

Research Meeting

The Press in the official Balkan languages in France and the foreign-language press in the Balkan countries, throughout the 20th century.

Organized by: Transfopress (Transnational Network for the Study of the Foreign-Language Press), Centre de recherches Europe-Eurasie (CREE)-Inalco, Centre d'histoire culturelle des sociétés contemporaines de l'Université de Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, Laboratoire de recherches sur les cultures Anglophones (LARCA-UMR 8225)- Université Paris-Diderot, Association française d'études sur les Balkans (AFEBAK), BNF.

Date : Thursday 1st June 2017

Place : Inalco, rue de Lille

The Balkan peninsula – or South-East Europe – is a region with shifting geopolitical boundaries which includes, according to the dominant definition of its maximum extension, a territorial space framed by the Carpathians, Crete, the Adriatic and the Black Sea. In the early Nineteenth century, it included Ottoman possessions with varying degrees of autonomy as well as territories administered by the Habsburgs. Following a number of internal and inter-state conflicts, usually referred to in international relations as the “Eastern question”, several states were formed during the Nineteenth century and up to the more recent period.

During this period, the press experienced a remarkable development in this part of the European continent as elsewhere. Periodicals and reviews published in the languages recognized as official in the different countries were published alongside periodicals in “foreign languages” such as English, French, Italian and other idioms used by linguistic minorities and/or immigrants who settled in the countries of the Balkans. At the same time, people from South-East Europe who moved to other European countries, including France, were sometimes at the origin of the emergence of periodicals published in one of the official languages of the Balkan countries, such as Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian-Bosnian, Slovenian and Turkish. As constituent elements of diasporic networks or vehicles for the promotion of political, economic and cultural interests, the study of the press published in foreign languages -i.e. languages different from those legally accepted as official and/or minority languages – could help us map out the social and cultural diversity of the societies under scrutiny.

At the crossroads between media history, the history of the circulation of knowledge, discourses, and cultural practices as well as the history of socio-spatial mobility, these periodicals are too often ignored by historical research, mostly because of the “alien nature” of the languages they use or the peculiar place they occupy in the history of the press written from the perspective of the official language of each nation state.

This research meeting intends to fill some of the gaps in the historiography and it hopes to attract both specialists of the foreign-language press and specialists of the Balkans.

Together with a reflexion concerning the use and definition of the term “foreign-language press” in the context of multilingual political entities such as the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the states born after their collapse, among the many topics that could be discussed we can mention the conception, organization, diffusion, function and reception of Press published in “foreign languages”, that is to say, non-official languages, at the aftermath of the First World War in the Balkan states and in official languages of Balkan states within French society, during the same period. We could also seize this opportunity to identify such periodicals in the collections of the BNF.

In order to analyse those periodicals, many questions come to mind (the list is far from exhaustive): the types of publications; the persons responsible for their launching; the publishing houses or news organizations that marketed them; the choice(s) of language(s); the networks that sponsored them; their life-span, chronology, content and readership; the role they played in the general circulation of men and ideas; the cultural transfers they facilitated; the hybrid identities they fostered; the strategies used by their editors to promote community or state interests.

Scholars interested in participating in this research meeting to be held in Paris on 1 June 2017 should send their proposal – with a title and a 250-word abstract in French or English – with a short CV and their e-mail before 15 February 2017 to:

nikolaospitsos@hotmail.com with copies to diana.cooper-richet@uvsq.fr; benedicte.deschamps@univ-paris-diderot.fr; richet.isa@gmail.com

Notifications will be sent by the end of February 2017. The workshop languages are English and French. Selected papers will be published in the scientific review *Cahiers balkaniques*.

Organisation Committee

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Scientific Committee

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