

**Bulgarian case studies in the ethnography  
of communication.  
I. Balkanizing the metaphor**

**Petko Ivanov**

**Abstract.** The essay presents an ethnographic case study of the 1990s' crisis of the former Bulgarian national air carrier BALKAN. Given the negative connotations of the Balkan trope (*viz.* balkanization, the Balkan powder keg, etc.) in the dominant Western discourses, I argue that the dropping of the company's ratings and the constant decrease of international passenger traffic in the 1990s was intensified by the metaphorical infelicity of the air carrier's name. This ethnographic anecdote posits the question of whose meanings prevail and what are the factors that determine the metaphor's activity scope. My claim is that metaphors are not only shaping the identities and subjectivities of social actors but also serve as instruments for (re)arranging the power-relationships between them. Operating from the position of extra-tropological power, the Western organizing metaphors serve as the principle instruments for "corrosion" of local meanings, thus forcing the rival metaphors to work against their implied scenarios, or to become *disorganizing* metaphors. From this viewpoint any socio-cultural "quality space" presents itself as a power-laden site of intense trope competition and struggle between the metaphors' local and global meanings.

**Keywords:** Balkans as metaphor, the notion of Balkanization, ethnography of metaphor, global production of locality, Bulgarian history

**Balkanization, and the notion of (dis)organizing metaphors**

The essay deconstructs "Balkans" as a metaphorical complex, playing upon the polysemy of the verb "to balkanize". Employing the verb in its literal meaning, it first embeds the discussion of metaphors in a Balkan context, selecting as its ethnographic material metaphors functioning in and concerning this geographic region; second, it projects upon the notion of metaphor the surface trope of *balkanization*, whose conventional (Webster's) interpretation implies "the breaking up of a(n) (geographic) area into small and often hostile units". The research timeframe and validity claims are limited to the 1990s and reflect the negative influence on Western perceptions of the region exerted by the

Yugoslav (misleadingly called “Balkan”) wars of 1991-1995 (the breakup of Yugoslavia) and 1998-1999 (Kosovo).

Theoretically, the essay revisits critically the anthropology of tropes, zeroing on James W. Fernandez’ (1986) concept of organizing metaphors and their performance in what he calls “quality” (or symbolic) spaces.<sup>1</sup> Being a strategic predication of identity upon an inchoate subject, the organizing metaphor is a venue for negotiating and establishing interactional identities, as well as for reinforcing and/or seeing anew previously established stereotypes. If apt and successful (or well-suited for particular interests), the metaphoric assertion can be adopted by social actors not only as a major tool for organizing otherwise inchoate experiences, but also as a scenario for behaviour. Working against this theoretical backdrop, I conjecture that, when moving across quality spaces, one and the same metaphor might acquire opposite interpretations and might thus provide contradictory scenarios for social behaviour. Being an organizing metaphor in a given quality space, in another one it may have a *disorganizing* effect on social actors, especially when the two quality spaces overlap.

### **The trouble with the Balkans**

The trouble with the Balkans starts with the designation itself, which in the 1990s became especially problematic due to its negative association with the wars of Yugoslav secession. In terms of geography, the Balkans constitute an entity, which is part of Europe, even though it is located in its periphery. In any other terms, the Balkans have the ambiguous status of being only semi-integrated with the rest of the continent. They are, in Stein Rokkan’s (1979) terminology, a typical case of *interface peripheries*, caught between different political, economic and ideological centres, but never fully integrated into neither of them. Being not only in the periphery of the West, but also in the periphery of the East, the Balkans are in the position of the recurrent included and excluded middle. From this perspective, the borders of the Balkans, especially vis-à-vis Europe, oscillate between being a frontier of exclusion and inclusion (much more the former than the latter - which result in the local construction of what can be termed “identities of exclusion”). A question to start with, therefore, is which countries are in, which ones are out. Because of the negative connotations of the designation, no Balkan country (with a possible exception of Bulgaria and Macedonia) considers itself Balkan. What we witness is a correlation between the local and the global symbolic organizations of space, in which the “Balkanness” of the Balkans and its inhabitants becomes the principle site where different ongoing projects intersect and where the local identities are negotiated within the framework of globalization.

A number of often conflicting descriptions are employed to explain the intersection of the local and the global imaginations of the Balkans. One of them

---

<sup>1</sup> I would like to express my gratitude to James W. Fernandez (University of Chicago) for his insightful comments on previous drafts of this essay.

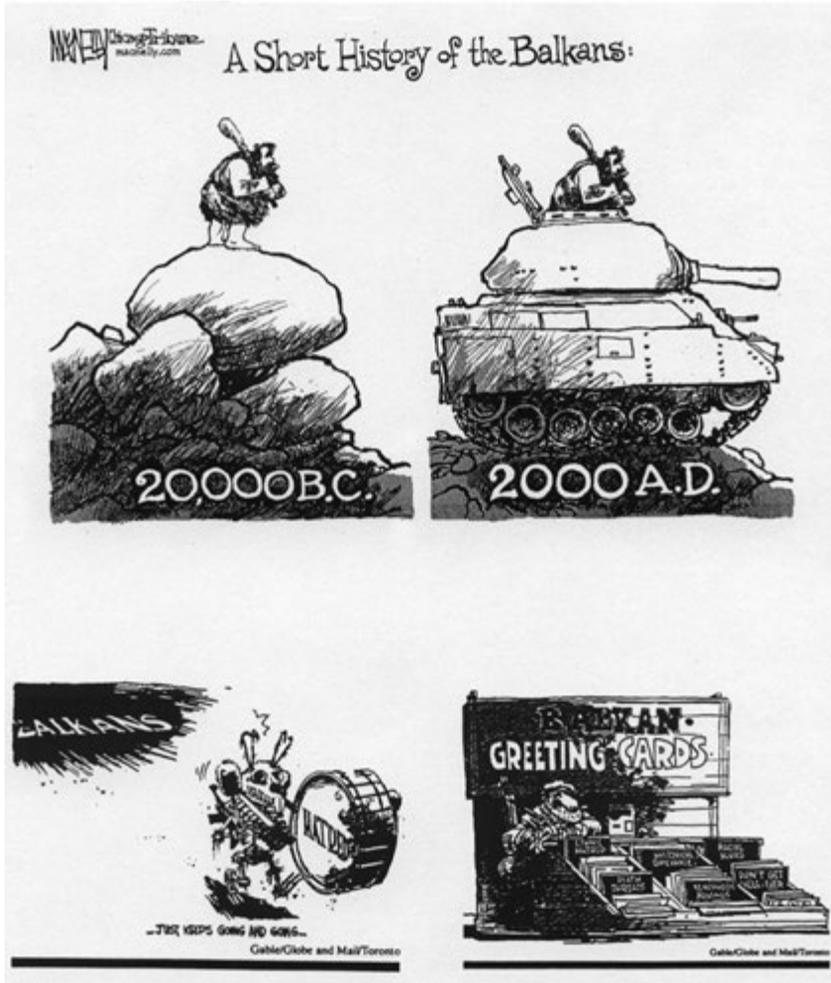
makes the Balkans readable through the category of Orientalism (Said 1979), and of *nesting Orientalism* in particular - a term which refers to the gradation of "Orients" as a pattern of reproduction of the original dichotomy upon which Orientalism itself is premised (e.g., our neighbours are more "oriental" than we are).<sup>2</sup> This paradigm is coupled by Maria Todorova's (1997) model, according to which the Balkans are subject to a particular discourse (*Balkan-ism*), which is distant from Orientalism (the Balkans were not colonies *stricto sensu*) but essentially depends on the same premise. Todorova (1997, 40) maintains that the Balkans are conceptualized by the West as "familiarily outlandish" (in H. H. Munro's phrase; Goldsworthy 1998, 69) with respect to "the order of symbols, of values and beliefs" (Shils 1975, 3) that govern the Western civilization in its European and North American hypostases. From this perspective, the Balkans have been generally constructed as the region "between and betwixt" whose unstable exotic qualities are constantly overshadowed by images of disorder, violence and threat - the political clichés "the Balkan ghost", "the Balkan danger", or "the Balkan malaise" being some of the most telling examples in this respect.<sup>3</sup> Established during the Balkan Wars (1912-1914) and revitalized by the wars leading to and following the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, such political metaphors perpetuate a "frozen image" of the Balkans (see Fig. 1) as a region of "ancient ethnic hatreds" (cf. a cartoon from 1993 depicting the Energizer Bunny of the Balkan hatreds that "just keeps going and going"), "new tribalism" and "the freedom to hate" (cf. another cartoon from 1994 that depicts an array of "Don't-get-well-ever" type of Balkan greeting cards). Such metaphorical complexes, featuring the Balkans as their tenor (cf. Bjelić, Savić 2002) and stereotyping the Balkan people as having and/or causing problems, produce further new metaphors, already with a "Balkan" vehicle. In them, the term functions as a core sign-image packed with traces of previous metaphorical interactions to organize the behaviour of the Westerners not only toward the region (constructed as the West's ridiculous Alter Ego) but also, by extension, toward themselves. Among them especially productive and influential in Western discourses, both inside and outside Balkan context, is the metaphor of "balkanization" (cf. Fig. 2) coined out in the aftermath of World War I (one of its earliest mentions is in an article from *The New York Times* entitled "The Balkanization of Europe", dated 20 December 1918).<sup>4</sup> The trope's original metaphoric value derives from conceptualizing the Balkans as a place of violent disintegration, ethnic cleansing and

---

<sup>2</sup> Bakić-Hayden 1995. Slavoj Žižek (1997) puts it this way: "For Austrians, the Slovenes are wild hordes they have to protect themselves from by an imaginary wall; the Slovenes erect walls before the onslaught of the "uncivilized" Croats; the Croats are walling themselves up against their neighbors, the "wild" Serbs; the Serbs think of themselves as the last shield of Christendom that protects them (but also Europe!) from the Islamic invasion. Four times, therefore, the cultural borders are shifted and the walls erected - all justified by the protection of Christendom against the onslaught of the wild hordes" (quoted in Živković 2001, 96).

<sup>3</sup> The 1990s Western images of the Balkans as an area of disorder, pathology and violence are studied by Bakić-Hayden, Hayden 1992; Craig Nation 1995; Goldsworthy 1998.

<sup>4</sup> The earliest definition of the term comes from Paul Scott Mowrer's book *Balkanized Europe* (1921): "And this, then, we find to be the meaning of the word "Balkanization": the creation, in a region of hopelessly mixed races, of a medley of small states with more or less



**Fig. 1.** The “frozen image” of the Balkans in Western newspapers (Cartoons by Jeff MacNelly for *Chicago Tribune*, and Brian Gable for *Globe and Mail / Toronto*), 1993-1994

superfluous separatism, where claims for self-determination more often than not fail to be translated into an establishment of autonomous public authority. There are two alternative political interpretations of this Balkan predicament: one, presenting it as inherent in the region itself, the result of its “surplus of history” (Churchill is credited for saying “The Balkans produce more history than they can consume locally”) and the burden of ancient and modern civili-

---

backward populations, economically and financially weak, covetous, intriguing, afraid, a continual prey to the machinations of the great powers, and to the violent promptings of their own passions.” The term is also used in its verb form “to balkanize” (*balkanisieren* in German, *balkaniser* in French, *balkanizzare* in Italian); see Gold 1986, cf. Niederhauser 1992.

## Balkanization



Fig. 2. Balkanization. Cartoon by Paula Goodman Koz (*New York Times*, 25 August 1996)

zational fault-lines that tear the area up from within; and another, viewing the Balkan predicament as the Great Powers' manipulation of local nationalisms in their struggles for the establishment of "arcs of influence". Both explanations, however different otherwise, invariably associate the Balkan crises with frustrated or temporally failed ethno-national projects, which are bound - sooner or later - to cause wars and lead eventually to the establishment of new, smaller and still smaller, Ruritania.<sup>5</sup> As a popular joke from the late 1990s had it, in the year of 2020 there will be only ten states in Europe: Western Europe and, besides it, Bosnia, Slovenia, Slavonia, Kosovo, Kraina, Greater Serbia, Smaller Serbia, etc...<sup>6</sup> By locating the processes of political integration exclusively in Europe and the opposite movement exclusively in the Balkans, the joke subscribes to the popular as well as sometimes academic distinction between two different nationalisms: "good" (Western, civic, rational, constructive) and "bad"

---

<sup>5</sup> I am referring, of course, to the fictional story of how little Ruritania breaks away from the empire of Megalomania that was invented by Ernest Gellner (1983) to illustrate the characteristic scenario of nation-building.

<sup>6</sup> Variants of the joke: only the Belgian [= Brussels] empire and 'n' Balkan countries; or only 7 states - Germany and the six former Yugoslav republics. The later variant is of Yugoslav origin and reflects the fear of a "new" German sphere of influence on the Balkans provoked by the early recognition of Croatia by United Germany.

(Eastern, ethnic, irrational, destructive).<sup>7</sup> It is the second type of nationalism that the Western metaphor of balkanization stands for when it is used in a political context (Pringle 2018), occasionally in double reference to the Balkans themselves (“the balkanization of the Balkans”, as in Đukić 2013).

Further circumstantial evidence of the “multiple marginality” (Hall, Danta 1996) of the region concerns the reception of its literature, viewed itself as “marginal”. In 1971, *New York Times* published a parody describing the “astonishment” of the literary world upon learning that “this year’s Nobel Prize for Literature had gone neither to Borges nor Nabokov, but instead to Gregor Drubnik, the 67-year-old Bulgarian fabulist” (needless to say, a fictitious character), who “for the past 55 years has lived downtown Plotznitska, a remote hill village where the principal industry of the glum and exceedingly hostile peasants is stringing goats’ teeth on rubber bands to fashion souvenir ankle bracelets”. The author of the pamphlet, some Thomas Meehan<sup>8</sup>, goes on to say that Drubnik’s brief, 250-word moralistic tales “make little sense to anyone unacquainted with the arcane tradition of 19th-century Balkan goat herding”. Moreover, Drubnik “stubbornly chooses to write all of his fables in Pludnik, a frustratingly ambiguous Slovene peasant dialect that has for centuries defied the translating efforts of some of the world’s most eminent linguists, many of whom, after wrestling with Pludnik, have fallen victims to serious mental illness”. The pamphlet ends with the suggestion that “perhaps the wisest thing that the American reader can do in regard to this year’s winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature is simply to forget that he ever heard of Gregor Drubnik and his goddam fables”. Although contrary to the facts, this parody solidifies Bulgaria’s reputation as an anonymous country (Ivanov 2001, 10-11).<sup>9</sup>

### Clash of metaphors

Let me now give you but one example of how such negative metaphors not only shape the identities and subjectivities of political actors but also serve as scenarios for behaviour. In the 1990s the Bulgarian national air carrier *BALKAN*

---

<sup>7</sup> The distinction between Western and Eastern nationalisms was first advanced by Plamenatz 1973. This “Manichean” view of nationalism has been critiqued by Rogers Brubaker (1999) as being both normatively and analytically problematic.

<sup>8</sup> See Meehan 1971. Here is the description of the language: “Pludnik contains a mere 243 words, and thus many words in Pludnik tend to have several meanings. There are in Pludnik, for instance, six separate and distinct meanings for the word *plodlik* - night, light bulb, dog sled, hello, goodbye, and tapioca pudding. [...] And, infuriatingly, the infinitive *sluvnik* can in varying contexts mean to go, to stay, to sit, to stand, to live, to die and to pole vault. Moreover, entire sentences in Pludnik can be subject to totally different interpretations. For example, the seven-word sentence “Jubda pluvda slubnik bluvda Plozluk plubka vrats” can mean either “I am going to the market place on Tuesday at 11 A.M.” or “My Aunt Mitzie has lost her bottle of Revlon nail-polish remover.”

<sup>9</sup> Another telling example is provided by Saul Bellow’s article “Papuan and Zulus” (*New York Times*, 10 March 1994, A25), in which the Nobel Prize winner threw the *argumentum ad hominem* “There is no Bulgarian Proust”, adding: “Have I offended the Bulgarians too?”

**Balkan Bulgarian Airlines** **BALKAN**  
BULGARIAN AIRLINES

## CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

**TOB, appointed by the Bulgarian Privatisation Agency to manage the privatisation of Balkan Bulgarian Airlines, invites expressions of interest for the purchase of a majority of the Company's shares.**

The goal of the privatisation is to find a strategic partner and to raise new capital for the airline's future investments. Expressions of interest are invited from established airlines and companies with international aviation experience and possibly in conjunction with financial investors.

Expressions of interest should provide information on:

- ✔ the qualifications of companies responding
- ✔ the percentage of ownership and investment being sought
- ✔ the participation in company management
- ✔ the future development of Balkan Air as a national carrier
- ✔ conditions in respect of the purchase

An Investment Memorandum can be obtained from TOB for USD 5,000. Due diligence visits to the Company can be made upon request to TOB and subsequent receipt of written confirmation.

During the privatisation period TOB is authorised to require final bids accompanied by a bid bond of USD 1 million. The final bid will be valid for 120 days after the closing date yet to be announced. A decision will be made within this period.

The sale will be subject to applicable Bulgarian law.

Formal expressions of interest should be sent by express courier in a sealed envelope marked "BALKAN AIR" to:

**TOB**  
Alexanderplatz 6, D-10100 Berlin, Germany  
E-mail: TOB\_Berlin@compuserve.com Fax: +49 30 24 31 25 90  
**To arrive latest 6 April 1998 at 4 p.m. local time**

TOB in consortium with  is acting on behalf of the Bulgarian Privatisation Agency to sell the majority ownership of Balkan Bulgarian Airlines.

**Fig. 3.** An advertisement in *The Economist* (21 Feb. 1998, p. 104) for selling the majority of Balkan Bulgarian Airlines. A year later, the company was sold for \$150,000

experienced a crisis which eventually led to its closure.<sup>10</sup> Within a year (1990-1991), its passenger traffic dropped drastically by more than 60%, which quickly led to a spiraling accumulation of debt. The nearly bankrupted state-owned company was offered privatization through rulings of the Bulgarian Privatisation Agency three times within the mandate of three major governments: in 1992-1995 (Lyuben Berov, later Zhan Videnov), 1997 (see Fig. 3) and again in 1999 (Ivan Kostov). Finally, in June 1999 Balkan Air was sold for \$150,000 to an arguably unsuited buyer, the Israeli Zeevi Group, which proceeded to sell off the company's properties both at home and abroad. (The national affiliation of the buyer contributed further to the company's troubles and propelled yet another ethno-metaphorical outburst in the local media, with xenophobic graffiti and cartoons like the ones pictured in Fig. 4-6.) Balkan Air officially ceased to exist in 2002.<sup>11</sup>

The demise of the company, arguably affected by the controversial privatization practices of Ivan Kostov's government, notably coincided with the Yugoslav wars that deepened the negative image of the Balkans and by extension to the

<sup>10</sup> The following description is based on Bulgarian and international newspaper and radio reports; see *Bulgarian Business News*, 14/20 Aug. 1995; *Duma*, 4 Apr. 1998; *Demokratiya*, 27 Feb., 6 Apr., 13 July, 24 Aug. 1998; *Reuters Financial Service*, 28 Jan., 31 March, 7 Apr. 1997; *The European*, 19 June 1997, 24 Aug. 1998; *Airline Business*, July 1998, p. 18-19.

<sup>11</sup> The current bibliography of the Balkan Air privatization includes, notably, Todorov 2015, 415-433, and Todorov 2017; the well-documented study by Sugarev (2017), a memoir by Ivan Kostov (2019, 416), and a journalistic critique of it by the newspaper *Telegraph* (2019, 81-88), as well as two documentaries by Lazarova (2020).



**Fig. 4.** Anti- Zeevi graffiti (ГАД ЗЕЕВ-И=МОШЕ-НИК), downtown Sofia, Sept. 2001.  
Photo by the author



**Fig 5.** Acquired by Israel's Zeevi Group (24 Chasa, 2 July 1999)



**Fig. 6.** BALKAN lost its Arab routes (Trud, 9 July 1999)

brand name of Balkan Air. As it turned out, the dropping of the company's ratings and the constant decrease of international passenger traffic in the 1990s was intensified by the metaphorical infelicity of the air carrier's name BALKAN AIR: after all, who would board a flying "powder keg" - a plane which by its very name threatens to break into pieces?! From a native Bulgarian point of view, however, there is hardly a more appropriate name for an air carrier than BALKAN, since it both evokes images of reliability ("we are as solid as the Balkan Mountain") and propagates the company's aspirations to be the representative airlines of the entire peninsula.

In the Bulgarian repertoire of tropes, as well as in the local symbolic space, the Balkan Mountain - the largest mountain range in the country that since 1809 has shared by a metonymic shift its name with the entire Balkan Peninsula - occupies a maximum privileged position. It has been constructed as a core sign-image of stability, security, durability and national identity. Thus, it is the focus of a rich metaphorical complex where the positive zones of numerous domains of experience intersect. The Balkan Mountain is the backbone of Bulgaria, the Father Balkan, the Balkan lion, it is up in the skies where eagles are born (while the plain down grows only pumpkins); it is the cradle of freedom, the navel of the peninsula, "our pride and our soul". At least two of these metaphors were put into operation in the Bulgarian political behaviour. The awakening of the Balkan lion was a major organizing metaphor of the Bulgarian national liberation movement, a movement that ultimately led in 1878 to the political emancipation of the country from the Ottoman Empire. (Later the lion was employed on the coat of arms of the new state.) Recognizing the crucial geopolitical role of this mountainous range for Bulgarian history, the renowned historian Petar Mutafchiev claimed: "Without the Balkans, and then also without the mountains on our soil, here in the European Southeast what has existed now for so many centuries under the name of Bulgarians would hardly have survived and might not have appeared" (Mutafchev 1987, 66). According to another Bulgarian scholarly authority, "nature and culture, geography and ethnos overlap each other metonymically in the Balkan Mountain, so that they form an entity with a unique content. [...] The Balkan is symbolically generalized as the 'quintessence' of the Bulgarianness" (Daskalov, Elenkov 1994, 42).

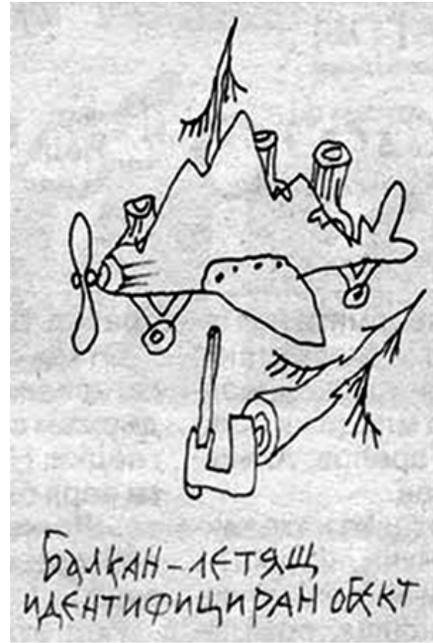
The productiveness of the Balkan metaphorical complex is used actively as an instrument of commercial persuasion as well. Bulgaria is a country where not only the airlines are called *Balkan*, but "whose tourist agencies are 'Balkantourist' and 'Balkan Holidays,' whose record-making industry is 'Balkanton', whose best export to the COMECON was an electrocar called 'Balkancar', whose most fashionable hotel in the centre of Sofia is 'Sheraton-Balkan', whose third largest bank is 'Balkanbank' [...]. These examples can be continued *ad infinitum*" (Todorova 1997, 56). All these commercial labels use the Balkan predication to move their products or services to a most advantageous position in quality space, i.e., in *Bulgarian* quality space, assuming it is shared by their customers around the globe.

Going back to my initial anecdote, the trademark *Balkan* is a commercial loser from a Western perspective but utterly felicitous designation if viewed from Bulgaria. Using a major organizing metaphor, the company expects to urge its customers towards a particular type of performance: buying its tickets.

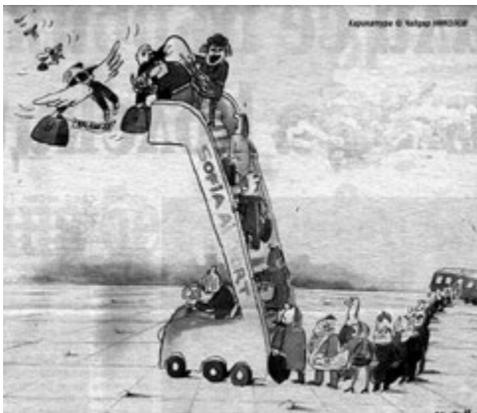
Yet on the international market this metaphor clashes with another powerful organizing Western metaphor with the same vehicle, which makes the opposite movement and leads to a diametrically opposite performance: people do NOT buy tickets. Operating from the position of extra-tropological power, the Western organizing metaphors serve as the principle instruments for corrosion of local meanings, thus forcing the rival metaphors to work against their implied scenarios, or to become *disorganizing* metaphors (see Fig. 7-10).



**Fig. 7.** Balkan (Air) as a bridge  
(*Sturshel*, June 2000)



**Fig. 8.** “Balkan - identified flying object” (*24 Chasa*, 30 June 1999)



**Fig. 9.** Flying with Balkan Air  
(*Demokratiya*, 17 March 1999)



**Fig. 10.** “Not everything that flies is worth money” (*24 Chasa*, 8 July 1999)

## A metaphor with an army and a navy

To rephrase the question posed by the case of Balkan Airlines: why some organizing metaphors travel well far from their emission centre (as do “balkanization”), while others (such as the local metaphor of the Balkan Mountain) fail to go international? It may be productive here to introduce, developing further the implications of the scientific metaphor “emission centre”, the variable *radius of activity*, or *scope of persuasion and performance*, to handle the varying stability of metaphors across culture’s space (and across cultures). Evidently, some metaphors have a greater radius of activity than others do, and the larger their scope of persuasion and performance is, the more aggressive they seem to be in the cross-culture competition of organizing metaphors.

What are, then, the factors that determine the metaphor’s activity scope? Since all the metaphors here discussed are apt and powerfully organizing in their emission centre, I assume that their long-distance intensity is a function of extra-tropological factors. What makes the metaphor of balkanization so stable and aggressive that it can outplay the “Balkan” metaphor is the fact that it belongs to the now dominant, i.e., Western, discourse. What I understand by dominant discourse is a discourse which, operating from the position of power (usually, but not necessarily, political), strives to homogenize the heterogeneous space of world’s culture and establish its own as *the* quality space. Its organizing metaphors are the instruments of this process of homogenization. As metaphors vested in extra-tropological power, they suppress rival organizing metaphors that are produced and operate within rival quality spaces and, in the process, force them to work against their implied scenarios, or to become *disorganizing* metaphors.

Such a relativist view on organizing metaphors brings into the tropological discussion the category of power and allows us to further distinguish between “weak” and “strong” organizing metaphors, based on their radius of activity as determined by the power vested in the adopted point of view of the metaphorical utterance. To paraphrase Max Weinreich’s famous distinction between a language and a dialect, a strong organizing metaphor (such as “balkanization”) is a metaphor with an army and a navy to defend it.

## COVID-19 postscript

The coronavirus pandemic added another example of the way metaphor tensions in the global quality space affect customer behaviour. In the first coronavirus months (Feb.-Apr. 2020) the leading brand of Mexico’s beer industry, Corona, reportedly experienced a drop in sales attributed to the accidental linking of the virus to the beer, as shown by Google search data at the time (Tan 2020). To counter possible damage to the brand, the owner Constellation Brands issued a statement addressing the American consumer reiterating the message “Corona. A beer. Not a virus”<sup>12</sup>. The metaphoric “corona” com-

---

<sup>12</sup> Details in Tan 2020 and Bajić 2020. A video sketch “Message from Corona Beer” by Conan O’Brien, aired on TBS on 4 March 2020, is available at <https://www.tbs.com/shows/conan/clips/a-message-from-corona-beer>.

plex has properties similar to the ones discussed above as it provides positive vs. negative positioning in overlapping quality spaces. Being the Latin and Spanish for ‘crown’, the name and the logo of Corona Beer indexes its “royal” status among beers. In the context of the coronavirus pandemic, however, it acquires for monolingual English speakers a subliminal association with the infection instead of its intended kingly connotations, thus taking it down in the consumer quality space. Fortunately, the vernacularization of the official name of the disease COVID-19 (‘CO’ for corona, ‘VI’ for virus, ‘D’ for disease + the year of discovery) obliterated the initial metaphorical mix-up, and it is safe to conclude that Corona Beer - contrary to sensationalist predictions and premature anxieties - will survive the coronavirus.<sup>13</sup>

## References

- Bajić 2020:** J. Bajić. Corona Beer vs coronavirus: Effects on the company’s brand and its response. - In: Lexology, 6 April 2020. Available from: <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=77d1fb22-64e2-4f7b-b886-ef40db6d0772> [Accessed: 23 March 2021].
- Bakić-Hayden 1995:** M. Bakić-Hayden. Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia. - Slavic Review, 54, 1995, 4, 917-931.
- Bakić-Hayden, Hayden 1992:** M. Bakić-Hayden, R. M. Hayden. Orientalist variations on the theme ‘Balkans’: Symbolic geography in recent Yugoslav cultural politics. - Slavic Review, 51, 1992, 1, 1-15.
- Bjelić, Savić 2002:** D. Bjelić, O. Savić (eds.). Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2002.
- Brubaker 1999:** R. Brubaker. Myths and misconceptions in the study of nationalism. - In: J. Hall (ed.). Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Craig Nation 1995:** R. Craig Nation. Images of the Balkan in the West. - Balkan Forum, 3, 1995, 12, 23-51.
- Daskalov, Elenkov 1994:** P. Даскалов, И. Еленков (ред.). Защо сме такава? В търсене на българската културна идентичност. София, Просвета, 1994. (R. Daskalov, I. Elenkov (eds.). *Zashto sme takiva? V tarsene na balgarskata kulturna identichnost* [Why Are We Like That? In Search of the Bulgarian Cultural Identity]. Sofia: Prosveta, 1994.
- Đukić 2013:** S. Đukić. Balkanizacija Balkana. Bugarski kadril. Izvidanja srpskog diplomate iz Sofije [Balhanization of the Balkans. Bulgarian Quadrille. Reconnoitring a Serbian Diplomat from Sofia]. Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2013.
- Fernandez 1986:** J. W. Fernandez. Persuasion and Performance: The Play of Tropes in Culture. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Gellner 1983:** E. Gellner. Nations and Nationalism. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Gold 1986:** D. L. Gold. Offspring of English *Balkanize*. - Names, 34, 1986, 2, 327-238.

---

<sup>13</sup> That was not the case with an earlier precedent, the appetite suppressant candy “Ayds”, popular in the 1970s and early 1980s, whose manufacturer went bankrupt due to the product name’s phonetic similarity with AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), coupled with inflexible corporate attitudes (“Let the disease change its name”); see Smith 2018.

- Goldsworthy 1998:** V. Goldsworthy. *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Hall, Danta 1996:** D. Hall, D. Danta. *The Balkans: Perceptions and realities*. - In: D. Hall, D. Danta (eds.). *Reconstructing the Balkans: A Geography of the New Southeast Europe*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996, 3-13.
- Ivanov 2001:** П. Иванов. „Винаги можем да ги наречем българи“: метафори на нетърпимост в масмедийното пространство. - *Летература / Lettre Internationale*, 2001, 27-28, 6-15. (P. Ivanov. “Vinagi mozhem da gi narechem bulgari”: metafori na netarprimost v masmediynoto prostranstvo [“We could always call them Bulgarians”: Metaphors of intolerance in the mass-media space]. - *Leteratura / Lettre Internationale*, 2001, 27-28, 6-15.)
- Kostov 2019:** И. Костов. *Свидетелства за прехода. 1989-1999*. София: Сиела, 2019. (I. Kostov. *Svidetelstva za prehoda 1989-1999* [Evidences about the Transition 1989-1999]. Sofia: Ciela, 2019.)
- Lazarova 2020:** Б. Лазарова. Следите оставам. Разследване за приватизацията на БГА „Балкан“. - В: БНТ 1. Ч. 1 (8.03.2020); Ч. 2 (14.04.2020). (B. Lazarova. *Sledite ostavat. Razsledvane za privatizatsiyata na BGA “Balkan”* [Traces Remain. Investigation of the Privatization of BCA “Balkan”]. - V: BNT 1, Ch. 1 (8.03.2020); Ch. 2 (14.04.2020).) Available from: <https://bnt.bg/bg/a/253794-sledite-ostavat> [Accessed: 23 March 2021].
- Meehan 1971:** Th. Meehan. *The last word: Notes on Drubnik*. - *New York Times*, 21 November 1971, Section BR, p. 87.
- Mutafchev 1987:** П. Мутафчиев. *Балканът в нашата история*. - В: *Книга за българите*. София: БАН, 1987, 65-89. (P. Mutafchev. *Balkanat v nashata istoriya* [The Balkan in Our History]. - V: *Kniga za balgarite* [A Book about the Bulgarians]. Sofia: BAN, 1987, 65-89.)
- Niederhauser 1992:** E. Niederhauser. *Balkanizalodas* [The Term ‘Balkanization.’]. - *Magyar Tudomány* [Hungary], 37, 1992, 3, 314-321.
- Plamenatz 1973:** J. Plamenatz. *Two types of nationalism*. - In: E. Kamenka (ed.). *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea*. London, 1973.
- Pringle 2018:** R. W. Pringle. *Balkanization*. - In: *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Balkanization> [Accessed: 23 March 2021].
- Rokkan 1979:** S. Rokkan. *Centres and peripheries in Western Europe*. - In: S. Rokkan, D. Urwin (eds.). *The Politics of Territorial Identity*. London: SAGE, 1979, 1-17.
- Said 1979:** E. Said. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- Shils 1975:** E. Shils. *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1975.
- Smith 2018:** E. Smith. *Ayds branding crisis: A diet suppressant’s unfortunate name*. - In: *Tedium*, 20 September 2018. Available from: <https://tedium.co/2018/09/20/ayds-candy-branding-problem/> [Accessed: 23 March 2021].
- Sugarev 2017:** Е. Сугарев. *Приватизацията на авиокомпания „Балкан“*. - В: Е. Сугарев, Х. Христов, К. Николов. *Корупционната България. История на българската корупция в годините на преход към демокрация*. Т. 2 (1997-2005). София: Libertarium, 2017, 100-116. (E. Sugarev. *Privatizatsiia na aviokompaniya “Balkan”* [The privatization of Airline “Balkan”]. - V: E. Sugarev, H. Hristov, K. Nikolov. *Korupsionnata Bulgaria. Istoriya na bulgarskata koruptsiya v godinite na prehod kam demokratsiya* [The Corrupt Bulgaria. History of Bulgarian Corruption in the Years of Transition to Democracy]. Т. 2 (1997-2005). Sofia: Libertarium, 2017, 100-116.) Online version with scanned documents available from: <https://corruptionbg.com/Privatizaciqta-na-Balkan> [Accessed: 23 March 2021].

- Tan 2020:** G. Tan. Will Corona Beer survive the coronavirus? - In: The Startup, 23 April 2020. Available from: <https://medium.com/swlh/will-corona-beer-survive-the-coronavirus-d4f2bbabdd> [Accessed: 23 March 2021].
- Telegraph 2019:** Оригиналът. Иван Костов. Истината за прехода 1989-2019. София: Телеграф медия, 2019. (Originalat. Ivan Kostov. Istinata za prehoda 1989-2019 [The Original. Ivan Kostov. The Truth about the Transition 1989-2019]. Sofia: Telegraph Media, 2019.)
- Todorov 2015:** А. Тодоров. Задкулиснето на прехода. Иван Костов. Т. 2 (1991-2001). Ч. 2 (1997-2001). София: Изток-Запад, 2015. (A. Todorov. Zadkulisiето na prehoda. Ivan Kostov [The Backstairs of the Transition. Ivan Kostov]. Т. 2 (1991-2001). Ch. 2 (1997-2001). Sofia: Iztok-Zapad, 2015.)
- Todorov 2017:** А. Тодоров. Документите. Приватизацията на БГА „Балкан“ - В: Kanal3.bg, 11.09.2017. (A. Todorov. Dokumentite. Privatizatsiyata na BGA “Balkan” [The Documents. The Privatization of Airline “Balkan”]. - Kanal3.bg, 11.09.2017.) Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9OpYmyat8&t=2s> [Accessed: 23 March 2021].
- Todorova 1997:** M. Todorova. Imagining the Balkans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Živković 2001:** M. Živković. Nešto između: simbolička geografija Srbije [Something in between: The symbolic geography of Serbia]. - Filozofija i društvo, 18, 2001, 73-110.
- Žižek 1997:** S. Žižek. Uživanje u pokornosti i sluganstvu [Enjoying obedience and servitude]. - Naša Borba, 5 January 1997.

**Petko Ivanov, PhD**

Senior Lecturer in Slavic Studies  
 Chair of the Slavic Studies Department  
 Connecticut College  
 270 Mohegan Ave Pkwy  
 New London, CT 06320, USA  
 Email: [pivanov@conncoll.edu](mailto:pivanov@conncoll.edu)