory are also to become victims of the political regime whenever they 'betray' its leading principle of closedness. The old Albanian man in beginning of the film that saves Konstantin from the lake dragging him out becomes also an object of degrading and inhuman torture by the very same national political regime.

In a mythical manner, the severity of the political regime is contrasted to the love of two individuals, who despite all the misfortunes, go through a exhausting initiation process, and manage to get over it, regardless of all the consequences it will inscribe in their lives and bodies. The individual story narrated in the film acquires a universal dimension, and universal political potential of a political "We" which is derived from the permanent 'state of exception' the human being is exposed to, as the uncertain and vulnerable condition which dispossesses the human of its political status and exposes him/her to the abeyance caused by the never completely predictable suspension of the law and the legal order as the sovereign's decision and an extreme indicator of the implications of power, the political and the 'bare life'. Crossing the lake, as the literal and referential geographic border, Kostantin spends almost 40 years of his life in a camp, imprisoned in a cell, radically exposed in his bare existence to the suspension of law, under the violence of the military and policing forces of the regime. The lake will further be impregnated as a metaphor for the illusory megalomaniac ideological human borders, thus signifying the eternity in contrast to the ephemeral human condition (Voice in off at the end of the movie, Kostantin's presumably, emphasizes explicitly this point). This metaphorical signification corresponds to the entire stoic character this Odysseys carries with it. Namely, this motif gets in dialogue with the tradition of Seneca or Marcus Aurelius. Marcus Aurelius and Seneca recommend a certain kind of self-movement which would lead towards a valorization of

everything starting from its reality within the cosmos, within the world. This provides the subject with possibility to see him/herself also as a spot in the universe and will consequently bring the ethical transformation of the subject under the influence of knowledge. This self-movement in Seneca's writing is described as a self-positioning in the highest spot and seeing the entire world beneath. This self-distance one makes in relation to oneself puts oneself in the same focal field as the entire world, and makes one realize one's place in the general system of the universe. This position is Divine, and particular with a limited place, at the same time. This perspective enlightens all the transient events in our lives in their true dimension. The position Aurelius takes is exactly the same as the position in which we are, but the focalization is realized with a look descending beneath our standing point in order to get right into the heart of things, with a decreasing and ironic look, depriving all the things we are so addicted to from the value we give them, and liberates ourselves from this addiction and enslavement. (Marcus Aurelius, 1997; 10.6)

And finally, the signification of the border the lake inscribes is countered by its signification of the eternal horizon and freedom which is evidently indicated when in several occasions Konstantin turns his gaze towards the blindingly sunny horizon melted with the lake's longitude, impregnated with the nostalgic longing for home as the emotional landscape presented through his focal point. The home and the nostalgia for this place is connoted as the topos of freedom in opposition to the topos of oppression the character is entrapped in, much more than being a signifier of imagined utopian spatialized historical time of a nation or ethnos. The critique of the national bordering is best illustrated in the end of the film with the quote from the Polish poet Walslawa Szymborska:

*Oh, the leaky boundaries of man-made states!  
How many clouds float past them with impunity;  
How much desert sand shifts from one land to another  
How many mountain pebbles tumble onto foreign soil  
In provocative hops!*

Crossing the borders and migrating is represented as an object of desire, longing, a yearning of the characters in CS, Roma people, which reflects their dissatisfaction with the conditions they live in. The West is imagined as the lost paradise and idealized as a utopian place where they can fulfill their desires and satisfy their needs, and most importantly earn for living. In the end of the film, in a perspective which captures birds flying, the narrator in off says: "We all dream of dematerializing from Shutka one day, and flying far to the West where a huge fortune awaits us, and for everyone else to feel envy (...)" Migrating and staying in the 'West' is also a precondition for prestige and social capital in the community, and acquiring higher status and respect in the hierarchy in the community. While migrating to the 'West' can help the emigrant accumulate financial capital and earn for descent life, it is also contrasted to the living in Shutka by the fact that it deprives the emigrant from his symbolic capital, or even better from the possibility of attaining it: "But he who leaves Shutka forfeits his rights to the title of champion. And that is a serious reason to stay at home. You can only be a champion in Shutka."

## 3.2. Gender in Migration

### 3.2.1 Society, Culture and Gender Norms

What can firstly be noted is that there is a complete lack of representation of gender in migration from the recourse that would situate the female gendered actor in an active e/immigrating position. However, as already elaborated in the previous section, in a similar context, in the film representations tackling different constellations of migration and society/culture, gender markers can be identified in a structure which exemplifies gender violence in an intra-community context, as a 'necessary' precondition for conserving collective purity and maintaining national and cultural norms.

This process which we named as "autoimmunization" is best exemplified in the murder of Zamira who disobeys the cultural gender norms imposed on her by her ethnic and religious tradition. The detailed semiotics of the gender norms' transgression of Zamira is perfectly weaved in the signifying chain comprising signs of her clothes and her hairstyle, the structure of her relations to her grandparent and her brothers and her connections with elements from the other system of signs as ethnic markers, that is the Macedonian ethnic community and males in particular. She refuses to wear the veil as a religious gender code and wears sport t-shirt. Her gender transgression is amplified when taken into consideration the connotative meaning of the sport t-shirt she is wearing, which is a male t-shirt put in conjunction with her short hair. In the narrative structure of the film her hair has been cut as a punishment from her grandparent for her disobedience, but on a connotative level, considering the culturally impregnated context, it is also a sign for 'masculinity'. Her bodily movement is further 'deviating' from the norm taken comparatively with the materialization of the norms which is evident and can be easily read on her mother's body (Hana). And finally, her decision to break the code of "pure blood" and leave with the young monk Kiril, Macedonian Orthodox Christian, is severely punished with the most extreme form of exercising the ethicist biopolitical mechanism of power which is murder.

The gendered violence in the context of intra-national de-contamination is furthermore interestingly enough installed in a constellation which counter poses gender norms amongst the Macedonian national context and the Western European Other. Namely, the murder of the Albanian girl Zamira in the end of the first part of the film as a result of her disobedience to the strict traditional and religious gender norms is juxtaposed by a rather opposite gender positioning in the English cultural and social context, that is by the immediately following shot of the naked English girl Anne taking a shower, and afterwards, finding out she is pregnant and preparing to tell her decision for a divorce to her husband, while simultaneously looking at pictures of Madonna as a symbol of the gender and sexual revolution of the pop Western world. This is further enhanced when representation of male gendered matrix is considered: the bearded men in the Macedonian village coursing and using vulgar words when arguing and expressing their warmness are juxtaposed to the shaved, male-costume wearing descent English husband of Anne;

The intra-national, inter-group transgressive and symbolic migration is ingeniously personified and embodied in the character of the young monk Kiril and his exclusion from the monastic order. The signifying chain generating his semiotics reflects in several occasions his transgression from the molar aggregates of different collective formations. His gentle, baby face, evoking images of mythic hermaphrodite figure, lapses the bodily 'masculinity' not only of his fellow monks, but of the other men in the Macedonian village. The beard, robust and sharp countenance and the vulgar humor as signifiers written on the bodies and in the behavior of men of his ethnos are counterposed by his appearance and his behavior. Most remarkably, his vow of silence counters and disobeys the linguistic barriers and violence which are one of the main bases and the core of nationalistic sentiment and barrier of intercultural communication. Again in an archetypal model, with probable biblical intertextuality, his refusal to talk makes connection with the mythical state of innocence, the life before the Tower of Babel divides the human race, the one which will be followed and paid with the high price of the 'state of experience', the reality of language differences and uniformities, which is the reality of nationalisms. Firstly, breaking the rules and the order of the monastic community (by keeping and hiding the Albanian girl) will cost him with being expelled from the order, and further on, his forbidden desire and unavowed love with Zamira will incite her murder.

### 3.2.2 Institutions and Gender Relations

Considering the fact that, in a historical and genealogical perspective, marriage has presented one of the main institutions for women's oppression (Kosofsky, Rubin, Butler, Levi-Strauss, Irigaray, Wittig) which has been codified with an entire range of gender norms and gendered positions and roles, and has further installed itself as an universal, natural and a-historical form of regulation of love relationships, the emigrational recourse it is represented in the film CM with, de-naturalizes its basis and renders its connection with the state and the Nation's requirements more than visible. From a gender perspective this is found to be extremely important especially taking into consideration one of the main and driving slogans of the feminist political movement from the late '60 and the '70-ies that the 'personal is political'.

In his quest for de-mystification of the politics of citizenship in the context of migration, Atanas Georgiev in CM de-naturalizes the institution of marriage as the universally recognized form of union between men and women and the state provided and carried form of love relationship. Marriage in this documentary is represented as one of the most frequent means for acquiring citizenship in a foreign country and, simultaneously, as the one of the essential cells of the state nationalism and the reproduction of the nation. (Yuval-Davis: 1997) Furthermore, it demystifies the nationalistic politics exercised through these institutions in order to conserve the 'pure blood' inheritance of the nation by the very insistence of same-nationality marriages and the extreme surveillance marriages with foreigners are put under (the interview Atanas and his future bride have with the lawyer who explicates the detailed legal framework and the nationalistic politics of the State in their treatment of foreigners). Provoking the information for the administrative procedures and

the legal particulars a newly formed marriage with a foreigner incites, Georgiev manages to expose the absurdity and madness these procedures present.

However, this perspective gets complicated in the film when cut with axis of culture, nationality and the East/West opposition. The documentary has two versions, one longer and another shorted made for the different projection condition (TV, cinema etc.). In the longer version of the film in the final theme is included a video recording of the director's marriage in Macedonia in a church with his girlfriend from Macedonia on a lake's coastline. Although Georgiev in the interview claims that this sequence has been included in the official version of the documentary from strictly dramaturgical reasons, so that the film gets finalized narrative structure and the character can be dramaturgically finalized, still, on a structural and signifying level this scene gets a highly problematic status from representational and imagological perspective. Namely, this scene can easily be positioned and functionalized in oppositional relation to the narrative chain taking place in Vienne. From this structural recourse this scene acquires and represents the opposite values and meaning from its binary partner. This would implicate that if marriage in EU was represented as a negation of love, exclusively state and economic matter, in this, the Macedonian, constellation it would reify the ideal of true love uncontaminated by capital, public and state interference. This conclusory logic is further supplemented by the semiotic of the environment the act is taking place. Church, boat in the lake/water, blinding sun, nature are all signs which do not only denote the referent in reality or function as pure elements/points in the structure of the event, but on a connotative and symbolic level they invoke archetypical images of the sacred marriage, the relation of heterosexual love with nature, the consent and the blessing of God, mythical creation of the original principles emerging from the Water etc. Although it can be noticed that marriage is 'divorced' from the State in this visual sentence, still the institutional historical impact of that Church in relation to marriage cannot be simply revoked. Finally, the film's main song that carries along with it in its durability and movement – "Love police is coming, what you did is crime" performed by the Macedonian musical avant-garde band 'Foltin'.

### **3.3. Imagining the Ethnic/National Other**

BR and CS in the times of their presentation in Macedonia and to the international audience raised a lot of controversies related to their repertoires and regimes of representation of 'sameness' and 'otherness'. Namely, in the case of BR the accusations that were directed towards the film were contained mainly in the Balkan post-colonial discourses. Dina Iordanova and Slavoj Žižek, for example argue that despite his intentions, Manchevski at the end offers to the Western gaze what it expects to see, which is the extocized, uncivilized, barbarian, nationalistic men from the Balkans, a "mythical spectacle of eternal, primordial passions, of the vicious cycle of hate and love, in contrast to the decadent and anemic life in the West." (Žižek: 2000) Iordanova's arguments go in the similar direction when claiming that BR continued the already dominant trend of Balkanism, presented by Maria Todorova as the trend of appropriation and interiorization of the images and the system of

representation produced by the means of discursive hegemonies and unequal distribution of power by the Western colonialist political and cultural centres, that is the voluntary self-exoticism. (Jordanova: 2000)

These claims seem to be enhanced when taken into consideration the Western reception of the film. In his text on BR, Keith Brown makes a detailed account on the discourses produced in American and Western European Newspapers in relation to the film, and his analyses lead to the conclusion that the most frequent point sublimated from the film reviews is that film tells a story about the ethnic hatreds, tensions and conflicts in the region of the Balkans, which, according to Brown, "fits into certain ideas that people from the USA had on Yugoslavia in particular after the Yugoslav war in the early '90-ies. The images depicted in the film correspond to other familiar impressions invoked by the images Westerners have seen coming from the Yugoslav war, and these impressions are further enhanced by the visual impact of the landscapes in which the action has been set as the site of authenticity that has further contributed to the realism in the reception of the events filmed. His main point is heuristically founded on the concept of 'frames of belief' constituted by the accumulated cultural life of the viewer delimiting the horizon and structure the modes of perceiving, viewing and interpreting cinematic images. By these means, Brown demonstrates that the different understandings of the historical events that have occurred in Yugoslavia have shaped the understanding of seemingly "apolitical practices as watching a feature film, or describing a director's background." (Brown: 1998)

What Žižek says about BR might be considered as appropriate remark, but still not comprehensive enough. The binary construction of the different and oppositional images' codes, the Macedonian and the English on the other side, is installed only to be in a clandestine manner undone and deconstructed by the fractures different events, characters, signs and images introduce in each of these two respective imagological corpuses. The oppositional parallelism can be easily identified on several levels. A family lunch in Macedonia and London, everyday life, gender-relations, people's behaviour, urban and village's landscapes, gender and sexual norms, all of which are represented in both signification chains and cultural contexts in the film, but whose difference and juxtaposition is evident in the editing of the signs and images. Namely, the dinner in a posh restaurant's lunch is juxtaposed to the rural lunch of a bunch of people laughing while drinking traditional Macedonian rakija and eating on an old wood-made table with an old house in the back of the film frame; the same goes for the different religious architectures and rituals, the double-decker buses in London in contrast to the old and dirty bus in Skopje, the higher-class 'modern' old lady vs. the old traditionally dressed hunch-backed grandmother in Alexander's village etc. All of these signs/images are also part of Alexander's imagery when returning in London after his professional trip and on his way back home in Macedonia, while nostalgically fancying for his warm, peaceful, honest and intersected with familiar intimacy native land.

The representation of the West is most significantly accentuated by its marking by the voyeuristic practice of looking, gazing the bloody tragedies taking place in Yugoslavia and its hypocrisy of decency and liberal democratic orders, while the very same nationalistic practices are present at the heart of this civilized world, demonstrated in the conversation between Anne's husband and the manager of the London restaurant. Namely, when the owner apologizes to his customer for

the incident caused by the violent guest, he (Nick) politely dismisses the incident saying that "these things, as far as British are concerned, happen only in Ulster, on what follows the owner's answer that he is from Northern Ireland too. According to Žižek, the Balkans represent a space impregnated with the Western's fantasy, where the West projects its "repressed" dark passions. The ambiguity becomes especially pronounced in a morbid fascination with the victims, with "horrifying pictures of mutilated corpses, of wounded and crying children... They were horrified by them, yet at the same time they 'couldn't avert their eyes'" (Žižek: 2000)

This entire problem becomes even more complex when taken into consideration other aspects of the film which are put in function of criticizing and deconstructing the unifying principles of nationality and ethnicity. Some of them have been already elaborated above. The most intriguing strategy, visual and narrative, that Manchevski uses to undo this coherent, self-enclosed and isolated imagined unities is the montaging of traces, signs, elements, images, individuals, groups and gazes that are traditionally ascribed to the other. The representational strategy necessary for the construction of the 'self' in its difference from the 'other', and its naturalization as a strategy for fixing differences is permanently undermined by the intrusion of fleeting images in the ethnic and national landscapes of the 'same'. The Westerner's gaze and distanced visioning of the atrocities as spectacle turns back on it with the violence in the London restaurant becoming a stage of chaos, brutal miscommunications and bloodshed caused by the very same object of its gaze, a Serbian customer. Anne's later presence at the funeral in Macedonia will be captured by the camera held by a small Macedonian child. And on the other side of the 'track' the similar strategies occur. The nationalistic hatred of the armed Macedonian band is undermined by their disguised desire for the forbidden Albanian female body; flows of Western capital is connoted in the advertisements, the billboards, the music, the clothes and weapons in the Macedonian cultural context among its people; Alexandars "uncritical reading of ancient Macedonian history, and glamourising the backbreaking harshness and banality of the 'scraps, rags and patches' of Macedonian daily life (Bhabha: 1994)" and further his desire to return to this imagined state of purity and innocence, Macedonia as the "place of decent, peaceful and hard-working men and women unsoiled by the malaise of the Western civilisation" (Lambevski: 2003), will be undone by the 'reality' slap when he comes back and faces the irrational ethnic based violence. And finally, the inhuman and tragic ending of these conflicts based on the ethnic fantasies de-mystifies the dead-end of the exclusionary and homogenizing logic of identity.

That the 'circle is not round' can also connote the meaning that representation is not what it seems to be, that the horizontal and homogenizing gathering of heterogeneous elements in the totalizing frame of the condensed historical time and emanation of the present from the grand past origin can easily become fatal if not taken in its contingency, imaginative and historical and subject's perspective, instead of unquestionably being accepted as incontestable ultimate and universal truths.

CC is a film that raised a Vulcan of reactions in the Macedonian civil sector, mostly among Roma NGOs, political representatives of the Roma community, newspapers and the blog sphere. At the premiere of the documentary in Skopje, 02.02.2006, there were protests organized by the Roma political representatives and parliamentarians of Shutka and a group of supporters of their severe objections of this film. (Vasilevska: 2006) The protest was organized with the explication that "it is really unpleasant when the Decade of Roma is



marked in Macedonia, when there is an entire industry of Roma non-governmental organizations working in the process of the development of Roma's emancipation, someone still to present our ugly face, so we say, it is enough." (Mustafa: 2006) Those who were disgusted by the film were pointing that it is not worded to be classified as documentary film since it does not represent the real situation of Roma people. "This film is just one more way for denigrating and representing in a bad light Roma people. People living on the edges of existence and have no positions in society are cynically being named ad champions, and what is actually being represented are their anomalies. With this rudeness and mockery a great shame is laid on Roma people...Roma's dignity has to be protected and the disabuse of the fragility of individuals of our community for the purposes of commercial success on the other's malfortune has to be stopped" (Vasilevska: 2006) – was stated by Mr. Iseini, the Mayor of the municipality of Shuto Orizari. On the other hand, the film was projected in Bern, Switzerland, as a part of the cultural heritage of Roma, and on the Ljubljana Film Festival of "Amnesty International" the film got the prize for affirmation and protection of human rights and minority groups.

Film critics in Macedonia were emphasizing the aesthetical qualities of the film, and the bloggers had also divided opinions, although most of them saw the film as real presentation of the real life, the real mindset and real people played by real individuals. These last comments were not rarely followed by discriminatory speech<sup>xv</sup>, but what almost everyone was emphasizing was that the film is very humoresque and brings a lot of enjoyment and pleasure for the viewer. Some of the bloggers, those well known for their critical perspective towards social and political contemporary Macedonian problems pointed out that the film only continues the long tradition of exclusion, stigmatization and discrimination of Roma people in Macedonia<sup>xvi</sup>. Biljana, a blogger who discussed the film on her site, told TOL the film made its effects with "a special humour based on the feeling of superiority through humiliating the other." (Alagjovovski: 2006)

Despite all of these controversial discussions, it remains that CC is a semi-documentary film, narrating stories of 14 different character accompanied with the comments and interpretations of a narrator in off, Dr.Koljo, played by a Roma actor, Bajram Severdzan. Our goal is not to discuss in these occasion the congruence of the films images with its reality referents, neither to widely analyze on the topic of the relation of fiction and documentaristic genre. Still, it is ineluctable to point out that although a documentary, the film cannot totally disguise its technical, human, cultural and political background as its necessary condition. No representation can be ideally comprehensive neither it can include all the differentiating subjects it pretends to represent under a general category of identity. The remarks of Roma politicians that this film does not represent not a single example of an educated, successful Roma can also be taken as appropriate remarks, especially taking into consideration the exoticism the Roma community is approached with. The film does not also represent not a single aspect of discrimination, violence and social exclusion these people are facing with on daily bases, case that has in many occasions been reported on.

The idea of the director of the film to represent these people as shiny, happy and humoresque people who know how to celebrate life despite all of their existential problems is not yet very far from the traditional racists' representation of black people. This includes the 'happy natives' who seem not to have brain in their head but sang, danced and cracked jokes all day long, to entertain white folks; or the 'tricksters' who were admired for their crafty ways of avoiding hard work (Hall: 1997), or funny shamans trying to dematerialize themselves and cross far distances, ex-gasterbaiters, transgender persons and homosexuals, funny, crazy women, prostitutes etc. The attempt to make Champions of all of these character is also highly problematic, since the narrator in several of the interviews clandestinely makes mockery of his interviews, laughs, or counters their claims to be champions by inserting claims which argue the opposite, or shots are inserted which 'dethrone' the claims of the characters (shot of holes in the socks of the kneeling dervishes in their rituals, questioning the dervish if he ever gets sexually excited when curing some woman, a short notice that the biggest intellectual in Shutka is Muzo who writes a dictionary of Roma words for whole 20 years and has never finished it, the laughs of the narrator and the cameraman while they interview the transgender persons Sabina and Natalija, laughing again while making Sabina to repeat for several times the name of the organization he is working in, which, to be more accurate I 'HOMOS' etc).

Furthermore, CS not in a single dialogue, sequence, sentence or shot problematizes the political and power implications that are disguised in the genealogy of the current socio-political, cultural and economic status of the Roma community. Irony is evident in the final comment of the narrator as well: "But he who leaves Shutka forfeits his rights to the title of champion. And that is a serious reason to stay at home. You can only be a champion in Shutka." The cultural capital of being a champion which is supposed to be the glorifying and positive image the film represents of Roma people appears ironically to be impossible outside of the community, thus perpetuating the closed and isolated character of people living there and further circulates the power and political installation of the social architecture and the exclusionary topos. This presupposition and conclusory remarks deprives these people of the possibility of succeeding outside their community, and keeps them 'at the place where they belong, and should stay'.

Migration is connoted in these stereotypical semiotic as one more sign that draws its meaning from the cultural context in which Roma people are associated very often with gasterbaiters and emigrants in Germany who earn money in order to make their community fellows 'envy them' and demonstrate their wealth with a lot of gold, big houses and cars.

In general, the problem with the representation in the film appears not to be in the very selectiveness of the documentary in the images it represents, but in the exclusive stereotypical repertoire of images edited in the organization, that is the reduction of Roma people to few characteristics taken to be essentials, that is fixed in Nature. The 'good intentions' of the director do not discharge the stereotypical assemblage of image, as most of the anti-slavery writers used to do in America when substituting one set of stereotypes with another in the process of sentimentalizing a modified version of racial discourse (Harriet

Beecher Stowe's novel 'Uncle Tom' is most remarkable example of this tradition). If one of the main features of the strategies of stereotyping is to maintain boundaries and generate severe splitting and clear-cut, unalterable and fixed boundaries, thus practicing closure and exclusion of everything which does not belong (Hall: 1997), this film, the last commentary of narrator in particular, can be place on a very problematic, hesitant and dangerous limit of circulating stereotypes and furthering exclusion.

The exoticism in this symbolic migration into the 'land' of Roma in Macedonia (Shutka/Municipality of Shuto Orizari is a northern suburb of Skopje which after the disastrous earthquake in 1963 has been populate by 50-65.000 people) is also very noticeable in the presentation of the two transgender persons who embody the fantasy about the transgressive sexuality and 'abnormal' gender identities which can be found in this 'other time', this non-civilized space, which is reflected in the bloggers and common people's comments and mockeries which express simultaneously an relation of disgust and fascination and attraction.

## 4. Written Press. Corpus Analyses

### 4.1 Migration

#### 4.1.1 Society and Culture

Typical migration for economic reasons as generally understood and existing in European Union Countries is not evident in Republic of Macedonia. (Centre for Research and Policy Making: 2007) Therefore, the focus is placed on trafficking as a illegal form of migration. The reason why trafficking in women is chosen for exploring media representations is also due to fact that in the printed media one can find certain number of articles referring to trafficking in correlation with gender and national identity. This is however not the case for topics dealing purely with migration as such. Root causes of trafficking in persons include transition, political instability, economic pressures and social and cultural factors. Such circumstances often intersect with other racial, ethnic, and class disparities to make poor and minority women and girls especially vulnerable to trafficking. (Blanchfield and Margesson: 2009) This also applies to the other forms of illegal migration such as for example smuggling of migrants. Many trafficking victims fall prey because they seek better life or enhanced economic opportunities. Therefore, they are vulnerable to false promises of good jobs and earnings. In one of the articles selected<sup>xvii</sup> a Moldavian victim of trafficking makes a confession in the interview made by journalists from 'Dnevnik'. She talks about her life story and the horror named trafficking in humans.

She says:

'The despair and the desire for better life forced me to leave my poor country and to believe to the lies presented by my friend Ruslan, who promised me that he will take me to Italy. Instead, he sold me'...

She continues:

'I left the school when I was 12 years old in order to help to my family to survive. At 15 years age I got married and pregnant but I got divorced soon after and I got back to the village where I was born.'

Another article contains the following: 'The suspects at the beginning of 2007 have deceived the parents of the girl by promising them that they will marry their daughter in France, instead they brought the girl in city of Leskovac (Serbia). From Serbia the girl was taken to Italy where was forced to prostitution...'

Further the article goes: 'The mother of the girl admitted that they were naïve when accepted to marry the girl for a husband in France, although they did not see the groom even on a photo... The agreement between the parents and now suspected was to take the girl to France for two months and introduce her with the future to be, and subsequently bring her back and wait until she turns 18 for the formal marriage to occur...For the deal the suspected gave to the parents 3000 Euros as expenses for the wedding and took the girl. (Dnevnik: 2008)

These portrayals clearly talk about both root causes and consequences of trafficking, but in the same time revealing a broader social and cultural phenomenon. Although both articles depict different stories nonetheless the elements are very much similar. Social aspect is related to the causes of trafficking such as poverty, family situation, low education, unemployment and etc. On the other hand this condition exacerbates the vulnerability of victims or potential victims, making them more susceptible both to fraud, deception or coercion.

## **4.2 Gender in Migration and Human Trafficking**

### 4.2.1 Society and Culture

The representations of gender through prism of human trafficking in the print media involve several categories. These categories talk about the causes of trafficking but also about the consequences thereof. Namely, they discuss of vulnerability and victimization, mostly due to socio-economic situation, family status is also indicated as something which leads to vulnerability, at some instance the mental condition of victim is being depicted as something that perhaps is conditional of becoming a victim of trafficking. The consequences of such vulnerability to trafficking evolve around issues as: sexual exploitation, prostitution, doing other 'low profile' or illegal jobs such strip-dancing, waiters or stilling for the benefit for those in whose possession are found.

The excerpts cited before in the section of society and culture in the context of migration also represent the link between the social and cultural tendencies within the society in general. The cultural tendencies and perceptions are related to the category of both gender as cultural construct (Butler: 1999), but as well as traits of representatives of certain groups. For example the latter example apart from the social background of the victim confirms the already accepted conception that not only Roma girls marry very early even before the maturity, but also marry through arranged marriage which results in financial benefit for the parents. Therefore, gender placed within the

broader framework of social and cultural categories results in multiple stereotyping and discrimination.

Further, in both examples the portrayed naivety is something that first and foremost is linked to women as gender category, but however is connected with the social status, lack of education, unemployment but as well to the cultural background such as 'rural women' who had dreamt for better life or 'Roma family' having their daughter as only way out of poverty and miserable life. However, the authors of these narratives forget the facts that per se discuss human lives, whose lives involve human sufferings and human destinies above all.

Such social and cultural contexts leads to something which can be identified as a consequence and result of trafficking, and that is exploitation and mistreatment of the women and girls involved in such practices. The mistreatment is not only physical but as well as psychological one. In that sense, trafficking in humans is considered as multiple violations of human rights.

The depictions of the physical exploitation and mistreatment of the women and girls is more obvious and varies in the corpus selected. One narrative elaborates the following: 'The traffickers are buying the girls in Eastern European countries for 150 or 250 Euros to work as models, waitress or in room service in Italy or Spain, and in Kosovo they are sold for 200 to 500 Euros. The girls serve 20 customers daily, and they charge their services for minimum 50 Euros per hour (Dnevnik: 2007)

Another article points out that the victim 'was forced to have sex with more than 1000 people for the period of nine months'. (Dnevnik:2006)

The paragraph contains many elements which contribute to construction and confirmation of preconceived gender and national other stereotypes. Primarily, the victims are 'objects' in the hands of the traffickers worth minimum monthly Macedonian salary. Regardless of the fact that they are treated like Eastern European 'merchandise' that is sold and re-sold for performing socially low jobs in Western Europe but they are also naïve, deceived or coerced to prostitution or other sexual exploitation.

In addition, what is the author's intention behind the precision of the number of daily customers they provide sex to and the price charged for such services? Is it necessary in order to depict the phenomenon of trafficking in correlation with prostitution or to make a well sustained reporting? Also why mentioning in victims' confession abovementioned the number of people she was forced to have sexual intercourse? From the victims' point such precision only confirms the preconception that they are 'sex objects' per se in the hands of both traffickers and the customers. Here the latter categories either traffickers or customers and their activities are not portrayed as something which is wrongful (particularly for traffickers) but the focus is on the women and girls who sell their bodies to up to 20 customers daily for 50 Euros or were forced to have sex with 1000 people over period of nine months.

Another particularity in this excerpt is the dichotomy made between Eastern European girls and Western European countries whereby they intent to work, but nonetheless are deceived to prostitution in Kosovo and Balkans in general. Not only that the author wants to portray the wish of the 'Eastern European' girls to seek better life in desirable destinations such Western European countries to the point of their naivety, but also emphasizes the societal and economic preponderance of the Western European countries, and illegality related to the Balkans. The growing involvement of

Eastern European and South-East European women and girls in prostitution reflects the broader structural improvements in the position of the relatively privileged women in the West who, due to socioeconomic improvement, no longer enter prostitution. Poverty and economic instability of Eastern Europe comparing to the wealth and economic development of the West on one side, and on the other illegality and criminality in Balkans which is result of violent dissolution of the Yugoslavia.

However, such situation would have been rather less unusual if the author was for example writing from Western European perspective, but in an instance when he works and lives in a region which is considered to have similar traits as the Eastern European its quite striking to notice that he himself confirms the already established stereotypes of superiority of Western European societies as oppose to the Eastern and South-Eastern European ones.

Six articles out of the selected corpus for analysis in headlines make direct reference to prostitution. One says: 'The dream for better life ends in the Macedonian brothels'. Even though not directly, the title implicitly makes reference to prostitution. Another article in its subtitle says that: 'Kosovo became centre of prostitutes'. The following stresses that 'Macedonian Albanian and Roma are victims of the sex-market in Kosovo'. Furthermore, remaining are entitled as: "A girl forced into prostitution in the Tetovo's 'Vila Rosa'" and 'Three prostitutes caught in a bar'.

The headlines and subtitles of the articles are taken into consideration primarily because of its significance and due to the fact that clearly elucidate what is the theme of the article. On the other side sensationalistic headlines (which also contain stereotypes) such those abovementioned easily discover whether the article itself contains stereotypes and prejudices. For example, in one of the interviews with journalists the respondent said that 'they make sure to avoid first and foremost stereotypes in the headline in order to evade sensationalism'.

Out of the total number of selected articles 16 make direct reference to prostitution in correlation with trafficking. Two of them confuse between prostitution as such and trafficking, making it difficult to identify what is the subject of the narrative. They refer to the socio-economic situation, psychological condition, the manner this occurs but they do not mention the most relevant distinctive element and that is use of force (physical or psychological) or coercion. In that sense is difficult to distinguish the real content and message of these articles intend to portray.

Those articles that make direct reference to prostitution in relation to trafficking contain almost all similar wording such as: 'the victims were forced to prostitution'. The elements include the number of the clients, the price they charge for the services, the way the sexual exploitation occurs and etc. Mainly they are illegally employed as dancers in the bars in Western part of the country but also involved and forced to prostitution. However, the question here arises what do the authors of the texts intend to depict with inclusion of such information? Many of the narratives as stated forth before are technical and one cannot track down a lot of substance.

Despite the technicalities included and their over-emphasizing the articles covertly expose the fact that not only that victims are 'dirty' in physical sense of the word using their bodies as a ultimate facet for survival, but they are 'immoral' 'incapable of doing normal job' 'vulnerable' but also 'an object' without decision making capacity (either in physical and psychological terms) since are forced to prostitution by way of deception or physical force.

Clearly, these conceptions are related to the power relations and patriarchal conceptions in the society, since trafficking of women for sexual exploitation is already gender specific phenomenon accompanied by distinction, discrimination and violence. Thus, it is apparent that the trafficking for sexual exploitation involves women because they are easily deceived or coerced into sex work, as oppose to other forms of illegal migration such as smuggling which involve men and assume their capacity to migrate. The logic here is that women cannot willingly immigrate, or if they do so, they are involved in sexual exploitation, rather than in economic migration.

In addition, there are indeed differences in the substance of the act. For example, smuggling involves illegal access to a certain country and finishes at that point with an opportunity to apply for asylum and work in the informal sector. Whereas trafficking involves illegal entry to a country and does not end at that instance but continues in a form of exploitation such as slavery-like practices or at the labour and sex market. In other words trafficking is smuggling, plus coercion or deception at the beginning and exploitation at the end (Bales; 2005)

The exploitation of the victims is mainly followed by physical and psychological violence and restriction of their freedom of movement. The slavery like practices are not only related to prostitution but other forms of exploitation as well. They are forced to work as dancers, waitress or to perform domestic work under threat and without compensation.

Such situation is illustrated by following examples. A statement of the MOI's State Secretary in one article goes: 'the perpetrators carried the victims in the remote mountain villages and they hold them from five to nine months in houses, whereby forcing them to prostitution. Those women were molested, burned all over their bodies in one word submitted to torture'

In addition, the article on thirteen year old girl discussed previously whose parents were deceived to marry the girl fictively contains the statement of the mother which goes as follows: 'She told me that she is in very difficult position and that she has been mistreated. She cried and she begged me to get her back. She interrupted because someone took the phone'...Furthermore, the journalist describes the horror to which the girl was submitted: 'After the fictive wedding the suspected took the girl to Leskovac and confiscated her passport. Thereafter she was forced to steal ....The girl was ill-treated physically, she was also forced to do domestic work, her freedom of movement was limited and she was not allowed to make phone calls to her family...'

This situation clearly talks about the horror to which the victims of trafficking are submitted to and the vulnerability and victimization involved. Furthermore, that the mistreatment is not only physical but psychological as well. Therefore, it can be noted that the stereotypes and discrimination within the media discourse are both result and mixture of real existing problem within the societies, in addition to already preconceived stereotypes. Both categories frame and design the subjective perceptions of various authors of the narratives resulting in texts over-loaded with discriminative and stereotyping discourses.

And finally what can be identified is that there is contradiction between actual media texts and accompanied photos. At some instances the texts portray one 'reality' such as trafficked women as victims in the hands of traffickers, and on the other hand the photos portray another 'reality'. The

former reality is reduced to the account of the latter by which the exploitive and coercive element associated with the trafficking and prostitution is neglected by which women are portrayed through the photos as consented and freely performing sexual activities and practices. For example some photos represent naked women strip dancing, half naked women or women dressed in provocative outfit, with physical appearance that denotes 'sexually free' 'immoral' and women 'who sell their bodies to earn money' accepting freely and without coercion or deception such life and destiny. These representations clearly foster confusions in the public per se about the real nature of the phenomenon on trafficking in women and girls, and the about the actual situation of women and girls involved in trafficking.

### **4.3 Imagining the Ethnic/National Other**

This sub-chapter as the title points out will discuss the representations of national self and the other in correlation with trafficking. It will also include intra representation by which it will attempt to show the inter-linkage between both categories and their effect on gender and vice versa. It is necessary to point out that even though in the previous chapter the intersection between gender and national/intra(ethnic) representations was not explicitly mentioned is apparent because both are intrinsically related with gender. This is confirmed by the theory whereas it is impossible to separate gender from the political and historical intersections in which is invariably produced and maintained, because it intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual and regional modalities of discursively constructed identities (Butler:1999).

In that sense this sub-chapter may duplicate some of the discussion initiated in the previous sub-chapter, but is included as separate one first and foremost because it is anticipated to prove as useful academic exercise. And secondly, since more than half of the selected corpus of articles make clear distinction of national self/other and intra-ethnic differences in addition to gender representations.

Twelve articles out of the selected corpus make direct reference to the nationality and thus far national identity of the victims. Predominant are distinctions on one hand between Bulgarian, Moldavian, Romanian, Serbian and Albanian and on the other Macedonian. There is however a nuance of representations of nationalities. For example some are represented as nationals of Bulgaria, Serbia and etc. which even though a specification it portrays certain national belonging of the character of certain narrative. Representations such as: 'Albanka, Srbinka, Bugraka Moldavka', (the translation in English: Bulgarian, Serbian, Albanian, Moldavian however does not bring forward the literal meaning of these nouns when employed in Macedonian) elucidate although not openly a tendency of somehow inferior status portrayal even in relation to the nationality to which they are associated with by the citizenship itself.



Dichotomy representation national self /other exposes several things. First and foremost a leading intent of the author to make distinction among the nationalities represented without taking into consideration the overall context, causes of the phenomenon and how this affects the characters and why were submitted to such practices. In that regard this division represents another technicality included in the narratives whereas at some point in the texts the victimization is lowered down as result of portrayal of national 'other' or 'self'. Accordingly, it is irrelevant whether the characters in the narrative were vulnerable and victimized but emphasize is placed on their nationality. Generally what is unifying for all of them without however being obvious and its unintentionally included in the narratives is the fact that all of them are exploited and forced to prostitution, trapped in the hands of traffickers mainly domestic citizens 'Macedonian Albanians' who are organizers and responsible for the sex-market in the country.

Therefore, the question which arises out of this observation is why the precision of national self and other in correlation with trafficking when all the remaining features (vulnerability, mistreatment, victimization and exploitation) are being portrayed in similar manner? In that sense it cannot be noted that authors of the texts attempt to portray 'others' as subordinate comparing to the 'self' since all of them are victims of exploitation resulting from trafficking. However, certain over-emphasizing that the 'prostitutes' are coming from certain Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, Ukraine) extends in some of the texts. Such representation attempts to portray that they are more prone to prostitution and that they earn throughout prostitution regardless of the other factors forcing them to access to this activity. General conception in the public is that indeed these nationals are more prone to prostitution and more often are perceived as 'free' women performing various activities such prostitution and strip-dancing as a way of earning.

Three headlines directly contain a distinction in relation to national identity or precision that the 'victims' were foreign citizens. For example, one says: 'Srbinki kriel pod shahta, Bugarka pod skara (Serbs hidden in a pit, Bulgarian under a barbeque)', other: 'Six foreign citizens arrested' and the third: 'Fourteen foreign citizens (the reference on citizens is made in feminine which according to Macedonian is "drzavjanki") discovered'. Along with the latter headline beside the text there is a photo of naked women strip-dancer, revealing that not only the content of the article discusses prostitution or other sexual practice but also that it concerns 'women' foreign citizens only. In that regard these headlines convey a message that Macedonians are not to be distraught because this negative phenomenon and exploitation does not concern them.

In addition, such headline covertly fosters xenophobic attitude since specifies that something which is generally considered wrongful or illegal is associated with foreigners only and their presence in the country. Regardless of the fact that 'those foreign women' were perhaps ill-treated, coerced or forced to such practices and above all were victimized in this or that way. Moreover, some of articles stress that they are in most cases illegally staying and working in the country ( as prostitutes, dancers) and some of them after being discovered and arrested by the police are going to be deported out of the country. Two-folded depiction of the potential victims of human trafficking as illegal's (working and

staying in the country) which would result in deportation diverts seriously the media discourse from the real phenomenon and its causes and consequences. It is however hard to evaluate whether such diversion is done unwittingly or intentionally by the author, but since overall the articles are following same pattern which is more technical than substantive can be concluded that such discourse is done unintentionally rather than willingly. This tendency however is a result of lack of knowledge, awareness and lack of interest to investigate thoroughly the particular subject.

As far as intra (ethnic) representations are concerned several trends are identified. Primarily dichotomy of the regions East and West, the eastern part of the country is inhabited with ethnic Macedonians and Roma, whereas in the Western region live predominately ethnic Albanians. The dichotomy is done by portraying the Eastern part of the country as a source of recruitment of women and girls to be involved in prostitution, as waitress or dancers due to its underdevelopment and poverty. On other side the Western part of the country is depicted as region where the illegal brothels, bars and restaurants exist and such illegal practices and exploitation occurs. The recruiters, being ethnic Albanians also are related to this region and cities of Tetovo and Gostivar which are most frequently mentioned in the articles.

On one side there is a portrayal of the potential victims (ethnic Macedonians or Roma) who are looking for jobs and earnings outside their place of living, faced with hard conditions due to unemployment and poverty, which are exploited and forced to prostitution. On the other hand, the ethnic Albanians as criminals who carry out illegal activities such as trafficking, exploitation and ill-treatment of the victims coming from the Eastern part of the country and who are mainly ethnic Macedonians or Roma. In that sense the dichotomy is two-sided poverty vs. criminality, ethnic Macedonian vs. ethnic Albanians. Poverty associated with ethnic Macedonians and Roma, whereas criminality to ethnic Albanians. Although representing certain reality these depictions only strengthen already existing preconceptions about the 'other' as distinct, different, weak, incapable, illegal and etc.

At one instance one text exposed the neighbourhood of the victim referring it as the 'as the rouge Roma quarter "Teneki Maalo"' in Kavadarci - a town in eastern part of Macedonia. Taking into consideration the fact that the cities in Macedonia are small, and in this particular case reference to the neighbourhood of the victim could easily disclose her identity. Moreover, this could lead to stigmatization and discrimination in the smaller or broader community after returning of the victim and worsens the attempts for her reintegration and re-socialization. Reference to the Roma and emphasizing the fact that the victim is from Roma community in the article also triggers and strengthens the stigmatization of that particular cultural group in general.

In addition to this when it comes to intra (ethnic) representation is noted that the authors (ethnic Macedonians) without trouble at some point specify that the 'prostitutes' or 'dancers' exploited or found in the raids are at some cases ethnic Albanians or Roma. Such portrayal discriminates against and stereotypes these ethnic groups, putting the whole community in a context of a particular problem.

Placing all these perceptions within a framework of media discourses provides it with opportunity to shape and perpetuate thought about national and ethnic identity, and convey messages to the public as how to perceive the 'other' as opposite the 'self' and therefore construct and confirm the pertaining stereotypes about the 'other'.

## **5. Conclusions**

All of the selected films represent the migrant as male individual, thus excluding in their representational systems the plots and images of subject-active female perspective in a migration context. Migrational issues and experiences are tackled as an individual experience of a male individual, thus subordinating the in-group migration experience. This characteristic is found to be saliently important when considering the context of Macedonia cinematic history, which has been predominantly oriented towards representations of migrational experiences as collective and national destiny subordinating individual perspectives.

In these films, the particular function which is given to the main characters can be reflected in their role of being the transgressor who contests the dominant social orders and cultural aggregates. Embodying the function of 'intruders' the characters mobilizing the sterile and exclusionary orders while simultaneously demystifying either the fragility or the violence of inter- and intra-national borders. Their deconstructive movements hold a critical stance towards both, the sending and the receiving society in the context of migration and expose the:

- hypocritical decency of the 'Western' liberal democracy,
- the paranoiac ethnic and religious group fantasies and imagined communal identities
- the cruel reality of communist and nationalistic state dictatorship and the
- deeply ingrained nationalism in the core of the EU and xenophobia in the center of civilized and modern world, where the concept of citizenship is still heavily overshadowed by the logic of nationality

Gender representational markers can be mostly traced in the context of community violence, that is, in a structure which exemplifies gender violence as collective patriarchic act of preservation and maintenance of the imagined communitarian purity and identity or as the 'necessary' precondition for conserving national and cultural norms. The gendered violence in the national context of internal cultural de-contaminations reflects the gender norms and

unequal distribution of power relations thus mirroring the existing social and cultural gender stereotypes. This effect of marking gender differences and stereotypes is achieved mostly by the means of juxtaposition of binary corpuses of gender images and representations distributed along the axes of the Macedonian national traditional context and the Western European Other that is the represented differentiation between the Macedonian and the Western woman. What can be emphasised as a conclusion in this constellation is that when gender in migration matters, the main strategy deployed is focused much more on mirroring the existing gender relations, norms and stereotypes (although indirectly criticizing them by demystifying the violence they generate) rather than producing and constructing more subversive, socially and politically engaged or transformed frames and models of gender representations and possibilities of gender performing.

In the context of gender relations, one of the documentary movies indirectly de-naturalizes the institution of marriage as the universally recognized form of union between men and women and the state provided and carried form of love relationship, and thus de-mystifies it as one of the most frequent means for acquiring citizenship in a foreign country and, simultaneously, as the one of the essential cells of the state nationalism and the reproduction of the nation.

Although all of the movies analyzed hold a critical perspective towards the unifying national images and the national borders regime, there is still a highly ambivalent system of representation of the cultural binary of 'self and the other'. This ambiguity can be traced as a connoted continuation of the already dominant trend of Balkanism, presented by Maria Todorova as the trend of appropriation and interiorization of the images and the system of representation produced by the means of discursive hegemonies and unequal distribution of power by the Western colonialist political and cultural centres, that is the voluntary self-exoticism. Hence, the West is either idealized as the utopian place comprising the civilized and modernized accomplishment of humanity's progress, or it embodies all the negative prerogatives of the modern man and thus represents the referent point where traditional values have evaporated and marriage is nothing more than just an exclusively state and economic matter, a negation of love, while on the other side would be the Macedonian constellation as the uncontaminated social space where the ideal of true love is still uncontaminated by capital, public and state interference.

When images of intra-national minority are at stake, Roma people for example, it is strongly problematic that there is still prevalent exclusivity of stereotypical repertoire of images, that is, reduction of Roma people to few characteristics taken to be essentials and fixed in Nature.

What can be accentuated as a conclusion of the analyses made on written press is that the construction of gender and national identities is conditional upon many circumstances which jointly contribute to the complexity of the matter. There are socio-economic, cultural, personal and other elements that operate in the background and dictate the discourses, in this instance media discourse, which on the other hand intentionally or unintentionally create stereotypes for the categories under examination. What can be noted although gender and national identities are not static and are

subject to changes in comparison with the stereotypes deriving thereof are however less inactive. Stereotypes operate and in this case through media discourse are attached to different categories of existing gender and national identities for example women are naïve, weak, incapable, involved in prostitution, dirty and etc.

In regard to national and ethnic identities there are representations such as: 'Eastern European prostitutes, foreigners involved in prostitution, strip dancing or illegally present in the country. Furthermore, nuances in representations of Bugarka, Srbinka, Albanka, Moldavka as opposite to utilization of more sophisticated notions such Bulgarian national, Serbian national and etc. The ethnic identities representations and thus far stereotypes vary, notably: ethnic Albanians are criminals, ethnic Macedonian and Roma women and girls from the eastern part are more prone to becoming victims of trafficking and thus prostitution and etc, Roma women and girls are submitted to arranged marriages. At any sense is identified that gender stereotypes are more solid than those related to national or ethnic identities. The latter are only additional to what is already existing preconception about the gender and gender roles within the society.

The manner in which articles are written depict that the journalist do not possess understanding about the concepts they employ in the articles such as distinction between trafficking and smuggling on one hand, and voluntary sex-work and prostitution as result of trafficking on the other. Although certain improvements have been noted in the areas of protecting the victims' identity there certainly need to be continuous training of journalist who report on this kind of sensitive issues.

This analysis identified that the informative rather than investigative journalism is prevailing approach in preparation of narratives related to trafficking and representations of gender and national self and other. Such conclusion has been also substantiated by the respondents in the interviews undertaken. Informative journalism even though neutral it is nevertheless a relevant factor that perpetrates creation of stereotypes in media discourse. The resort to informative journalism in the human trafficking reporting is due to several reasons. One related to the situation of print media and journalism in general in the country, and the other linked with the nature of trafficking as such.

The first obstacle to investigative journalism is related to the lack of human resources within the print media editorials. Most of the journalists in the interviews confirmed that this is indeed a problem. As one of the respondent stressed that in general covers subjects related to culture section, but sometimes also writes for the criminal section covering trafficking. Furthermore, the other respondents confirmed that the editorials make shifts of employees back and forth from one section to another, and therefore in general the quality of reporting is reduced and with that the journalism is sublimated to mere dissemination of information.

Another shortcoming of human trafficking reporting and thus representation of subjects such gender and national identity in Republic of Macedonia is the fact that general policy of the media houses is to focus on actual information dissemination in order to attract more readers. Therefore rely more on

sensationalism and mainstream subjects such daily politics, corruption scandals, quarrels opposition-position and etc.

In terms of challenges when reporting on trafficking it was pointed out that in order to make a story journalists need a person a character who will give the article a human dimension. However, the respondents point out that the access to 'victim' in order to make a story or to get confession is quite difficult due to various reasons such as: difficulty in approaching them because either they are transferred in NGO centres or MOI's centre, fear to openly talk, language barriers when the victims is a foreign citizen and etc. In that sense the overall nature of the trafficking as phenomenon makes it harder for the journalist to resort to investigative journalism. On the other hand the necessity for characters in order to make a story could lead to sensationalism and over-emphasizing of certain elements of the phenomenon on trafficking without in the same time representing the subject objectively and properly.

## **6. Policy Recommendations**

- Official film studies and educational curricula should include gender studies and cultural studies subjects in their programmes and provoke discussions among students and scholars on topics related to gender, cultural issues and intercultural violence.
- Film critics should deploy postcolonial, poststructuralist, semiotics, gender studies and cultural studies methodologies and epistemological tools in their writings of films so that more comprehensive analyses can be provided and multidisciplinary academic debates raised in relation to Macedonian film production
- Any further training for journalist should include gender and cultural sensitive approach within the overall training curricula. The trainings should focus also on editors from specific sections within the media houses.
- In order to develop more gender and culturally sensitive media discourse, the journalism should be more investigative rather than informative allowing journalists' time to explore and understand the subjects which they cover.
- Investigative journalism should not be only associated with access to characters/victims involved in trafficking but should encompass investigation on various levels: consequences leading to trafficking, existing legislation, policy measures undertaken, challenges and best practices to effectively combat the phenomenon.
- Editorials and print media houses should make sure that a shift of journalists from one section to another does not affect the quality of informing.

- Print media houses should modify their policies of being only instant information services and should focus more on developing comprehensive and cutting-edge informing. Therefore, print media houses should make sure to evade sensationalism and deal more thoroughly and analytically with subjects they cover.

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## 8. APPENDIX: FILM OVERVIEWS

### 8.1. FEATURE FILMS

#### 1. Before the Rain - BR

- Director: Milcho Manchevski
- Writer: Milcho Manchevski
- Production: Marc Baschet, Judy Counihan, Cedomir Kolar, Paul Sarony, Sam Taylor, Cat Villers
- Release Date: 1994
- Genre: Drama
- Language: Macedonian, English, Albanian,
- Running time: 113 min.
- Setting: UK, Macedonia
- Cast: Katrin Cartlidge, Rade Serbedzija , Grégoire Colin, Labina Mitevska, Jay Villiers, Silvija Stojanovska, Phyllida Law, Josif Josifovski , Kiro Ristevski, Petar Mircevski, Ljupco Bresliski, Ilko Stefanovski , Suzana Kirandziska, Katerina Kocevska, Vladimir Endrovski , Igor Madzirov
- Music: Anastasia
- Awards: Independent Spirit Award Best Foreign Film, 1996; Oscar nominee for Best Foreign Film, 1995; Golden Lion for the Best Movie, Venice, 1995; 30 awards overall

#### 2. Across the Lake – AL

- Director: Antonio Mitrikeski
- Writer: Tashko Georgievski, Antonio Mitrikeski
- Producer: Gorjan Tozija
- Production: VARDAR FILM – Skopje, STUDIO FILMOWE-Poland, " LOGOS " - Poland
- Release Date: 1997
- Genre: Drama
- Language: Macedonian, Albanian
- Running time: 110 min.
- Setting: Macedonia, Albania
- Cast: Agnieszka Wągner, Nikola Ristanovski, Ekrem Ahmeti, Bedia Begovska, Aco Dukovski, Fehmi Rubi, Vlado Jovanovski, Josif Josifovski, Kiril Risteski
- Music: Georghe Zamfir

## 8.2. Documentary Films

### 1. The Shutka Book of Records - CS

- Director: Aleksandar Manic
- Writer: Aleksandar Manic
- Producer: Aleksandar Manic
- Production: A Cabiria Films Production
- Genre: Documentary
- Language: Macedonian, Roma, Serbian
- Running time: 79 min.
- Setting: Macedonia
- Cast: Severdzan Bajram
- Awards: Amnesty International Film Award, 2005; [Madrid International Documentary Film Festival](#) Audience Award, 2006; [Ourense Independent Film Festival](#) Grand Prize, 2006; [Prague One World Film Festival](#) Audience Award, 2006;

### 2. Cash and Marry– CM

- Director: Atanas Georgiev
- Writer: Marijan Alcevski and Atanas Georgiev
- Producer: Sinisha Juricic, Ralph Weiser, Atanas Georgiev
- Production: [Ralph Wieser](#) for [Mischief Films](#); [Atanas Georgiev](#) for [TRIS film](#), [Sinisha Juricic](#) for [Nukleus](#)
- Genre: Documentary
- Language: Macedonian, Austrian, English, Bosnian, Serbian, French
- Running time: 56/70 min.
- Setting: Vienna, Macedonia
- Cast: Marko Prica, Atanas Georgiev, Barbara Steiner, Liljana Georgieva, Aleksandar Manic, Roland Kier
- Awards: ZagrebDox 2009 - Jury Special Mention; Diagonale 2009 - In Selection; Visions du reel, Nyon - In Official Selection
- Music: Foltin

### Notes:



- <sup>i</sup> *The Second Beginning of the Macedonian Film – Results of the Symposium – The Origins and the First Phase of the Development of the Institutional Organized Cinematography in Macedonia, 1988* (Skopje, Cinematheque Macedonia: 1990); Holloway Roland. *A History of Macedonian Cinema 1905-1996* in KINO (Cinematheque of Macedonia, Skopje: 1996)
- <sup>ii</sup> <http://www.ecofilms.gr/popup2005en.asp?Year=2006&reqid=L-16>
- <sup>iii</sup> European Commission Staff Working Document SEC (2009) 1335 *The Republic of Macedonia 2009 Progress Report*  
[http://www.sep.gov.mk/content/Dokumenti/EN/mk\\_report\\_2009\\_en.pdf](http://www.sep.gov.mk/content/Dokumenti/EN/mk_report_2009_en.pdf)
- <sup>iv</sup> An exception was done in regard to this interview which dates from 2006, however was taken in consideration since provides substance and descriptive relevant information for the subject under examination.
- <sup>v</sup> Nine printed media were monitored (Dnevnik, Vest, Utrinski Vesnik, Vreme, Spic, Nova Makedonija, Vecer, Koha, Lajm and Fakti)
- <sup>vi</sup> Only few articles deal directly with victims directly, and the others provide information on the victims indirectly.
- <sup>vii</sup> *STRENGTHENING CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE WESTERN BALKAN REGARDING MIGRATION MANAGEMENT MACEDONIA MIGRATION FLOWS IN MODERN MACEDONIA* (Skopje, Center for Research and Policy Making 2007)
- <sup>viii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>ix</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>x</sup> Article 418 (a-g).
- <sup>xi</sup> *Combating the Trafficking in Human Beings, Policies of the Republic of Macedonia Reviewed*, p.3.
- <sup>xii</sup> See more in Bordwell David & Thompson Kristin. *Film History: An Introduction* (University of Wisconsin, Medison: 2003); Smith Nowell Geoffrey (ed.). *Oxford History of World Cinema* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1996)
- <sup>xiii</sup> This is one of the main points Atanas Georgiev emphasized in the course of the interview
- <sup>xiv</sup> The stoicism as the underlying philosophical thread of the story has been emphasized in several critical reviews. For example see: Cepinovic Miroslav. *Macedonian Feature Film* (Cinematheque of Macedonia, Skopje: 1999)
- <sup>xv</sup> [http://sinner.8.forumer.com/a/\\_post1302.html](http://sinner.8.forumer.com/a/_post1302.html)
- <sup>xvi</sup> [http://kanalizacija.blogspot.com/2006/02/blog-post\\_03.html](http://kanalizacija.blogspot.com/2006/02/blog-post_03.html)
- <sup>xvii</sup> This interview has been selected because clearly portrays the phenomenon of trafficking in women and accompanied effects which are discussed in the research despite the fact that is being published in 2006. Such an interview or article has not been found in chosen period.
- <sup>xviii</sup> *Op. cit.*, note 1 p...
- <sup>xix</sup> *Op. cit.*, note 1, p.33
- <sup>xx</sup> Dnevnik. *Macedonian Albanian and Roma Girls victims of sex-market in Kosovo*. 12.04.2007 (Дневник. *Македонски Албанки и Ромки жртви на секс-пазарот во Косово*, 12.04.2007)