



Austrian-Hungarian Albanology 1867-1918 – a case of cultural imperialism?

Abstract

Kurt Gostentschnigg's dissertation „Die österreichisch-ungarische Albanologie 1867-1918. Zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik“ / “Austrian-Hungarian Albanology 1867-1918: Between Science and Politics” (1996) is the first comprehensive study of the history of Austrian-Hungarian's Albanology in the context of the general relations between the Dual Monarchy and the later Albania. However, it ended up with an outlook of still open questions related to the concrete relationship between academia and politics, which shall be answered by the submitted research project.

Whereas the relationship to the Monarchy in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina the (post-) colonial debate is relevant, in the case of Albania imperialism has been discussed. With regard to the Austrian-Hungarian – Albanian relations three elements are indicative of cultural imperialism: the Kultusprotektorat / Cultus protectorate over the Catholics of North Albania, the Austrian Committee for Albania, and the Austrian-Hungarian military administration of Albania 1916-18.

The primary aim of the project is to give a clear answer to the question whether Austrian-Hungarian Albanologists let themselves being instrumentalised by Austrian-Hungarian politics and military or was it a mutual exertion of influence between the academic, political and military field with a multitude of players? In addition, there are some detailed questions to be answered such as the formation and history of the field of Albanian studies, its relationship with the field of power or the problem of the belonging of several famous Albanologists to various fields.

For the resolution of the mentioned research questions a combination of Johan Galtung's concept of cultural imperialism and Pierre Bourdieu's field theory in relation to individual and institutional social actors. Whereas Galtung's concept constitutes an instrument for the analysis of the asymmetric relations between Austria-Hungary and the emerging Albania, Bourdieu's field theory offers a significant potential for the analysis of the relationship between the Austrian-Hungarian field of foreign policy on the one hand and the military and the academic field on the other hand.

Research on the social actors will be conducted in the Viennese Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv and Kriegsarchiv as well as in the State Archives in Sarajevo and Tirana. The evaluation of

the relevant material will be guided by Bourdieu's field theory, just as the analysis of the internal structures of the fields of Albanian studies, politics and military, the reconstruction of the historical genesis of the field of Albanian studies, the determination of the intersections between the field of Albanian studies as well as the political and military field, and the exposure of the field of Albanian studies to the field of power.

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