



Ph.D. candidate

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Research Project

International Research Network 'Physical Violence and State Legitimacy in Late Socialism'

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Title of the Dissertation

War and Peace in Socialism – The Yugoslav People's Army and the Break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Abstract

The aim of my research project is to analyse how the societal role and the self-understanding of the Yugoslav People's Army and their military staff changed during the constitutional crisis which took place in the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The main research question is how this institution, which officially was sworn in the communist project and well-respected within the socialist society in Yugoslavia, changed into a military-political instrument of the Serbian nationalist agenda under the leadership of Slobodan Milošević.

In my research project I will distinguish three thematic clusters. (i) **Power and Institution:** In this cluster I will analyse the role and the function of the Yugoslav People's Army within the communist society-project and the socialist state-building process after the Second World War. A specific focus lies on the programmatic orders of the Communist Party and on changes which were initiated by the institutional structure of the Yugoslav People's Army itself. (ii) **Army and Society:** The second thematic scope should explore the social implementation of the Army in socialist society. Sub-items of this cluster are the social-biographic meaning of national service, the military staff as a stratum of the socialist society and the Yugoslav People's Army as a socio-economic actor. Based on a local analysis of the Serbian town Valjevo I will explore on the one hand the relationship between the population and the military unit in this region, on the other hand the relevance of the Army for the local economic development of the region Valjevo. (iii) **Conflict and Crisis:** Finally I will synthesise the exposed insights of the previous chapters with the large-scale changes in Yugoslavia in the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. I want to demonstrate how the societal role and the self-understanding of the Yugoslav People's Army and the military staff changed depending on their structural and social features of the socialist era and the situational context of the constitutional crisis and the break-up-war in Croatia 1991.